

# COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

## STUDENT GROUP LEAVES ITS FOOTPRINT IN FRANCE

*Schlumberger-Sponsored Group Installs Labyrinth at Engineering School Campus*

A group of 15 Houston teenagers left its mark in France this summer, with some help from Schlumberger. The students designed and installed a public work of art – a stone labyrinth – atop the highest point in the city of Lyon this past June.

The project grew out of Schlumberger's role as a sponsor of the Texan French Alliance for the Arts (TFAA), a non-profit that promotes artistic, cultural and educational exchanges between Texas and France. TFAA tapped Houston-based artist Reginald Adams to lead the effort as part of his Sacred Sites Quest: International Exchange, a program he created to provide Houston-area youth an opportunity to collaborate with students in other countries to create community-based public art projects.

The 32-foot-diameter labyrinth, located next to the Basilique de Notre-Dame Fourvière, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the campus of Ecole catholique des arts et metiers (ECAM) Lyon Graduate School of Engineering, was the culmination of weeks of studying, planning and preparation for the teens, all in an effort to create a lasting symbol of spirituality and reflection.

With its math and technology components, the project also earned a sponsorship from Schlumberger Excellence in Education Development (SEED), a non-profit supporting STEM education programs.

Students participated in workshops to learn Sketchup, a 3D modeling software, in order to plan and design the labyrinth. Students also studied 3D printing to create a scale model of the project before traveling to Lyon to begin the installation. In addition to

visiting Buddhist temples, mosques, synagogues and churches in the Houston area to gain a better understanding of sacred spaces and world cultures, team members researched the history of labyrinths and why and how they are made. Each aspect of the project gave the teenagers a foundation on which to build when they began the work of digging trenches and laying stones in Lyon.

“The kids had a hand in everything from the design process, to implementation, to actually building the labyrinth,” says Richard Stowe, operations coordinator, Schlumberger SEED. “For them, it was the experience of a lifetime and the first time most of them had experienced a different culture.”

While in France, the group traveled to various labyrinths in Paris, Amiens, Chartres and Germainville. Students also visited a Schlumberger manufacturing plant in Clamart, giving them insight into Schlumberger and the various STEM careers available within the company.

With a labyrinth successfully installed in France, the group is setting its sights on Ecuador for the summer of 2016, with plans to build a labyrinth straddling the equator, with half of the circle on the northern hemisphere and the other half on the southern hemisphere.



Houston students made their mark on the French countryside as part of the Texas French Alliance for the Arts.