

Unwind the Mind at Duke University Library

Will Students Take a Break from Intense Study?

As a capstone project, senior student Anamika Goyal placed 5000 KEVA® Planks, along with the message below, in the Perkins Library at Duke University and left them unattended to see what happens.

build something



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search **build something** on facebook

Dear Soon to be Builder,

I am leaving these blocks out here from now until April 8, and I want to see what YOU ALL can come up with!

So take a few minutes, build something, (anything!) and then ask the **front desk for a camera** and stick a picture of your work up here with the others.

Looking forward to seeing it!
- Anamika Goyal

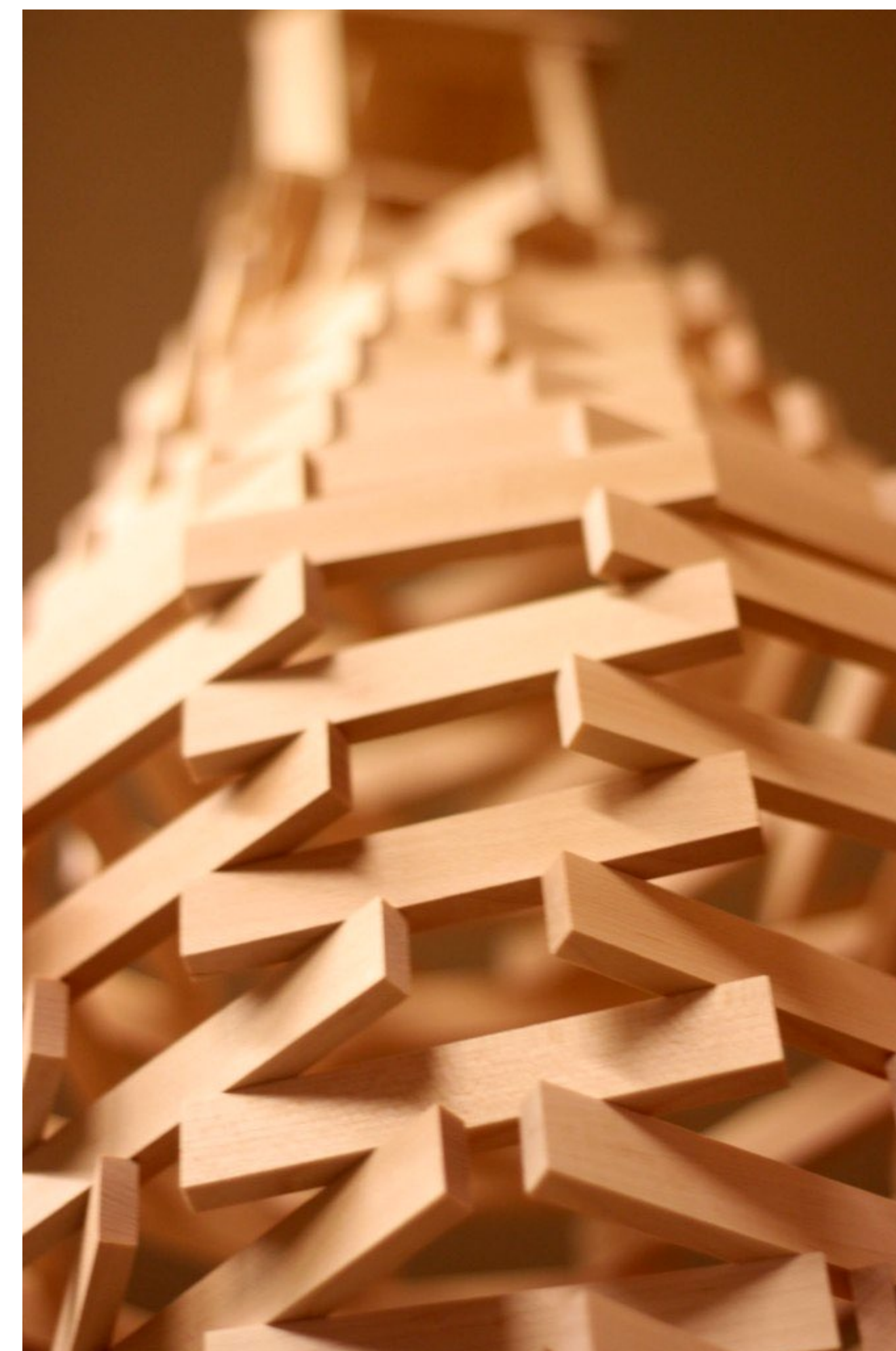






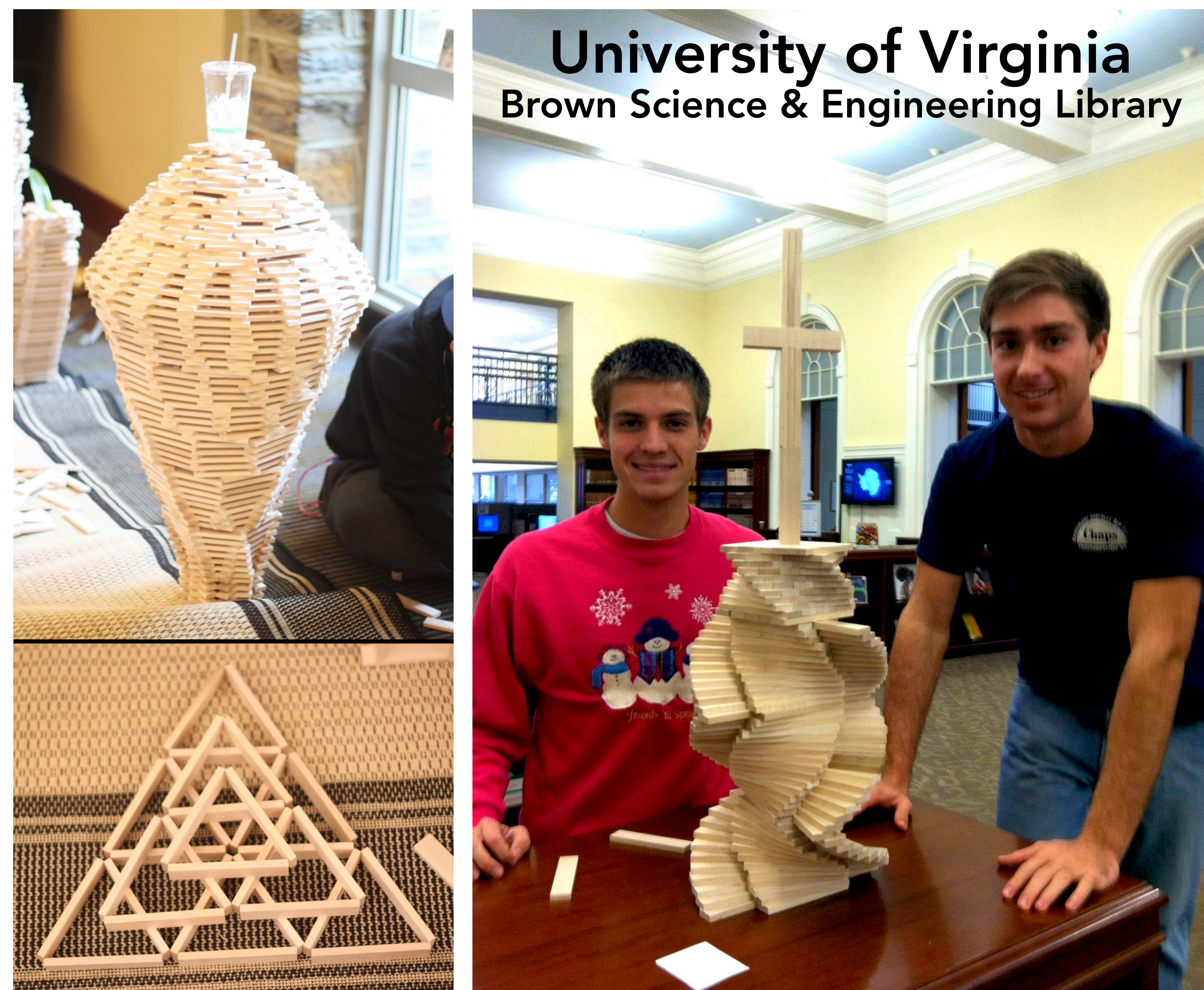
Aren't you supposed to be studying?

Students spend many hours in deep concentration and with extended screen time at the library. Is learning more effective by powering through brain fatigue or taking periodic breaks that can refresh the mind and body?



The Science of Taking a Break

University of Illinois psychology professor, Alejandro Lleras, led a study in 2011 to determine the effectiveness of prolonged study periods without a break. Performance clearly dropped off for the group without a break while the group with the break seemed unimpaired by time. It suggests that prolonged attention to a single task actually hinders performance. "From a practical standpoint, our research suggests that, when faced with long tasks (such as studying for a final exam or doing taxes), it is best to impose brief breaks on yourself. Brief mental breaks will actually help you stay focused on your task!"



Give Me Break

Traditional libraries are filled with books, computers and quiet, thinking people. What options are available for a break? Many students take a break from their computer by looking at their phone, but this is not the best kind of break. Physical movement of the body and simple tasks allow the analytical part of the brain to reboot and refresh. Libraries can promote better study habits by providing the tools, space and encouragement for effective ways to take a break from study.



Overwhelming Response

"The support and enthusiasm on campus for this project has been beyond incredible. We unlocked an entire world of hidden creativity that I have never seen on campus before!"
Anamika Goyal

When given a workable option, students responded with overwhelming enthusiasm, creativity and camaraderie. Enjoyment and effectiveness of studying can both be increased by creating an environment that includes the tools and space to help unwind the mind.

