



Reinforce  
Squat -  
position!

College of Design team hopes to alter the toilet archetype with their Go With the Flo™ design. [Download image](#)  
**Industrial product design wastes away the competition**

A team of [ASU College of Design](#) students and faculty were recognized this spring for their transgenerational toilet design concept, Go With the Flo™ by the Northwest Design Invitational (NDI). Five excellence criteria were exercised at the NDI biennial competition to recognize outstanding design: appropriate aesthetics, design innovation, ecological responsibility and market and user benefits.

Design team members honored with the NDI's Breaking the Rules Silver Award include [John Takamura](#) and [Dosun Shin](#), College of Design faculty members, and Tamara Christensen and Dean Bacalzo, Master of Science in Design students.

"We hope our design will alter the toilet archetype by the year 2030," says John Takamura, design team leader and assistant professor of industrial design in the ASU College of Design.

The Flo™ toilet is an ergonomic, sustainable design concept for baby boomers that functions like a squat toilet. Designers maintain that using the Flo™ toilet is akin to yoga – by building and strengthening abdominal and back muscles. Only one-half to one gallon of water is used for flushing and The Flo™ reuses water from hand washing. To flush water from the tanks to the toilet, the Flo™ employs an electromagnetic ball valve that uses electromagnets. Go With the Flo™ also is free of mechanical parts. The toilet is fully self-sustaining and independent of electric power.

The genesis for the Go With the Flo™ design concept was a request by graduate student Tamara Christensen. She expressed her interest in toilet design based on some work she did as an industrial design undergraduate. Takamura agreed to work with her on an independent extracurricular study and quickly pulled in Dosun Shin, fellow College of Design professor.

"I wanted to have another graduate design student on the team and solicited the talents of Dean Bacalzo because of his undergraduate engineering degree," Takamura says.

Bacalzo became the design engineer, Shin was the 3-D design consultant, Christensen served as the team's researcher and Takamura stepped into the branding-specialist role.

"We decided to meet at least once a week over a 15-week semester to take on the task of completely redesigning the modern toilet," Takamura says. "This was actually very difficult because the toilet really hasn't changed in over 100 years of use, but we felt confident in our transdisciplinary team to get the job done!" he adds.

Takamura and his design team not only have changed the concept of a typical bathroom experience with their Go With the Flo™ design, but they also shut out the competition. According to [NDI](#) event organizers, this year they received more than 80 entries from 25 different design organizations and universities.