



HMC News Release

Contact: Tracy Black (800) 350-9979

Three Cosumnes River College Students Mentored by HMC Architects Win the First Round of the US Green Building Council's 2008 Natural Design Competition

Winning designs by Alex Villalobos, Ming Yee Hsu, and Michael Lee, students of Cosumnes River College's popular architecture program, will participate in the national US Green Building Council competition in November

SACRAMENTO, Calif., October 2008—For several weeks last spring, Alex Villalobos, Ming Yee Hsu, and Michael Lee came to HMC Architects' Sacramento office every Friday to discuss their ideas for a smart growth community in Sacramento's historic railyard depot district.

Their designs ultimately won the first round of the US Green Building Council's Natural Design Competition, which challenged students to come up with innovative smart growth designs for a proposed high-density, mixed use section of Sacramento's historic railyard depot district, the largest urban infill site in the nation.

The US Green Building Council's Sacramento chapter selected the railyard for the competition because it provides the opportunity for smart growth on a scale never seen before in Sacramento. The council also felt that a successful plan for the district could serve as a template for the redevelopment of other industrial cities across the country.

"They didn't ask for much help," said Arturo Levenfeld, a senior designer from HMC's Sacramento office. "We worked with them as if they were researching a thesis. Our role was primarily to take their passion and guide it in the right direction. They had their own computers and their own architecture design programs. They pretty much knew what they wanted to do."

Having won the first round of competition, Villalobos, Hsu, and Lee will fly to Boston in November to participate in the US Green Building Council's GreenBuild Conference, where they will see how well their railyard designs stack up against smart growth designs

produced by students in other US Green Building Council-sponsored competitions across the country. The winning team in the national design competition will receive \$5,000, while the second place finisher will receive \$2,000.

"We are very proud of them," said John Ellis, an architecture professor at Cosumnes River College where Villalobos, Hsu, and Lee attend. He added that their success in the US Green Building Council competition helps raise the profile of Cosumnes River College, whose architecture program is in high demand and in great need of expansion. The college's architecture program, in fact, would be moved into a larger facility if voters in November approve Measure M, a general obligation bond intended to help Los Rios Community College District keep up with its expanding student base.

Villalobos, Hsu and Lee, meanwhile, are continuing to advance their education and careers. Villalobos has already found employment with a local architecture firm, while Hsu and Lee have transferred to UC Berkeley to continue their architecture studies. The three students made a lasting impression on HMC as well. Levenfeld is now an adjunct instructor of architecture at Cosumnes River College, his interest in teaching having been stimulated through his interaction with Villalobos, Hsu, and Lee.

Throughout its history, HMC Architects has established a reputation as an award-winning design firm and thought leader for education, healthcare, and government facilities. Founded in 1940, HMC is one of the most prominent planning and design firms with offices strategically located throughout the West. To learn more about HMC Architects or to arrange interviews with the firm's executive leadership, please contact Tracy Black at (800) 350-9979, or tracy.black@hmcarchitects.com and visit www.hmcarchitects.com.