The Kinetic Sculpture Race Team RELEASES THE KRAKEN!

The Kinetic Sculpture Project is an applied learning INDS 430 course where students from various disciplines collaborate with the community and each other to design, build, and race a kinetic sculpture

By Fabiha Mahmood

Lord Alfred Tennyson wrote, “Below the thunders of the upper deep; Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea, His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep The Kraken sleepeth,” - but not anymore! Thanks to our very own Kinetic Sculpture Race (KSR) Team here at INDS, the Kraken has been fully awoken and revived. Now what exactly is the Kraken at fault for this time and why is the KSR Team involved? The only monsters of the sea lurking in the deep waters that the KSR Team is concerned about are the monstrous effects that material pollution has had on aquatic ecosystems. The plastic waste the marine life has involuntarily ingested has become the silent killer no one has noticed, but now the KSR Team has decided to bring the silent killer to justice through the construction of the Kraken as their sculpture.

With the theme of their kinetic sculpture revolving around the sustainability of upcycling, the team wants to send a powerful message about the benefits of upcycling for our environment by reusing and constructing the sculpture completely out of upcycled materials. The Kraken will be constructed from plastic bottles, plastic bags, hula hoops, safety fencing, platoons, and other objects that are often found polluting ecosystems. To better understand the essence of upcycling, I asked one of the students in the INDS 430 Kinetic Sculpture project class to explain the concept. Kirby Kelbaugh, a student who focuses on the disciplines of Education and Performing Arts within the project, describes the difference between upcycling and recycling. “Upcycling is where old products are given more value and not recreating them into another product, which is what recycling does. You can see what products and materials have been used to create the sculpture. Recycling breaks the product down into chemical elements that are then used to recreate something else.” Kelbaugh goes even further to connect the purpose of upcycling to the sculpture’s theme: “In the ocean there are all sorts of marine life and plants that are ingesting the plastics without even knowing it. The Kraken represents this monster we’ve created with our use of plastic. Three gallons of water are used to make one plastic bottle! The market makes it seem like bottled