Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
ISUPD x IND D – A case study of design collaboration with campus police and student designers

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• Abstract (300 words):
This case study describes a relationship that developed between a police department and a class of industrial design students in a sixteen week design studio, aimed at designing for high performance human factors with police officers as end users. Police departments across the country do many “touch and go” styles of community outreach. This is a process where police officers show up, give a message, and have a localized influence. In this sixteen week project we were able to develop personal relationships that had a name, face and emotion. The relationships we created will help the students share ISUPD’s proactive philosophy and give students a perspective of what they want a police department to be. Through this collaboration, we were able to share a message of teamwork. That teamwork was built with trust, opportunity, commitment, and a mutual understanding of what design could do. The bonds made will help spread the message for future contacts and resources both in policing and design. It opened our minds to
the limitless possibilities of how design can facilitate change in a system that is resistant to change. The relationships gave deeper meaning and ownership to both the police department and design students. ISUPD worked with the professor of the class to develop a number of experiences that would allow for the students to develop an empathetic understanding for the mental and physical demands of the police line of work. Students were allowed to wear police officer duty gear to help them understand how each piece of the uniform has a positive and negative feature. Students had to perform police functions to help them understand the basic operations of a police officer’s uniform. With this cooperative effort the students personalized the experiences and used them to form new uniforms and equipment to assist the police in their work.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Dan Neubauer is an Assistant Professor of Industrial Design at Iowa State University. His focus is within the area of product design and interaction with a strong emphasis on creating meaningful educational experiences that develop empathy for the end user.