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## UTSA student's dancing pendulums find home in The DoSeum

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Public Affairs Specialist

(June 23, 2015) -- Mechanical engineering senior Christian Trevino was just goofing around in her robotics lecture class last fall when she took her assignment—to make a computer simulation of a dancing pendulum—and turned it into a disco dance party. She had no way of knowing where it would lead.

"I ended up adding music to the background and made it look really crazy," Trevino, who graduates in August, said. "Professor Bhounsule thought it was hilarious. He'd never had a student do that."

In January, Trevino's mechanical engineering professor Pranav Bhounsule asked if she'd like to make a prototype. He introduced her to life-size pendulums that were parts of art exhibits all over the world. Some even lit up and used music.

"He asked me if I wanted to make a desk-size pendulum, because he was interested in taking it to the San Antonio Children's Museum," she said.

She finished the prototype in two months and was charmed by the kids' reaction at the museum.

"They were so excited," she said. "And of course they immediately wanted to pull it apart. Some asked if they could keep it."

Trevino's pendulum now has its own place in The DoSeum, which opened to the public June 6 after the San Antonio Children's Museum closed its doors earlier this spring. It wasn't long before she was welcomed by the museum to create another, larger pendulum that would light up and play music. She was also asked to write something to accompany it that would help kids become inspired by physics and engineering.

The new pendulum will be six feet tall and eight feet wide, and will be utilized as part of The DoSeum's public programs that focus on art and engineering. According to Chris Navarro, Public Program and Community Partnership Manager, "it is great to have students participate in service learning to benefit The DoSeum. In this way, we build capacity and continue to have new and exciting demonstrations and activities for kids and their families."

Trevino admits she never was, and still isn't, interested in the math side of things. As a kid, she liked simple toys, especially wooden toys from across the border.

"They had no motors or anything but I was fascinated," she said. "I think having a visual aid and seeing that first creates excitement. Once you hook kids, you show them the work that goes behind it and you hook them into learning about it."



*Trevino's pendulum, which began as an assignment for a UTSA class, on display at the DoSeum.*

Watch a video of Christian's dancing pendulum prototype [here](#)

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