Students in Outdoor Product Design and Development (OPDD) are empowered to create products they are passionate about. During OPDD Student Doug Hintze’s time in the program, his love of footwear, as well as the knowledge and skills he developed in a footwear design course, led him to a summer internship with Salt Lake City-based company, KURU.

Through partnerships with the industry, OPDD offered a footwear design class to support those students interested in working in the footwear industry. While taking this course, Hintze gained technical skills in footwear design, prototyping and concept development.

Hintze said his key to finding an internship he was passionate about was using LinkedIn to connect directly with companies he was interested in. Over several months, he built his relationship with the product development team at KURU and was able to show off his resume and portfolio.

“As an intern I get to work with everyone on the development team and understand the whole process of taking a shoe from a concept to finished product for the customer,” Hintze said. “I have taken the footwear class and have loved everything that I have learned about shoes and the footwear design process. I have seen a lot of similarities in what I have learned at school and what I am doing in my internship.”

Through specialized course work, teaching and mentorship from faculty with industry experience, OPDD students are making real impacts in the sports and outdoor industry.