COVID-19_UMaine News_New media seniors develop novel tools tackling stress, COVID-19 lifestyle

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New media seniors develop novel tools tackling stress, COVID-19 lifestyle

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The stress of COVID-19 and other obstacles of everyday life prompted seven seniors from the University of Maine New Media program to develop novel apps and activities to cope and adapt.

Using a variety of modern audiovisual and interactive technologies these students crafted tools that can help users de-stress, learn new hobbies, entertain themselves and perform tasks made more difficult by the pandemic.

Projects include augmented reality apps for self-guided campus tours and gardening, a therapeutic video game for players with obsessive-compulsive disorder, a popup oasis with audio and visual recordings to provide soothing ambiance, an app to improve professor and student interactivity, and more.

"These projects are compelling examples of the potential for new media to make a clear positive impact on our society" says Penny Rheingans, director of the School of Computing and Information Science at UMaine.

As a result of their work, the new media seniors earned two Center for Undergraduate and Graduate Research (CUGR) fellowships, three research fellowships from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and two special awards from the McGillicuddy Humanities Center. They will present their creations at the 2021 Student Symposium on Friday, April 16.

"These accolades are a testament to the creativity of our majors, and more broadly to the inventiveness shown by young people armed with digital tools when confronting a global crisis," says new media professor Jon Ippolito.

Read the full story on the New Media program’s website.

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