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CCNY Architecture Students Honor Brick Through Competition

Students to apply venerable materials for modern designs in contest sponsored by masonry contractors and bricklayers union

"It is important that you honor the material that you use," architect Louis Kahn said in a 1971 talk to students at the University of Pennsylvania. Third-year students in City College's Spitzer School of Architecture this semester will honor brick, the material Kahn used to make his point.

The students will take part in an innovative competition sponsored by the Associated Brick Mason Contractors of Greater New York, Inc. and the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Local 1.

Working in teams of two, some 50 undergraduate students in the third-year class will participate in a four-week project to design a meditation space for an open area adjacent to the French Evangelical Church, which is located on W. 16th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues in Manhattan.

The five best designs will earn prizes of \$2,000 and be exhibited in the Spitzer School's Atrium Gallery.

On the afternoon of February 6, the program will go beyond the drawing board when the students visit the Bricklayers' Training Center for "hands-on" construction experience. The center is located at 12-07 44th Avenue, in Long Island City.

"The visit will give our students an opportunity to appreciate what they draw in two-dimensions by realizing it in three-dimensions," said Professor of Architecture Christian Volkmann, who coordinates the third-year studio. "The competition is also an opportunity to make connections between the planning and building disciplines, which is very advantageous to our students' development."

"As building materials, brick and masonry are well suited to urban areas like New York because they fit in well, contextually, with existing buildings," explained Brian Blesi, executive director of the Associated Brick Mason Contractors of Greater New York, Inc. "By having an opportunity to be creative with them, we hope that Spitzer School of Architecture students will come to appreciate their application to modern design."

About The City College of New York

Since 1847, The City College of New York has provided low-cost, high-quality education for New Yorkers in a wide variety of disciplines. More than 16,000 students pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees in: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture; the School of Education; the Grove School of Engineering; the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education, and the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership. U.S. News, Princeton Review and Forbes all rank City College among the best colleges and universities in the United States. For additional information, visit www.ccnycunyu.edu.

About the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture

The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at The City College of New York is the only public school of architecture in New York City. It offers programs in Architecture, Urban Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, and has a student population of approximately 350. Its emphasis on the urban situation as a generator of ideas about the appropriateness of programs and forms in the city landscape is one of the school's most original aspects. Architecture studios currently pursue programs that are civic, institutional, residential, and commercial allowing the student an in-depth experience of these project types as they are projected into the urban landscape of New York City.

About the Associated Brick Mason Contractors of Greater New York, Inc.

The Associated Brick Mason Contractors of Greater New York, Inc., is one of the oldest associations of building contractors in the City of New York. Founded in 1926, the association is comprised of the major brick and masonry contractors in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, and surrounding areas. The association has represented most of the major brick and masonry subcontractors in the City of New York and employs between 1,750 and 2,500 people annually. Among its main objectives are maintaining the high standards of the unionized construction contracting business in New York, promoting safety and accident prevention programs and continuing the expansion of union masonry construction.

About the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 NY

Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 NY is dedicated to the craft of bricklaying, stone setting, stone tending, masonry restoration and plastering. The union represents more than 5,000 of the most talented masonry craft workers in New York City and Long Island. Their members are responsible for some of New York City's iconic structures, including Grand Central Station, the Chrysler Building, the Met Life Building, and the American Museum of Natural History, Lincoln Center, the Cloisters, the Frick and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as thousands of office, hospital, school and residential buildings.

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