

For Immediate Release

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**Nine California Community College Students Awarded
Chester and Diana Widom Architectural Education Scholarships**

Scholarship supports promising and accomplished students advance their architectural education

(Thursday, June 5, 2025. Sacramento, CA.) The California Architectural Foundation (CAF) and American Institute of Architects California are honored to announce the recipients of Chester and Diana Widom Architectural Education Scholarships (Widom Scholarship).

Nine community college students transferring to four-year institutions have been awarded—each student receiving up to \$5000 to help offset the costs of higher education in architecture and design. A total of \$24,000 in awards were allocated this year.

“As a profession, it is our responsibility to support and mentor next-generation architects,” said Michael P. Porter, AIA, President, California Architectural Foundation. “We are grateful to Chester and Diana Widom for establishing this scholarship.”

“The most important act I have done as an architect, remains my most simple—to teach and mentor students of architecture,” said Chester “Chet” Widom, FAIA, whose accomplishments include California State Architect 2012 – 2018 and Founding Principal, WWCOT. “I am impressed by the recipients of this year’s scholarship awards and wish them the best as they pursue further studies.”

2025 Chester and Diana Widom Architectural Education Scholarship Recipients:

\$5000 Level Recipients

Jorge L. Reyes – East Los Angeles College

A leader and a fixture in East Los Angeles College’s architectural program, Jorge is driven to participate in outside programs as well, leading the team participating in the Cal Poly SLO Design Village Competition, and selected by ELAC faculty to represent the department at Woodbury University’s Platform event in 2023, A ‘non-conventional’ student who returned to school after thirteen years in another profession, Reyes aspires “to contribute to projects that address housing insecurity, such as affordable housing and community-focused developments,” and a belief in “providing, safe, dignified spaces for all.”

Jury Notes: A non-traditional student, his maturity is incredible, and his sacrifice to make such a huge career change is commendable. He transcends the design side into the technology side; He will understand all parts of architecture.

Arlan “Elijah” Tiglao - Cosumnes River College

The president of the Architecture Student Association for his school and an Instructional

Assistant/Tutor for the 2024/2025 school year, Tiglao is not satisfied with excelling for himself: instead he promoted transfer campus tours and created transfer guides for his peers, and supported high school students. He has already immersed himself in practice--part-time during the year, full-time during breaks. "Everything I have accomplished stems from my passion for architecture," he says. "I'd like to be a driving force behind urban revitalization and bring a sense of urban well-being to my community."

Jury Notes: He combines a strong portfolio of work with internship experience—he worked at an architecture firm while at school, kudos! His college contributions as an instructional assistant and transfer advisor, and his volunteer mentoring with CREATE are notable.

\$2000 Level Recipients

Robert Avanesyan – Glendale Community College

Avanesyan chose to pursue architecture because "it is such a deep-rooted subject that is not just about designing buildings but solving real-world issues."

Jury Notes: Robert is a successful student with an architecture excellence award from his high school and a portfolio showing development of design thinking. He has professional experience drafting, works as a student instructor in the architecture program at GCC, and is engaged in co-curricular activities, including school events and student competitions.

Michael Brentlinger – El Camino College

"I always wish I could have spent more time on my floor plans or my renders," said Brentlinger in his submission as a way of describing his passion for architecture and the drive it catalyzes in him for excellence.

Jury Notes: Michael is an especially strong in his academic preparation, which includes student design awards, and in professional experience through internships and freelance work.

Andrea Factor - El Camino College

The winner of the Cal Poly SLO Design Competition in 2024, believes "architecture is the bridge between nature and humanity that brings the community together, ultimately helping each other out."

Jury Notes: She demonstrates sustained achievements in creative endeavors, and a submission that has sophistication. She has a promising future as an architecture student and architect. It was really powerful to see a student with such a great level of detail.

Ryan Hoo – Pasadena City College

Adept at navigating challenges through constructive collaboration with professors and peers, Hoo is impassioned by process; "the hours of reworking, refining, and reimagining an idea from scratch."

Jury Notes: Ryan's record of achievement, including receipt of a 2 x 8 ACLA award shows that

he is a strong student. His design approach is very creative and he exhibits characteristics we look for in the profession.

Nicola Ogdock – College of the Canyons

“Ultimately, I want to use architecture as a tool that can aid marginalized groups while creating sustainable public spaces that foster empathy and community,” said Ogdock of her goals including the prioritizing of ADA and access.

Jury Notes: Her record of achievements is impressive with volunteer leadership in AIAS, NOMAS and other organizations, and a portfolio that conveys her conceptual understanding of design, the purpose of her academic assignments and versatility in the use of various media. Her interest in focusing her career on the creation of accessible urban places is notable.

Jose Ubaldo – Glendale Community College

As deeply committed to education, as he is to architecture, Ubaldo’s experiences as a child instilled in him “a profound appreciation for the shelter and security a well-designed home provides.” He has balanced full-time employment, on campus activities such as secretary of the Architecture Club and personal responsibilities, while maintaining a GPA of 4.0 at Glendale Community College.

Jury Notes: With a submission that reveals his interest in exploring expressive dimensions of architecture, his story is one of persistence and overcoming challenges to a clear path to becoming an architect.

Adam Whitman – Santa Monica College

Whitman’s long-term goal in architecture “is to contribute to the redesign and evolution of forgotten spaces—buildings that hold memories of the past but have been neglected by time.”

Jury Notes: Skilled at explaining the basis of his design thinking. With more than a year of internship experience at a firm and his role as a leading member of the team that received an award in a national NOMA competition—an extremely competitive competition—he is on a path for success.

The 2025 **Widom Scholarship Jury** was composed of Ginger Thompson, AIA; Christine Theodoropoulos, AIA; Heather Reeves; Paul Welch, Hon. AIA; Michael Hamner, FAIA; Scott Callihan.

About The California Architectural Foundation

The California Architectural Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting excellence in architecture through scholarships, grants, and educational programs—bridging the gap between the academic and professional worlds. CAF exists to provide a mechanism for members of the AIA and the general public to contribute to an organization with a great benefit to society.

