

## New Tech Institute Students work on Dollhouses Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright Disciple and Chief Architect/Chief Engineer, Evansville Native Wes Peters

William Wesley “Wes” Peters was the main apprentice under legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and he created the Taliesin Associated Architects after the death of Wright. Peters was born in Terre Haute, and attended Evansville College (now the University of Evansville) as well as MIT. He joined Wright’s Taliesin fellowship in 1932, but had a falling out with Wright during which time he returned to Evansville for two years in the mid-1930s. While back in Evansville, he designed the Peters-Margedant house at 1506 East Indiana Street in Evansville. He designed the house in the Usonian style, two years before Wright’s first Usonian house emerged in 1937.

During his two years in Evansville with Wright’s daughter, Svetlana, Wes and Svetlana designed dollhouses as prototypes. While no known dollhouses are known to exist, plans for the dollhouses have survived. Wes and Svetlana married in 1935, and they reunited with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin in 1935.

In the fall of 2016, Dr. Jim Renne approached New Tech Institute with plans for creating a dollhouse based on Peters’ plans. Eric Havener, Engineering Teacher at New Tech, worked with two NTI students to convert the plans to Inventor, the 3D CAD program. From those plans, Havener and the students have created the skeleton of the dollhouse – and with continued work this fall they plan to have a finished product which will bring Wes Peters’ mid-1930s dollhouse design to life! The in-progress dollhouse was on display during the April 2017 of the Peters-Margedant House during its dedication, and Brandoch Peters (son of Wes Peters and grandson of Frank Lloyd Wright) had the opportunity to see the house!

Mr. Havener and the New Tech students have used STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) principles to make this project happen. They have researched the best materials to use to build the dollhouse, used Technology and Engineering to convert the plans from paper to computer, and they have used Math in their calculations.

In fall 2017, Eric Havener will have a Special Projects class at New Tech where students can work on this and other projects related to STEM. Also, New Tech teachers are exploring ways to expand these projects to other curriculum areas such as English/Language Arts, History, Art, and Entrepreneurship.

### Media Coverage

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/local/2017/04/20/tiny-brown-house-work-brilliant-mind/100663104/>

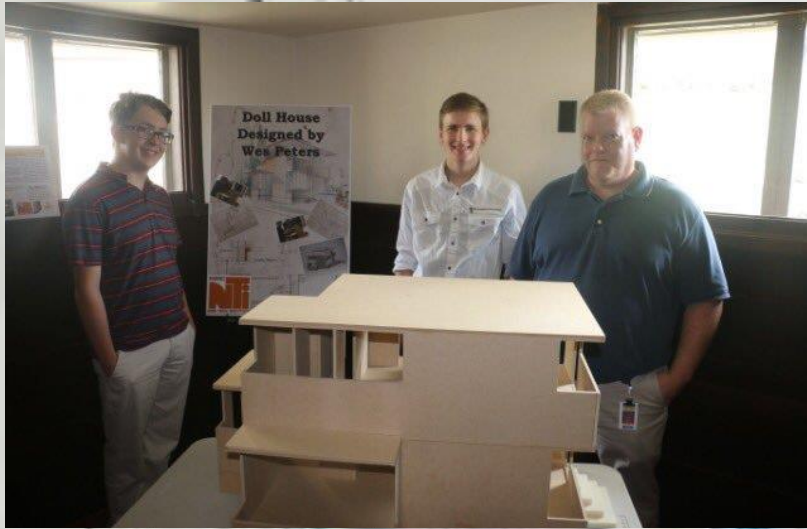
<http://www.evansvilleliving.com/articles/hidden-history>

<http://www.tristatehomepage.com/news/local-news/building-beauty-with-brains-wes-peters-dollhouse-comes-to-life/700723627>

### References

<https://www.indianalandmarks.org/about/special-projects/peters-margedant-house/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Wesley\\_Peters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wesley_Peters)



NTI students Quinton Schaefer (left), and Josh Brown (center), along with NTI Engineering Teacher Eric Havener (right), with their in-progress dollhouse from Wes Peters' designs. The in-progress version was on display at the dedication of the Peters-Margedant House on the campus of the University of Evansville in April 2017.

At the April 2017 dedication of the Peters-Margedant House on the University of Evansville campus (left to right):  
New Tech Institute Principal Chris Gibson, student Josh Brown, Engineering Teacher Eric Havener, Brandoch Peters – son of Wes Peters and grandson of Frank Lloyd Wright, and student Quinton Schaefer.



Dignitaries gather before the April 2017 dedication of the Peters-Margedant House on the University of Evansville campus. NTI students have a Wes Peters designed dollhouse on display in the house during the dedication.