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The quarterly publication of the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), Innovation provides in-depth coverage of design issues and long-term trends while communicating the value of design to business and society at large.
We set out to create the most beautiful products in the world, for the moments in life when people will most appreciate them.

—Native, designers of the Best in Show product, Coloplast Design DNA
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This is certainly a year of firsts. For example, the first time a reality TV star leads the polls for a political party’s nomination for the highest office in the land while an actor turned governor turned actor takes his place as, well, a reality TV star.

IDSA Executive Director Daniel Martinage, CAE, Deane Richardson, FIDSA, chair of the 1985 Washington, DC, WORLDDESIGN Congress and newly inducted Fellow Austen Angell, FIDSA, celebrate at the IDEA Gala sponsored by Samsung that closed IDSA’s International Conference in Seattle in August.
Hmm, well perhaps a dubious first there. Let’s recognize a much more significant first. This Yearbook marks the first time IDSA has published the profiles of our new Fellows. We recognize this extraordinary group of leaders, educators and thinkers through an in-depth look at their contributions to the profession and to IDSA.

This year I was privileged to have dual IDSA responsibilities. In addition to serving as executive editor for INNOVATION, I had the distinct honor of serving as the chair of the 2015 Awards Committee. This committee, per IDSA’s bylaws, is made up of past Fellows who take the work of evaluating candidates very seriously. IDSA was lucky to have Peter Bressler, FIDSA, Tucker Viemiester, FIDSA, Brian Roderman, FIDSA, and Pascal Malassigné, FIDSA, as the jury deciding to whom the new Fellowships and the additional Education and Individual awards would be given. So a heartfelt thank you to my fellow Fellows (I always wanted to say that) who served on this distinguished jury, and a congratulations to all the new Fellows and IDSA award winners.

A great big congratulations also to all of the IDEA winners featured in this issue. The talented designers and design teams acknowledged here originate from all over the globe and have produced an unprecedented and meaningful collection of work. The products featured in this issue are the best collection we have ever seen. They are responses to today’s environmental, technological and cultural shifts, and they set the bar high for design intention and quality. The People’s Choice Award, the Tork Xpresssnap® Image Napkin Dispensing System, is a pure design play that beautifully solves an everyday problem we all share, and adds authentic material choices and sustainability to its story. A perfect embodiment of the design ethos of today. The Best in Show, the Colorplast Design DNA, uses design and innovation to “create products that restore emotional dignity and turn patients into people again.” Bravo for that. Finally, the Curator’s Choice, selected by Marc Greuther, chief curator of The Henry Ford, stands out as a first-of-its-kind answer to an engaging, fun and productive activity done for hundreds, if not thousands, of years: fishing. Flip Reel by Squiddies was selected for how its simplicity and functionality as a tool intersects with its “skilled use of materials.” We celebrate this design, as we do all of them, for being the answer to reducing the friction between us as humans and the achievement of our goals. In the end that is the true mission of design.

In thinking more about firsts, this year will be remembered as remarkable for events that are transforming the design landscape. An unprecedented number of acquisitions of design firms by larger entities is providing design seats at the table in boardrooms and the C-suite. On the downside is the failure of Quirky, based in New York, which will surely raise questions about how far the crowd-based model of innovation and product development can go. Opposite that, Kickstarter’s bold move of forgoing an IPO and reincorporating as a “public benefit corporation,” and explicitly stating that its goal is to do good as well as make profit, is testimony to its success and impact.

This year has been electrifying and unusual, to say the least. So maybe the bizarre political landscape fits. As designers we constantly challenge our clients and ourselves. We challenge convention. This issue of the Yearbook is full of unexpected and exciting answers to problems and equally exciting responses to the opportunities we face in the world today. In it we celebrate this always inspiring and fascinating collection of products, packaging and service design that makes up this, the 2015 IDEA Yearbook—an issue full of firsts.

—Mark Dziersk, FIDSA, INNOVATION Executive Editor
mark@lunar.com

“I believe that the creative communities that we serve are likely to have some of the same values that we do, and will find it meaningful that a company is challenging itself to do things differently.”

—Yancey Stiekler, Kickstarter CEO
Welcome to the world’s most prestigious design competition.

The 2016 International Design Excellence Awards

The 2016 International Design Excellence Awards (IDEA®) opens January 4, 2016. IDEA celebrates design insight, talent, innovation and excellence. Gold and Silver trophies are presented to the top winners at the IDEA Ceremony at the conclusion of the 2016 IDSA International Conference—August 17-20 in Detroit.

Acknowledging and illuminating excellence across a wide array of industries and disciplines, IDEA winners represent the highest level of design innovation.

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The 2016 IDEA competition is open for entry from January 4 – April 1, 2016.