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Alumni company is 'Paragon' of success



Savannah College of Art and Design alumni Andrew Davies (left) and Susan Isaacs opened their own local company with two other classmates in August 2001.

Photo by Ben Dashwood

By Hannah Pittard

Rather than leave town after graduation to seek employment in unfamiliar cities, four SCAD alumni decided to create jobs for themselves in the city they have grown to love. In August 2001, Andrew Davies (B.F.A. computer art and illustration, 1999; M.F.A. broadcast design, 2003), Eric Murphy (B.F.A. graphic design, 2001), Philip Joyner (B.F.A. computer art, 2000) and Susan Isaacs (B.Arch., M.Arch. 2001) started Paragon Design Group — a local company whose services include print design such as ads, brochures, book design and layout and annual reports; Web design such as static and dynamic sites; and motion design such as 3D and motion graphics.

"We started the company for a number of reasons," said Isaacs. "We recognized the benefits that could be had from the

collaboration between different design fields and wanted to work in an environment that fostered this cross-fertilization. One huge problem we noticed was that although the college was producing hundreds of qualified and talented design professionals every year, Savannah was retaining very few of them."

The future of Savannah, as it happens, is at the heart of Paragon's objective. "We would like to become a very audible voice in the design world, locally and globally," said Isaacs. "Certainly for Savannah, we would like to see the city maximize its potential to become an art and design mecca. There is no reason why this city should not live up to this with the college here. We want to play our part, both by raising the level of expectancy for design and by providing the vessel to retain local talent."

Isaacs, Davies, Murphy and Joyner met at SCAD while living at Weston House. "We became very close friends while attending the same church," said Isaacs. Except for Murphy, who continues to work with Paragon from time to time, all original founding members are still with the company whose goal, according to Isaacs, is to develop long-term relationships with their clients by offering the best in creative branding and marketing solutions, delivered within the framework of exceptional customer service.

"We work extremely well as a design team," said Isaacs. "Nothing leaves the office that hasn't been carefully critiqued to ensure that we've done the best job possible." In addition to playing her part as a designer, Isaacs also is the managing director of Paragon. Davies is the creative director and oversees all the projects; Joyner is the company's 3D design and technical "guru," as well as in-house computer technician and proprietary software developer.

Isaacs points to SCAD as both a role model and a contributor to Paragon's continued success as a new and local company. "We appreciate very much the fact that the college works hard to remain in the forefront of what's going on in the design world. This is something that we as a company strive to do. As alumni in Savannah, we have benefited from the advice and support of SCAD faculty and staff, and have also benefited from the lectures and exhibitions that the college holds. SCAD has set an incredible example in terms of civil responsibility and revitalization of important buildings in the historic district. Being a part of something that has made and continues to make such a tangible difference to the city has been inspiring for us because we have proof that a few people with good ideas and the willingness to work can make a difference."

The Mus

*Good people are
because they've c
wisdom through f*

- William Saro



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