

# I Conference on Merida State: Crossed glances at its capital city

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Paper title:

## **Merida, from industrious city to cradle of the first professional degree in Industrial Design of Venezuela**

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Abstract:

The difficult geographical conditions and the limited means of transport to access Merida city until the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century propounded a local way to face reality full of new, creative and even daring enterprises in spiritual, intellectual and practical terms. With this in mind, the present paper aims to show that the creation of the first professional school of industrial design of Venezuela at Universidad de Los Andes was not a fad provided the non industrial character of this region. Standing on a review of diverse documental sources, the author argues that the establishment of such a school in Merida was perfectly justified given: (1) the industrious and long standing nature of its craft activity (Picón Salas, 1958; Duarte, 1979; Ramírez Méndez, 2007), (2) a tradition of more than 220 years in the teaching of Arts and Crafts (Leal, 1968), (3) the strong support such a city has given to the development of science and technology at national level through initiatives such as its free economic zone for cultural, scientific and technological goods (Arvelo, 1997; Rondón Nucete, 2008), and (4) the visionary, enthusiastic and logistic capability of University of Los Andes for the development of new degrees (Miliani, 1974; Rísquez, 1991).

Key words:

Industrial Design, University of Los Andes, Bachelor degree, Merida, Venezuela.