

# Dunwoody College News

ALUMNI & FRIENDS, STAFF NEWS, STUDENT NEWS

## DUNWOODY WELDING FABRICATES SCULPTURE FOR CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

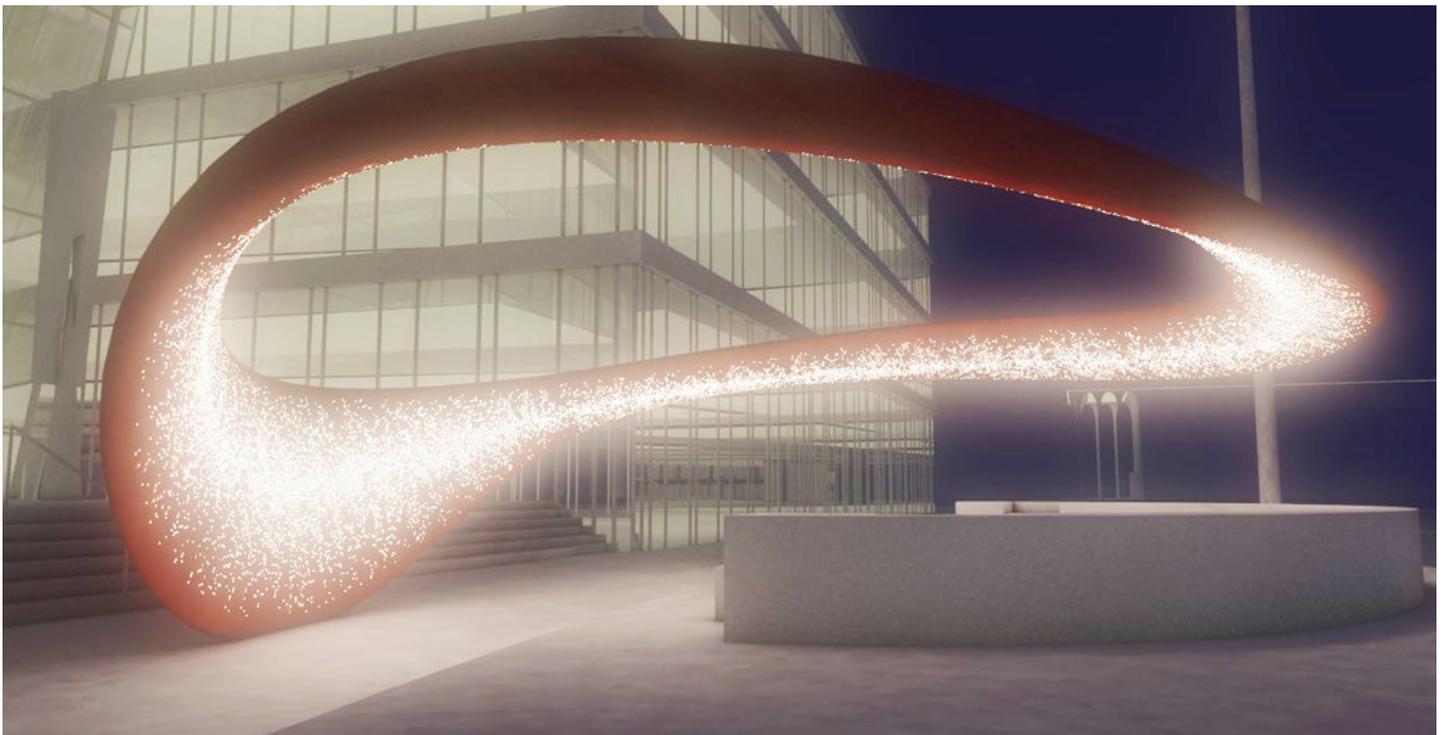
8.28.2018 | NEWSROOM

**Instructor, students, and alumni gain life-changing experience, carry on Dunwoody legacy**

### Accepting the challenge

This past May, Welding & Metal Fabrication Senior Instructor Denise Bailey was approached with quite the opportunity: to fabricate a 45-foot, 18,000-pound sculpture.

Designed by visual artist Tristan Al-Haddad of Atlanta, GA, the sculpture – titled Nimbus – was commissioned by the City of Minneapolis as an extension of the Nicollet Mall redesign.



*A rendering of what Nimbus will look like in the evening (Courtesy of formations-studio.com)*

The job was once in a lifetime but would come with challenges.

Due to a local Minneapolis welding shop's difficulties with heat distortion, the sculpture would have to be fabricated near the designer at [Formations Studios](#) in Atlanta. And this would require an immense amount of travel and time commitment.

But Bailey said it wasn't long before she was sold.

"I spoke with the designer, Tristan, on the phone about the project, and 20 minutes later he had convinced me to hop on a plane to Atlanta the following week to check it out," Bailey said. "His passion is contagious and familiar. When I got there, I knew that this project was going to be a part of my life."

### Bringing in Dunwoody

Fabricating the project alone, however, wouldn't be realistic.

"The designer asked if I would like to bring a couple students down to Atlanta to help me with the project," Bailey said. "It was an instant 'yes.' This is such an amazing opportunity for welders/fabricators — especially those new to the industry — to experience."

Bailey recruited Industrial Engineering Technology student Tiara Hill, '18 Welding Technology alum Jane Thompson, and '18 Welding Technology alum Madison Vail to join her after seeing the three of them thrive during a previous art installation.



*From L to R: Jane Thompson, Denise Bailey, and Tiara Hill*

Thompson was immediately on board.

Having the opportunity to get out of my comfort zone and to work hard on a project in my chosen field straight out of college is absolutely unheard of," she said. "I could not think of a better way to discover yourself professionally, learn your field, and be certain through trial that you are doing something that is motivating, inspiring, and exciting to you."

So on June 11 the Dunwoody team boarded a plane to Atlanta and got to work...and have been busy ever since.



*Jane Thompson grinding the weld so it is flush to the surface. The project required all visible welds to be ground.*

### Project tests, rewards Dunwoody team

Although worthwhile, the project hasn't been easy.

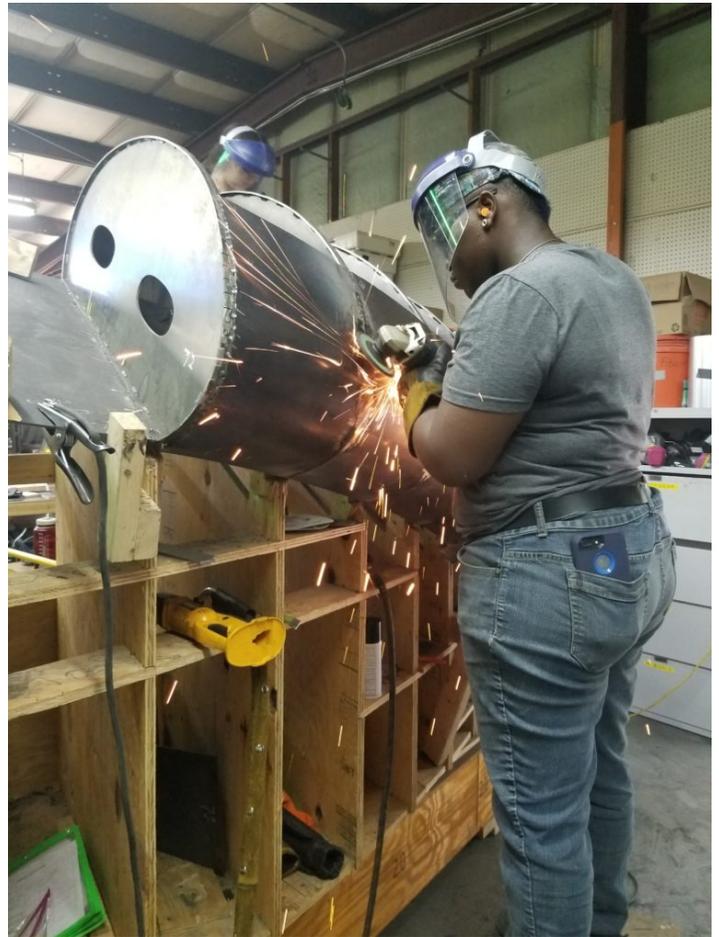
After passing a 3G Flux-Cored Arc Welding (FCAW) test, the welders got to work metal forming with 8 and 10 gauge corten steel, tackling, welding, grinding, and fixturing."

The average work week involved 50-60 hours at temperatures of 100 degrees in the shop," Bailey said.

But the pros have definitely outweighed the cons for Thompson.

"Learning by doing, trial and error, and actually getting your hands dirty will teach you things about yourself and your profession that a classic education will not," Thompson said. "I can say wholeheartedly that I gained more confidence in myself as a professional in one year at Dunwoody than I did getting my bachelor's at another four-year college."

"This kind of project is exactly what Dunwoody and carrying on a legacy is all about," Bailey said. "Nimbus will be one of the most visible sculptures in the City of Minneapolis."



*Tiara Hill putting finishing detail work into the piece.*



Thompson finished up her portion of the work at the end of July. Since then, Bailey has spent her weekends working in Atlanta. The next steps of the project include finishing the outside skin of the structure and fabricating the structural supports.

The sculpture will be installed this fall.



*A rendering of what Nimbus will look like in the daytime (Courtesy of formations-studio.com)*

Bailey has plans for her current second semester class to observe and possibly assist in the process.

“It is such an amazing experience to be able to not only give to the students, but to also give to the city I call home,” Bailey said. “The thing that I take the most pride in is that my team was an all-woman crew coming from a school that was founded on providing education for everyone.”