Architecture students take national prizes - 1, 2, 3

The prizes piled up for three teams of Woodbury architecture students at the 2007 Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture/American Institute of Steel Construction design competition. The Woodbury students earned a first place, a second place, and a third place prize in the contest, which drew more than 400 submissions from 50 universities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. This marks the second consecutive year that Woodbury teams have taken home a first place prize in this contest.

Matthew Beausoliel and Noel Moreno’s project, “Divert.City: United States-Mexico Border” was awarded first place in the open category. The expert jurors praised the project for its authenticity, noting that the project’s “overall level of resolution and commitment to repairing the rift of the U.S.-Mexico border sets it apart and made it the clear choice.”

Woodbury students Lilit Ustayan and Nelli Khachikyan took second place in this same division. Titled “U.N. Water,” the judges lauded the project as “an appropriate rendition of a traditionally expansive civic prototype as an iconic movement, using contemporary engineering and human challenges.”

The first and second place entries were projects developed during a fourth-year “Top- ics” studio, the topic being architectural responses to borders in crises. The first place entry proposed an infrastructural alternative to the current fence along the U.S.-Mexican border, while the second place project dealt with a tripartite Central Asian border where water is scarce and water rights are a cause of conflict.

Jason Muller and Pouyeh Choroomi’s project “Vert-cycle” was awarded third place in the museum of steel category. The judges said the project “has strong spacial form which is portrayed through dynamic, fluid, and smooth design.”

Gerard Smulevich, associate professor of architecture, was the faculty advisor for the first and second place award-winning projects, and was the co-instructor with adjunct faculty member Giulio Zavolta for the “Vert-cycle” entry. For the past seven years, Woodbury architecture students working under the direction of Smulevich have placed in the national ACSA steel competition, including first place awards in 2000, 2006, and 2007.

“That we won first, second, and third place awards in 2007 is a tribute not only to the winning faculty and students, but to all of the faculty and students in the architecture program as well,” says Norman Millar, director, School of Architecture, Woodbury University. “It is also noteworthy that this year for the first time, a Woodbury team of third-year students was a winner in the contest usually won by fourth- or fifth-year undergrads or graduate students. With this year’s results, I think it is safe to say that Woodbury’s architecture program, thanks mainly to Gerry Smulevich and his students over the years, is the ‘winningest’ in the history of the annual national contest. I am very proud of that.”

The Woodbury students’ prize-winning designs will be seen by thousands of practicing architecture professionals at the ACSA Annual Meeting in Houston in March 2008 and the American Institute of Architects National Convention in Boston in May 2008.
Woodbury student takes two firsts

The 2007 Harold W. Grieve Educational Fund Scholarship competition was held on March 23 at the Woven Legends Showroom in Pacific Design Center. Stuart Mills of Woodbury University won first place in the Commercial competition. In the competition, students were asked to give a 10-minute presentation of a student project to a panel of jurors. Projects were either residential or commercial. Students, to be eligible, must have completed one-half of the requirements for a degree or certificate program at an accredited educational institution and be a current student member or corresponding member of ASID Los Angeles or within Los Angeles County.

Mills also placed first in the Design Innovation category of the Annual IIDA Southern California Scholarship Competition. Students from twelve area interior and environmental design schools participated in the presentations and interviews by panels of design professionals. Also representing Woodbury were Interior Architecture students, Iva Kremsa, Fuyumi Aikawa, and Jennifer Gawboy.

IA student wins at AWAF

IA major, fashion design minor, Corina Apodaca received one of five scholarship awards from the Association for Women in Architecture Foundation. Apodaca was honored April 7 during AWAF’s awards dinner, which also featured an exhibit of her work from a Studio III project. In addition to her demanding academic schedule, Apodaca worked for three years at the architecture firm Zimmer Gunsul Frasca and is now at the firm JS Egan Design, known for its non-profit projects and low-income housing. She is currently working on interiors for the new Project Angel Food offices in Hollywood.

Three earn SFV-AIA awards

Three Woodbury students earned the AIA San Fernando Valley – American Architectural Foundation Scholarship Awards in recognition of excellence. Mary Tims of Burbank, Natalie Popik of Lawndale, and Teo Biocina of Hollywood were honored at Woodbury’s May 4 awards convocation by leaders of the San Fernando Valley Chapter of The American Institute of Architects (AIA/SFV). The three were the winners of the Burbank Grand Critique. They will be recognized at AIA/SFV’s awards dinner on September 26.

Students win foundation summer internships

Out of 1600 applicants, 33 are chosen for the T. Howard Foundation summer internships. Recently graduated communication student Angela Getter and senior Ani Okkasian were two of the 33. Getter was offered a place at A&E Channel in Los Angeles and Okkasian at The Game Show Network (GSN).

In order to promote workplace diversity within entertainment and multimedia platforms, the foundation sponsors the highly sought after internships with industry leaders nationwide. The selective process considers each student’s unique interests and academic achievements.

The two students were flown to Washington, DC for the orientation. There they heard Douglas Holloway, the President of cable investments for NBC/Universal. He urged the students to put in writing their 20 year plans in order to accomplish their dreams. Getter, who chatted with Mr. Halloway prior to his talk, was thrilled to hear herself mentioned in his remarks. “I’m never going to forget you A&E girl!” he said.

Physics teacher to present research on teaching

Dr. Nageswar Rao Chekuri has been invited to participate in the International Conference on Physics Education: Building Careers with Physics, which will take place in Marrakech, Morocco, from November 11-16, 2007. This conference is hosted by the Cadi Ayyad University of Marrakech - in collaboration with the Tunisian Society of Optics, the Moroccan Society of Applied Physics and the Faculty of Sciences Semlalia. ICPE2007 is supported by the International Commission on Physics Education of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics.

The conference will bring together physicists, physics educators, physics education researchers and curriculum developers from around the world to share and debate their findings and experiences in the teaching-learning process in physics. It aims to provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences about building careers with physics and enriching the professional skills of the graduates, as well as about improving curriculum. Dr. Chekuri’s presentation is entitled “Student Reasoning on the Temperature Dependence of Buoyant Force: Pre and Post Experiment.”

Faculty earns AIA grant

Interior architecture faculty member Joshua Stein earned a cash award from the 2007 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Research Grant program to pursue his research on “Reactive VOID: Socializing Space through Responsive Technology.” The research explores the use of technology to create interactive spaces. Woodbury’s Faculty Association supported the initial phase of this project through a development award. Stein hopes to present his findings at the 2008 AIA National Convention in Boston.

UMMM-Movie

Professor, alumni contribute to The Simpsons Movie success

The high-grossing and grossly entertaining The Simpsons Movie has a Woodbury hand in it (or three). Faculty member Eddie Rosas served as character layout artist, while Ross Blocher (2004) worked on visual effects, scene planning, and compositing, and Carlos Lutterbach (2006), worked on character layout. Rosas, who has been a long-time animator on the The Simpsons television show, took a year off from his Woodbury duties to work on the feature film. He still found time to help seniors with their final projects. Dane Romley (2004) also works in character layout for The Simpsons television show.
Destination China, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Korea

Woodbury architecture students again traveled the globe to apply ideas they have learned about urbanism in Los Angeles to myriad other locations worldwide. Led by Woodbury architecture faculty, they were also accompanied by Dr. Doug Cremer.

Dr. Cremer has been teaching the architecture students political and urban history in Spain, China, and Germany. Arriving in Paris, Dr. Cremer noted: “This city presents challenges unlike Barcelona or Nanjing for many of the students: issues of politics, memory, design and power are of a completely different scale. Yet they have the insights and skills to move to this next level of complexity and produce some great insight.”

President Nielsen, who joined students for their final presentations and celebrations in Berlin noted the quality of their work and the growth of the students.

Business students spent part of May in China, while humanities students enjoyed a month-long residency in Rome, and communication majors studied in Korea.

Frank Lloyd Wright expert to present in Italy

On the occasion of an exhibition about Frank Lloyd Wright, which is scheduled from September 29 to October 28, sponsored by the Associazione Amici di Frank Lloyd Wright, faculty member Carol Bishop has been asked to present her photographic work and lecture in Volterra, Italy. Only three Americans have been invited as speakers, Wright’s grandson, Professor Bishop and one other scholar. As the only American artist, her work is intended to “create a visual dialogue expanding on the ideas covered in lectures and texts.”

Travilla the subject at sold-out event


Her presentation was part of a two-part program tracing the emergence of the professional costume designer in film by highlighting this unique art form from the early silent films to the zenith of the studio system with a special emphasis on the contributions of Woodbury alumnus William Travilla. Original Travilla sketches (like the one of Marilyn Monroe’s halter dress for Seven Year Itch, on the left) and costumes accompanied the lecture.
WU students compete at SIGGRAPH 2007

Three Woodbury animation students – Nick Bane, William Moran, and Blake Penido – competed in early August against other three-person teams of CG (computer graphic) animators in the first international FJORG! – an iron-animator event was held at this year’s SIGGRAPH 2007.

The Woodbury students had 32 hours to create an animation based on a theme presented at the event, using only the tools and assets provided by FJORG! Their goal was to resist the distractions and meet the deadline for creating the best character-driven animation the world has ever seen. In return for their efforts, the Woodbury students earned attention of recruiters and talent from the top studios in computer graphics, feature films, animation, and game production.

You can see their work ePray at the SIGGRAPH website.

Smulevich to keynote ELEA

Gerard Smulevich, associate professor in the School of Architecture, has been invited to be a keynote speaker at the XXIV ELEA conference in San Salvador. His presentation will be October 11 at the El Salvador International Convention Center. ELEA is a nine day-long student conference that is held every year in a different country and attended by 1,500 to 2,000 students of architecture from the Caribbean region, including Colombia, Venezuela, all of Central America and Mexico, and including the U.S., Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Cuba. Each keynote session is attended by the entire conference and is a requirement for all student participants.

Students undertake labor of love to save ancient water system

This summer Woodbury Architecture teamed with Estevan Arellano, the caretaker of the Acequia Junta y Ciénaga, a thousand year old irrigation system which is an important landmark in the history of ecology. Arellano still lives on part of the Embudo Land Grant, deeded to his ancestors in 1725. Architects Peter and Hadley Arnold from Woodbury designed a mini-course and brought 10 students to map, measure, and photograph the acequia, learn about it, and record their observations. At the end of the students’ study, Arellano invited planners, sociologists, water commissioners, and Sandia Labs computer modelling experts to join the Woodbury students and the community members.

“The project is significant because it will serve as a pilot to a larger documentation project sponsored by the New Mexico Acequia Association in preparation for the nomination of the acequias of the upper Rio Grande as UNESCO World Heritage sites and other similar designations as historic and cultural resources,” said José Rivera, a professor at UNM and member of the Acequia Documentation Working Group.

Brief Bits

Emerging Artist Recognized
The outstanding first-year architecture student Armen Tutundzhyan is also a gifted painter. This summer ten of his paintings were exhibited at Lurie Gallery in Studio City at an event showcasing the work of emerging Armenian artists.

Delegation Briefed
Sebastian Zacharia, Director of International Programs at Woodbury, flew to Wisconsin to brief a delegation from that state on global markets. The delegation, led by Governor James Doyle, will visit Japan and China to assess possible business ties between those countries and the state.

Woodbury at SENCER 2007
Faculty members Eugene Allevato, Marty Tippens, Christine Carmichael, and Rao Chekuri were selected to participate in the SENCER 2007 summer school held in Portland, Maine, earlier this month. Poster sessions and presentations made by Eugene Allevato and Marty Tippens were well received by the other participating universities.

GMU crowd hears WU Faculty
Barbara Bowley was an invited panelist on June 23 at Mason Hall Conference Center on George Mason University. The conference was “Presidential Accountability.” Bowley, an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Information Literacy, is an expert on the political uses of language and recently contributed to a book on the subject.
Maverick SD architect/developers shake things up and win recognition

According to San Diego CityBeat, “A generation ago, architects didn’t bother with the dirtier side of building—the dusty construction phase or the even muddier waters of finance.” For Woodbury faculty Ted Smith, Jonathan Segal, Sebastian Mariscal and Lloyd Russell, the architect needed to take on the developer role, so they started financing, designing and building projects themselves.

“The foursome just wrapped up the second year of teaching a master’s program in real-estate development at Woodbury University, and architects all over are already competing for a seat in next year’s class, hoping to gain insight or, as Russell half-jokingly calls it, ‘The Force.’ And the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) has invited the men to share their real-estate knowledge with interested audiences across the country,” reported the paper.

All four have been making a name for themselves locally, which has brought attention to Woodbury’s first-in-the-country M. Arch. program in real estate development.

Schultz book in the works

Hot from the success of his book on technology and ethics, Professor Bob Schultz will tackle a work on another aspect of the implications of technological advance. Titled The Ethics of Globalization, this new book will examine the coalescence of the economies and cultures enabled by Information Technology.

The book will argue that by altering previous economic and social structures, globalization raises new ethical concerns for managers, IT professionals, and the rest of us. According to Schultz, nations need to formulate new social contracts that allow globalized economic development using IT to proceed in a way that does not violate the principles of justice. Previous discussions of global responsibility have not taken into account the power of the internet to connect and change the cultures of other countries.

Dr. Schultz also presented a paper at the Information Resource Managers Association’s annual conference in Vancouver, B.C. this past May, entitled “Trust Issues in Supply Chain Management.”

Accountants honored

Accounting students Alisa Oganesyan and Zhulet Tsarukyan, along with accounting professor and retiring chair Jon Myers, received honors from the Association of Government Accountants and the California Society of CPAs, Los Angeles.

Oganesyan received an award from the Association of Government Accountants as an outstanding student interested in government service upon graduation. Tsarukyan received an award June 8 from the California Society of CPAs, Los Angeles, for outstanding scholarship and service. At the same meeting, Jon Myers was honored for 40 years as a member of the California Society of CPAs.

Young Architect of the Year

Lloyd Russell, who is a frequent collaborator with Ted Smith, was honored last year for R3 Triangle building. This year the San Diego AIA named him Young Architect of the Year. The Young Architect of the Year Awards program, fondly known as the YAYA, was created to encourage renewal within the architectural community by recognizing and promoting the next generation of architects responsible for shaping the future of our built environment.

Segal Wins at AIA Local and National

The San Diego AIA recognized Segal’s The Union with an Honor Award for in the Mixed Use category. He also received a merit award in the residential category for K Lofts, a nine unit complex in the Golden Hill section of San Diego. Segal reported that he undertook The Union — his Honor award-winning project — as something of an experi-
SD Architecture faculty traces musical and architectural history of Tijuana

Rene Peralta, San Diego architecture faculty member and co-author of Here is Tijuana is working on a trilogy of films about architecture and culture with director Les Bernstein.

The first film of the trilogy focuses on Tijuana. Called Tijuana Moods, the documentary will chronicle the urban development of Tijuana’s traditional downtown center during the era of early and late Jazz styles of music. Through a series of interviews of musicians still living, a retracing of urban memory is interplayed alongside images and actual footage of the urban areas.

Oral histories play an important role in the shaping of the visual journey of the film through cabarets, bars, cafés and other urban zones of downtown Tijuana as remembered and as they currently exist.

Tijuana Moods intends to reposition historically the cultural and urban developments that began to shape a consciousness of modernity by way of its relevant movements such as jazz, urban and architectural modernism and a sense of utopia as felt throughout the modernization of the US/Mexico Border.

The next two films will focus on similar developments in Las Vegas and Habana, all of which evolved from the same roots and had the same architects and musicians involved in their casino/resort/night club evolution. Work on the first project on Tijuana can be seen at Youtube.com under “Tijuana Moods, case study #1.”

Rene Peralta has been invited to present his work on Tijuana at the Hong Kong Shenzhen Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism 2007. The biennale’s theme is Re-fabricating City and looks at realized works, unrealized or to-be-realized projects, original explorations, or other creative ventures that elaborate and contribute to the theme of fabrication and re-fabrication of the city.

Woodbury team lauded at summer higher education academy

A recent week-long workshop and conference in New Mexico, known as the Summer Academy of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, collected teams of faculty, students, staff, and administrators from around the country to share ideas about improving student education. Among the bullet-points in its final report on takeaways for the week, Morgan State University, a Baltimore institution founded in 1867 and having over 6000 students, wrote “Woodbury University – inspirational!”

Part of a project that links universities across the country working on new ways to improve education, Woodbury was invited to send a team to help lead discussions about our approach to integrating the curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. The team was praised for the university’s work on creating integration. They were also praised for creating “affinity groups”—separate but linked learning communities of faculty, staff, and students – to discuss and propose innovations in learning that transcend the classroom.

The conference staff and participants encouraged the Woodbury team to publish on their “affinity-group” learning community model and on the holistic approach to education. Team members were Phyllis Cremer, Associate Vice President of Student Development; Douglas Cremer, Director of the Institute of Transdisciplinarity Studies; Paul Decker, Executive Director of the Institute for Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Vic Liptak, Associate Professor of Architecture and Dean of the Faculty; Ani Okkasian, President, Associated Student Government.

Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Troy Williams (Tijuana, 1966) were all part of the scene described in a trilogy of movies on Tijuana, Habana, and Las Vegas by Woodbury architect and documentarian.

Morgan State University

1) Developed BEAMS Initiative, "Morgan Cares"
   - Re-engaged our commitment: interaction of consultants + other teams
   - "Interaction of Consultants + other Teams"

2) Woodbury University - inspirational!
   - Organized "Morgan Cares" program director + distribute
   - Brief UP’s on Summer Academy
   - Plan first "Morgan Cares" event