

# MScBMC student designs an eBook with buzz

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The Smithsonian Science Education Center published an eBook this past August designed and illustrated by Lauren DiVito, a University of Toronto Mississauga graduate student. In [Expedition: Insects](https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/expedition-insects/id912242496?mt=13&ign-mpt=uo%3D4) [<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/expedition-insects/id912242496?mt=13&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>], a textbook for Grades 3 to 5, students travel the world to visit six different types of insects in their natural habitats.

“Expedition: Insects reached number 1 on the Australian iBooks’ Top Charts for free textbooks,” said Ashley Deese, the Center’s interactive media producer, “and peaked at number 8 on the Top Charts in Canada.”

For ten weeks this past summer, DiVito, a student in the Master of Science in Biomedical Communications program, lived in Washington, D.C. DiVito interned in the publications division at the Smithsonian Science Education Center where she worked as part of an interdisciplinary team, led by Deese, to create an eBook on insects.

DiVito, whose background is in chemistry and visual arts, began by researching the flora and fauna of each geographical location to ensure that the insects were depicted in scientifically accurate environments. Next, DiVito sketched the insects and environments with traditional pencil and paper. She then revised the sketches until she was satisfied with the architecture of a scene. To create the final images, DiVito used digital illustration software and technologies.

Fellow team members wrote the text, added the animation, photos, videos and the interactive components to DiVito’s images. They produced the eBook using Apple’s iBooks software. Entomologists and education specialists at the Smithsonian verified and edited the team’s research.



**Lauren DiVito**

*Photography by: Dave Mazierski*



“Not only did I need to use my creativity,” said DiVito, “but the research skills emphasized by the BMC program played a huge role in all the projects I took on at the Smithsonian.”

Now in the second year of the Biomedical Communications Program, DiVito’s master’s research project will focus on the creation of an interactive exhibit for the Royal Ontario Museum.

“Like my work for the Smithsonian,” said DiVito, “this project is being created for the public and has to be informative, interactive, and most of all, fun to use.”

[Expedition: Insects](https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/expedition-insects/id912242496?mt=13&ign-mpt=uo%3D4) [<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/expedition-insects/id912242496?mt=13&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>] can be downloaded free for iPads or Macs from Apple’s iBooks store.