Architecture: attracting the best and the brightest

PRINCETON, N.J.—Be prepared for stiff competition if you want to study architecture in the next few years, warns Roger Schluntz, Executive Director of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and co-editor of the Association's new official reference book, Architecture Schools in North America, to be published October 15 by ACSA and Peterson's Guides of Princeton, N.J.

The number of applicants to architecture schools has increased substantially in the past few years. "We had to turn away over 1500 applicants last year," reports George Hasslein, Dean of the School of Architecture and Environmental Design at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, one of the largest architecture schools in the nation.

"We're seeing a new kind of student — highly cerebral, very academically oriented, better in math than our math majors and better in English than our English majors," added Hasslein.

Part of the increase in high-caliber enrollment may be the result of a growing belief that an architecture education is excellent preparation for many fields besides architecture.

"Many people see architecture as a way to secure a solid liberal arts education—as a good foundation for law or business school, if they don't intend to get their professional degree," reports Joseph Bosserman, Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia.

Architecture Schools in North America reveal an increasing assortment of degree programs and a staggering array of special options now available to architecture students, which may help to explain the increased interest in the field.

Although the new wave of architecture students cannot regard an architecture degree as a ticket to instant wealth, the picture brightens with experience.

The average salary for senior draftsmen and designers is approximately $17,500, for job captains $19,000, for project managers $21,800, for project architects $27,500, and for architects working for the federal government at the GS 11-GS 13 levels, about $31,000.

Owners of architectural firms can earn from about $28,000 with a small firm to over $80,000 with a larger one.

A look at current special activities listed by the institutions in Architecture Schools in North America indicates the impact of current social issues including energy, cultural preservation, and the needs of the elderly and the handicapped.

For example, Arizona State University offers solar water heater workshops and has an environmental simulator. Hampton Institute's department of architecture is developing a joint program with the school's gerontology department; the Lawrence Institute of Technology has a center for architectural design for the handicapped;

The University of Arizona offers a special research project in ruins stabilization and adobe and the University of Houston has a university-wide Energy Institute as well as a Spacelab project in conjunction with NASA.

Established architects and those first considering the field will find something of interest in Schluntz's introductory section which covers career options available with an architecture degree, the satisfactions and frustrations of the field, basic skills needed by successful architects, how to tell if a program is right for you, and the licensing and registration of professionals.

The 268-page, 8½" x 11" paperback will be available in bookstores this month and may also be ordered from the publishers (Book Order Department, Peterson's Guides, P.O. Box 978, Edison, N.J. 08817) for $8.98 plus $1.25 postage and handling and applicable state taxes.

A companion volume, Life Experiences in Environmental Design, which features twenty-four interviews with students and recent architecture graduates is also available from the same address in paperback for $4. plus $1.25 postage and handling and applicable state taxes.

National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering

The Consortium, organized in 1976, is a joint effort of 22 accredited engineering schools and 17 major industry-research laboratories througnout the United States to increase the pool of minority engineers who wish to continue their studies beyond the baccalaureate and receive advanced degrees.

In this program, we identify capable minority engineering students and assist them in the pursuit of a master's degree by providing them with paid summer work experiences in a research environment and awarding them a graduate fellowship which pays tuition, fees and $4,000 stipend per academic year.

We are presently operating in our fourth fiscal year which began on October first, 1978. Each company-university belonging to the consortium selects a person to be on the board of directors of the consortium.

This representative to the board has full voting rights. All issues brought before the board for vote must receive a majority vote of each type of member institutions.

We hold a board of directors meeting each year in May at Notre Dame, Ind., in conformance with the by-laws. A seven-member executive committee has been established with the chairman of the board serving as chairman of the committee.

Along with the chair on the committee are three research centers and three university members, serving staggered one- to-three-year terms.

We are presently soliciting laboratories-industries to become members of the consortium, and our overall objective is to secure at least fifty such centers.

This number of laboratories is required to support our goal of producing 100 minority graduate engineers annually.

The annual fee for each industry is $15,000 per year, making it possible for us to support two new student participants each year.

Each laboratory industry, unless there are extenuating circumstances, makes a commitment of five years of support. Most laboratories have agreed to take two or more new students annually with the company bearing the cost of summer employment and travel to and from the work site. A student is expected to spend a minimum of two summers with the same employer.

We have also been attempting to solicit funds from sources other than members such as the Federal government, industry and foundations. We have been successful in securing a $450,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, said grant to be disbursed at $150,000 per annum over a three- year period.

Participants are usually chosen in their junior or senior undergraduate year. They are afforded summer employment at one of the member laboratories industries and their graduate school tuition is borne jointly by the consortium and the university.

We are programmed to support students an average of three graduate semesters. In fiscal 1977 we admitted thirty students; in fiscal year 1978, 51 students were admitted; and in fiscal year 1979, an additional 51 students were selected.

At the present time, the Consortium has had seven students complete the program and receive the master's degree; eleven will complete the program during the summer of 1980.

Twenty-seven are in their second semester of graduate study; and thirty-one students, who are presently in their senior year of undergraduate study, will enter graduate work during the fall of this year.

—Delaware

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seling, each student's performance is monitored. Each recruiter is asked to complete a confidential rating form.

This feedback evaluation is beneficial to recruiter, placement staff, and student. According to Mr. James Mims, director, "The feedback serves as a skill reinforcement and builds self-confidence for future interviews."

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Pilot program to teach technical drafting skills

Under the guidance of a pioneering civil rights movement leader, Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, a pilot program to teach drafting skills to minority - group members is under way at Gibbs and Hill, Inc., a New York engineering firm.

A dozen young men and women are enrolled in Energy Systems Drafting, a six - week course in which they will learn to draw technical details of power plants.

Eight weeks of on - the - job training will follow, when they will work with the firm's electrical, mechanical, structural and civil engineering design groups.

Four of the twelve students had been Gibbs and Hill employees in entry - level and clerical positions, such as mailroom messenger.

The other eight students, who went on the payroll the first day of class, were referred by Clark, Phipps, Clark, and Harris, Inc., an affirmative action consulting firm.

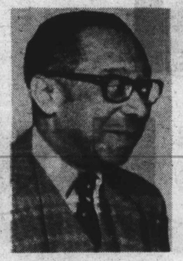
Dr. Clark, president of the New York consulting firm, made race relations studies in the 1950's which formed the basis for the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark school desegregation decision.

He has been a professor of psychology at City College, Columbia, Berkeley and Harvard, and is a member of the New York State Board of Regents.

The impetus of the unique training program came when Gibbs and Hill Vice President Frank D. Hutchinson happened to sit next to Dr. Clark on an airplane.

"As we got acquainted on our plane flight, we discussed the potential benefits of teaching deserving people drafting skills," Hutchinson said.

"He was tremendously impressed with the possibilities at Gibbs and Hill. Shortly thereafter, I asked our personnel and design departments to plan an in - house course. We've retained Dr. Clark's firm and arranged for the Private Industry Council to reimburse part of our costs from CETA funds.



Dr. Kenneth B. Clark

"I believe this is the first program of its kind," the Gibbs and Hill vice president stated. "As an international engineering and design firm, all we have to sell our clients are the services of our people.

"Despite the lowest employee turnover rate in the field, we need more quality people to keep pace with our growth. This experiment opens the door to an unlimited career path for these young people."

Dr. Clark said he is "privileged and happy to be a part of it, because all these I've met at Gibbs and Hill are truly concerned about helping people." He noted that his consulting firm will provide the students with personal and occupational counseling during the program.

Textbooks, drafting tables, reproduction equipment and supplies are provided to the students in a classroom set up for the pilot program at the company's Seventh Avenue headquarters.

Three senior drafters and designers are serving as instructors.

LEARNING THE ROPES—Carol Chaderton of N.Y. discusses Energy Systems Drafting course with Frank D. Hutchinson of Gibbs & Hill engineering firm. Domingo Velazques is hard at work in the background.

Under their supervision eight hours a day, the students will acquire the skills they need to join the teams of Gibbs and Hill designers and drafters at drawing boards to work on clients' projects totaling more than 10 billion dollars in constructed cost.

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