

**Final Reflection on My 2026 Summer Enrichment Experience at
Savannah College of Arts and Design Rising Star Pre-College Program**

By Margaret Davis

When attending SCAD's Rising Star Program, I felt that it gave me a real college experience. During the program, I was not limited to the people within my classes. I interacted with peers from other classes that were totally different from mine. I made friends with people who took Fashion, Graphic Design, Art History, Interior Design, Business, Film, and Oil Painting. I valued the diversity I was introduced to and was glad I made friends with people who had different interests.

In my own classes, Architecture and Sketching and Drawing, I was put in a position where I needed to work outside of class time. For the first time while attending a summer program, I had actual homework. In previous programs, homework usually meant coming back into the studio to work on unfinished class assignments. During my time at SCAD, however, I was assigned videos to watch and papers to write about the videos' topics. I learned to put my work before hanging out with friends and to use my free time with the intention of finishing assignments or going back into the classroom to work.

Before I ever arrived, I was worried about the environment I would be introduced to at SCAD. All of the architecture programs I had previously attended had more of a STEM-based approach. Architecture is a two-sided coin, where it can either be taught with a more artistic focus or a more engineering-focused approach. This was the first program I attended that focused more heavily on the artistic side of architecture. I was concerned about the new approach and what I would possibly learn. Even though I was excited about experiencing something different, I was still nervous.

Despite my concerns, I loved what I was taught and introduced to. I realized that I prefer the more artistic approach to architecture rather than the engineering-focused one, and this

program solidified that preference for me. Through my Architecture class, I learned about the beginning stages of the architectural process and received a step-by-step introduction to Revit, a program commonly used by architects. I had previously learned Rhino, another program commonly used by architects, so I was able to compare how I learned each program. I really liked SCAD's approach. I enjoyed learning through the professor's instruction, where we learned as a class rather than working completely individually.

Through my Sketching and Drawing class, I also learned the importance of asking questions. I was put in a position where I could not expect automatic feedback but instead had to seek it out. I learned to talk to my professor about ways I could improve my work. We also participated in peer reviews. We would place pieces of paper next to our work and walk around the classroom looking at everyone's art, and then write what we liked and what we thought could be improved. I learned different approaches to critique and that I should not always expect professors to automatically give me feedback.

Overall, I was proud of what I accomplished during my four weeks at SCAD. I created multiple still-life pieces that I was very proud of. As someone who previously struggled with sketching still lifes, I was proud of how I worked through something that was difficult for me. I was also glad that I made so many friends. As someone who is an introvert, I was proud that I stepped outside of my comfort zone and put myself out there.

I am especially proud of my final Architecture board, which I was able to present to my family and explain everything I had done. My greatest accomplishment, however, came when I met with an admissions advisor and was told that I had been accepted into SCAD. Not only was I accepted, but I was also offered scholarships. At first, I was almost confused by the sudden accomplishment, but once I fully understood what it meant, I felt extremely proud of myself. SCAD was a wonderful experience, and I would highly recommend the Rising Star Program to anyone looking for a creative environment and the opportunity to be surrounded by people who share the same creative drive. Thank you, Garwin Family Foundation, for this opportunity.