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National DiscoverDesign Competition Yields Three Top Winners

Chicago Architecture Foundation Competition draws nearly 250 Entries Nationwide

CHICAGO — The Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) is continuing to awaken the inner architect in young people. CAF is pleased to announce the student winners of the 2016 National DiscoverDesign Competition. The competition invited youth from classrooms all over the United States to design an affordable housing prototype for a local town, city or location of their choice. There was an overall total of 250 registrations. At the close of the competition 150 completed entries were submitted representing 30 schools from 12 states. The five competition jurors deliberated and decided on the top 10 finalists, awarding two first place winners with an all-expense paid trip to Chicago for two with hotel accommodations provided by The Blackstone, A Renaissance Hotel. A second place winner will receive a $250 CAF Shop Gift Certificate to be used either in-store or online at the CAF Shop and Tour Center located 224 S. Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago. The third place winner receives a $100 CAF Shop certificate. The top four winners represent Atlanta, Chicago and Las Vegas.

"Since its inception the National DiscoverDesign Competition has served as a catalyst for surfacing innovative ideas from students all across the country," said Gabrielle Lyon, Vice President of Education and Experience of CAF. "The competition challenges youth to apply math and science skills, research and empathy to solve problems using the design process. The problems they solve are real ones - and the diversity of participants and solutions are a great reflection of the talent of young people from across America. "

CAF's National DiscoverDesign Competition is in its fourth year. This is the first year the competition was launched on the newly redesigned DiscoverDesgn.org website offering a more user—friendly experience for the entrants. This year's participants had to identify a specific audience in need of affordable housing (families, elderly, etc.). The design had to make sense in context with other buildings in the area and show evidence of their data. Jurors of the competition based their final decisions on the originality of the final designs; a completed National DiscoverDesign Competition design challenge showcasing creative use of the design process; a completed submission on the competition registration page; high quality images, sketches, drawings and models; and finally well-written, effective short answer essays that responded to given prompts. There were many great entries and jurors decided on the top ten.

"The competition presented a unique opportunity for students to take on the challenge of affordable housing. A subject, hard to define, but offering endless possibilities depending on economic outcome," said Kerl Lejeune, Discover Design Juror and Senior Design Manager, Public Building Commission of Chicago. "Attention to detail of materiality, site placement, energy efficiency and cost were some of the few areas of focus. The complexities of the designs showed us that design plays a crucial role in developing solutions that are aesthetically impactful and viable. The recognized entries for prizes represent and offer a testament to what Discovery Design aims to achieve in having opportunities for students to tackle real world problems with innovative and progressive solutions."

Meet the Top Four Winners

Denilson Saavedra 1st Place— Lindblom Math and Science Academy, Chicago, Illinois
Denilson created a model for the Douglas Park neighborhood in Chicago. The problem that Denilson sought to address with his model was the situation where demand for affordable housing options outweighs the supply of the units. After conducting research of his market, Denilson learned that home owners were paying less than 30% of their income on housing yet the neighboring community was in need of an affordable housing plan. After creating several sample designs, Denilson settled on a prototype model that would make housing affordable enough to encourage renters to buy.

Antonio Trejo 1st Place —Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada
Antonio entitled his project "Aurora" making reference to his objective of designing a model that provided ample natural lighting. Choosing the area near the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Antonio described the problem of the area as not having enough "attractive" affordable housing. Antonio conducted his research and determined the targeted demographic was UNLV students. In brainstorming his model, Antonio wanted to make his model not only attractive but also energy efficient providing an additional cost saving factor. The final model provided a solar roof, solar filmed windows, smooth stucco and several cost saving amenities.

Meejan Patal 2nd Place— Atlanta International School, Atlanta, Georgia
Meejan is a resident of Atlanta Georgia. After reading a news report by the Downtown Salt Lake City Alliance suggesting that the city lacked the necessary affordable housing for young and low-income workers, Meejan decided to go outside his local community and address this need. Meejan's affordable home model would be located near downtown, cutting cost on transportation into the city. In addition, the model is a designed space with an open concept for lots of family interactions and socials. Keeping the unit relatively small in size and using cost efficient furnishing aligns the home to the standards of affordable housing.

Andrew Shepherd 3rd Place — Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada
Andrew Shepherd calls his model the "Showboat Home" aiming to address the problem of attractive and affordable housing for low-income professionals. He chose the former site and home of the Showboat Casino, just a few miles from grocers, shops and the Downtown Art District. Shepherd using architect Alejancro Aravena and Designer Liz Ogbu to inspire his mid-modern architecture model. Andrew's design included passive cooling technologies, condensed rooms and a butterfly roof to maximize the natural light in the bedrooms and bathrooms. Finishing his model, Andrew designed a home that meets Nevada's low-income housing trust fund limits.

Finalists:
- **Carmen Bushorn** - Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada

- **Tavion Byrd** - Curie Metro High School and Chicago Architecture Foundation Teen FellowChicago, Illinois
- **Caden Franc** - Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada
- **Diego Samaniego** - Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada
- **Vincent Sangpo**- High School for Math, Science, and Engineering at City College, Brooklyn, New York
- **Haley Unthank** - Springside Chestnut Hill Academy, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

Competition Jurors:
Maya Bird-Murphy – Designer, Valerio Dewalt Train Associates
Nancy Firfer – Senior Advisor, Metropolitan Planning Council
Kerl Lejeune Senior Design Manager –Public Building Commission of Chicago
Adam Rosa – Principal, Camiros
Douglas A. Smith – Managing Principal**,** Perkins+Will

About the Chicago Architecture Foundation

The Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. As an education leader in architecture and design, CAF offers tours, programs, exhibitions, field trips, curricula and online tools that are part of a dynamic learning journey for all ages. Proceeds from CAF's tours and store, as well as grants, sponsorships and donations, support this educational mission.

About Discover Design

DiscoverDesign.org is a web-based learning tool that connects teens to an online community of peers, educators and design professionals around the world. The site also functions as the platform for CAF's annual national high school architecture competition. The site redesign coincides with this year's competition; design an affordable housing prototype for your city utilizing big data.

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