



NKU students work to help Haiti

By Howard McEwen • Enquirer contributor • May 16, 2010

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS - Northern Kentucky University students in the school's Department of Construction Management have designed a affordable housing for Haiti as part of their senior capstone project.

The students' proposal would create housing for 500 people at a cost of approximately \$400 per person.

"We must evaluate what the people of Haiti are accustomed to," said Patrick Ohlhaut, who graduated this spring and was named Outstanding Student in Construction Technology. "We have to determine how to overcome some major logistical hurdles. We must ensure that the dwellings are safer than previous designs, and we must produce this proposal at a cost low enough that it can be constructed using funds and labor from charity."

Dr. Sean Foley, an assistant professor at NKU and chairman of the Department of Construction Management, said the students had to always keep in mind what the Haitians needed and had to work with.

"There are so many special considerations to learn about," Foley said. "For example, we take for granted that we would need to take into account plumbing and electric here in the U.S. Where we are looking in Haiti, there is no

Hearts and Hands for Haiti has delivered aid to Haiti for 25 years.

"Throughout the course of the semester we have been able to rely on the experiences and knowledge gained from the faculty at NKU to come up with some very feasible solutions to the problems," said Ohlhaut. "What we have found is an incredible willingness for people to help."

Foley said Lyness will present the student proposal to his organization and possibly fund it.

The design was part of the senior capstone project for students Patrick Ohlhaut, Martin Kehoe, Zach Vater, Michael Schwartz and Jeremy Reis.

"A capstone project can be many things, but in the NKU Construction Management program it is a senior project typically done during the students last semester which demonstrates what the student has learned during their studies," said Foley. "Typically the class is set up so that a group of students either create a proposal for a specific group or several groups compete against each other to see who can come up with the best proposal for a common group."

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