

Outreach Inside the Library: Attracting and Engaging Millennial Engineering and Science Students

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Abstract

The Science & Engineering (S&E) Library at UC San Diego has capitalized on the values of Millennials to attract and engage undergraduates in science and engineering with inside-the-library exhibits and events. Appealing to characteristics of Millennials, the S&E Library showcases various types of student work, sponsors engaging and innovative library events, and freely experiments with new ways to draw students into the library.

Stress Busters



Annual S&E Trivia Contest

The idea behind the contest, held every Spring during finals week, is to provide a break from studying during a time of particularly high tension, and reward research skills and science knowledge. It appeals to students' sense of competition and achievement as much as the prospect of winning a prize. Recognizing that students are under intense pressure, we keep the quizzes short and announce winners daily.

sciPod

A collection of puzzles, games, and construction toys – available for short-term checkout and use within the library. Conceived to give expression to right-brain activities in a very left-brain environment, and to nurture the engineering/building focus of many of the S&E student clientele.



A sampling of library programs and spaces designed to leverage Millennial characteristics:
collaborative, special, confident, achieving, pressured

Showcasing Student Work

Displaying student work in the S&E Library not only gives exposure to the students whose work is displayed – thus appealing to the Millennial traits of achievement, confidence, and special-ness -- but it also appeals to students viewing the work, as a source of peer-to-peer learning.



Junkyard Derby winner



Balsa wood tower and trophy case



Robot competitions



Computer art



Steel bridge competition



Research posters



Flight-worthy model aircraft

Spaces designed for Collaboration

Movable tables, group study rooms, presentation practice rooms



Engaging and Innovative Events

Photo Shoots

*Einstein's Birthday and
The Science of Superheroes Exhibit*

These events appeal to Millennials' confidence and sense of special-ness. Students' enthusiasm for the event, their ease in front of a camera, and their frequent insistence on take-overs if the first shot goes badly, all point to their fluency and comfort with being photographed as well as the medium of digital photography.



Great Campus Race

This libraries-wide event, based on the TV show, "The Amazing Race," involves solving clues, via Google or the library catalog, which then lead students to locations on campus where they document their presence with a digital photo. The first year, nearly 300 people participated. This event appeals to many Millennial traits: team orientation, achievement, confidence, interactivity, facility with technology.



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