

The Miami Herald

Posted on Mon, May. 31, 2010

Student rocks with design for band's CD

BY LAURA ISENSEE
The Miami Herald

In September, senior Jose Garcia got an assignment in his graphics design class at Miami Lakes Educational Center.

The task: Design a cover for a song by an indie British band about cutting our carbon footprint.

Garcia got an A-plus. The 18-year-old also won an international competition that landed his design on the cover of the CD single of the song *Footprints* by the band Storey.

The contest was part of the Fairchild Challenge Competition, an environmental education outreach program at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables.

The competition partnered with other botanical gardens in California, Chicago and Central Florida and the Botanic Gardens Conservation International based in London.

It marked the first international contest for the Fairchild Challenge.

The five band members of Storey helped pick Garcia's entry as the winner.

His design featured yellow sticky notes -- each with a piece of a map of England -- next to white footprints, all against a wooden background.

Garcia's graphic design teacher Odalis Soto said she coaches students to make the message in their design easy to grasp. Soto said Garcia's design made an interesting use of Post-it notes, commonly used as reminders on office desks and in homes.

"In his design the Post-it notes are to remind us to take care of the earth," Soto said.

For Garcia, making a design for a music cover wasn't a far stretch. The Miami Lakes senior likes to jam on the guitar with friends and said graphic design is like making music.

"The freedom that you have to express yourself -- it's just like music. You just do it in another way," Garcia said.

Both music and design are careers he's interested in, but the Miami Lakes senior plans to study at Miami International University of Art and Design.

He first sketched his design, then took the picture of the sticky notes and finally finished the art on the computer.

The band members thought the design would capture someone's attention, said Netiva Kolitz, who coordinates the Fairchild Challenge's satellite program.

At the awards ceremony earlier this month, the band performed and Garcia learned he won - which took him by surprise.

In Miami-Dade County, more than 150 schools, from elementary to high schools, participate in the Fairchild Challenge, which includes contests across academic disciplines.

The Fairchild Challenge will likely feature more international competitions, said Amy Padolf, director of education at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.

"In order for us to solve environmental problems, we all need to work together," Padolf said.

Proceeds from sales of the band's song *Footprints* on iTunes and the CD single available at www.bgci.org will support the Fairchild Challenge and BGCI in London.

miami lakes, fl

© 2010 Miami Herald Media Company. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miamiherald.com>