



THE DOEL REED CENTER
IN TAOS

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Major: English

1. First of all, congratulations! How did you hear about the Doel Reed Center T-shirt design contest?

Thank you so much! I was so excited when I first heard about the Doel Reed Center T-shirt design contest through the OSU Monday Memo and immediately checked out more details on the Doel Reed Center website. It felt like such an excellent opportunity to get creative and contribute!

2. Were you familiar with the Doel Reed Center in Taos before the contest? If yes, how?

Yes, I am familiar with the Doel Reed Center in Taos. In the summer of 2023, I took a course with this center entitled *Reading the Trees in New Mexico*, taught by Dr. Ross Ariel. This opportunity was made possible through a scholarship I received from the Doel Reed Center. When I saw the advertisement for the T-shirt design contest, I felt truly honored to participate, as it was a meaningful way to give back to a place that has brought me so much discovery and learning. The Doel Reed Center has been a sanctuary of joy and peace for me. I would have participated in the contest even without a monetary reward because my time there was so fulfilling and transformative. I am already looking forward to taking another summer course there soon.

3. What's one thing you learned about the Doel Reed Center during your research for the design contest?

One key thing I learned about the Doel Reed Center during my research for the design contest is how to capture the essence of a place within a constrained framework given the requirement of the T-shirt design contest and still successfully convey its story. The Doel Reed Center's rich history, cultural significance, and connection to the landscape inspired me to focus on its unique identity. It taught me how to balance simplicity and depth in design, ensuring the message remains clear and impactful while honoring the center's identity.

4. The contest received considerable interest and over 25 submissions from OSU students and staff. What was your reaction when you found out you won the contest? How did you celebrate?

I was very emotional when I found out I had won the contest. While I submitted my designs, I had doubts since I am not a full-time graphic designer, and designing is what I do occasionally. However, the design process for me was not about winning; it was about attempting to capture the essence of the Doel Reed Center to express what it means to me and to show my gratitude for the privilege of taking a summer course there in 2023. Winning was not my primary motivator, but it was a complete game-changer. When I heard the news, I was dumbfounded for a few seconds before calling my parents, siblings, and friends to share the good news. It was an unforgettable moment of joy and validation!

5. Do you have a favorite memory or experience related to art, design, or your time at Oklahoma State University that helped shape your creative process?

One of my favorite memories related to art and design at Oklahoma State University happened as a master's student, particularly when I took part in the Doel Reed Center summer course in 2023. The experience of studying in such an inspiring environment sparked my creativity in ways I never expected. It was not just about learning but connecting with the center's landscape, history, and purpose. That connection taught me how to infuse deeper meaning into my designs. Now, as an OSU student who recently started my PhD program, this experience continues to influence my creative process. It reminds me that art is not just about technical skills but about storytelling, emotional connection, and reflecting on the spaces and moments that shape us. This lesson has been a cornerstone of my work ever since.

6. If you could see someone famous wearing your design, who would it be and why?

For me, the sponsors of the Doel Reed Center. They are the reason I had the incredible opportunity to be part of the center, and their generosity has left a lasting impact on my academic and creative journey. Wearing the design would symbolize their invaluable role in fostering creativity and supporting students like

me who have been fortunate enough to experience the center's programs. It would also be a meaningful way to celebrate their dedication to preserving the legacy of the Doel Reed Center while inspiring future generations to carry that legacy forward.

7. What advice would you give to other students who want to participate in creative competitions like this one?

I advise other students who want to participate in such creative competitions to believe in their unique perspective and take the leap, even if they feel unsure about their skills. Creativity is not just about technical expertise; it is about telling a story, sharing a message, and bringing your authentic voice to the table. Do not focus solely on winning; see it as an opportunity to grow, experiment, and express yourself.

Also, do not hesitate to ask for feedback or learn from others. Every experience, whether you win or not, is a step forward in your creative journey. Most importantly, remember that your ideas matter, and competitions like this are a great platform to showcase your passion and creativity to a broader audience.