

CALIFORNIA MASONRY DESIGN AWARDS

2026 STUDENT COMPETITION PROGRAM

Produced by



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SAVE THE DATE!

APRIL 30, 2026
IRVINE, CA



**CALIFORNIA
MASONRY**
SUMMIT
& EXPO
2026

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Presents the 2ND edition of the California Masonry Summit
& Expo, uniting our trade with the AEC Community!

Architecture &
Design

Sustainability
& Energy Efficiency

Building Materials
& Code

Technology
& Innovation

Produced by California Masonry Council, a division of MIA
Contact: info@CaliforniaMasonryCouncil.org

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DESIGN AWARDS

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CALIFORNIA MASONRY DESIGN AWARDS

STUDENT COMPETITION - 2026

The California Masonry Council (CMC) is pleased to announce the 1st Masonry Architecture Design Student Competition, taking place during the 2025-2026 academic year.

The program is intended to challenge undergraduate and graduate students, working individually or in teams, to explore a variety of design issues related to the use of masonry materials in design and construction. Concrete Block (CMU) or Brick (clay) must be used as a prominent material with special emphasis placed on innovation, resiliency, and sustainability.

The competition allows students to explore the many functional and aesthetic uses for Masonry Materials. Students will get a chance to research and learn about many features as: fire resistance, sustainable materials, thermal mass and energy efficiency, constructability, aesthetics and architectural features, durability, resilience, ballistic resistance, and low maintenance costs.

CMC highly encourages students to design with materials that are locally manufactured and locally sourced within CA.

Our competition is divided into 2 different categories:

1- Concrete Block (CMU)

2- Brick (clay products)

AWARDS

(brick & concrete block architecture)

The design jury will meet in April 2026 to select winning projects and honorable mentions. Winners will be notified of the competition results directly.

A list of winning projects will be posted on the CMC web site at www.californiamasonrycouncil.org.

Winning students will receive Sponsorship Cash Prizes totaling \$12,000 with distribution as follows:

Concrete Block Competition:

1st Place: Scholarship of **\$3,000**

2nd Place: Scholarship of **\$2,000**

3rd Place: Scholarship of **\$1,000**

Brick Competition:

1st Place: Scholarship of **\$3,000**

2nd Place: Scholarship of **\$2,000**

3rd Place: Scholarship of **\$1,000**

A selection of projects including winners will be part of an exhibition at the California Masonry Summit and Expo 2026 at Irvine, CA on April 30th, 2026. The exhibition will tour different architecture schools, and AIA offices including AIA Los Angeles, AIA Orange County, and others to be confirmed.

A limited number of honorable mentions may also be awarded at the jury's discretion.

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

(brick & concrete block architecture)

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Schedule:

January 16, 2026 - Registration Deadline (free registration)
March 20, 2026 - Submission Deadline
April 2026 - Winners Announced
April 30, 2026 - Award Ceremony at CMSE-26

Use of Masonry Materials:

Concrete Block (CMU) or Brick (clay) must be used as a prominent material, depending on the category you are participating. All masonry materials used shall be listed and available in the California Market. Materials that are not currently sold or distributed in CA will not be considered.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and computational design is permitted with the following considerations:

- AI usage in student submissions must ensure the students remain responsibly in control and continue to be accountable for all images and likenesses in their submissions.
- As a tool, AI is not a replacement for professional judgment or creativity. Regardless of the AI tools used, it remains the architecture student's responsibility to provide designs in conformance with academic integrity.

Students choosing to use AI as a tool must attribute this use in their design essay (abstract). Students are accountable for the originality, validity, and integrity of the content and designs of their submissions. In choosing to use AI tools, students are expected to do so responsibly and with a high standard of ethical conduct.

We encourage students to use AI as a tool for rendering, graphic interpretation, or modeling if desired, while keeping ownership of the creative process and the architect's role in design.

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COMPETITION GUIDELINES

(brick & concrete block architecture)

Eligibility and Registration:

To participate in this competition, students must comply with the following:

- All participants (individuals or teams) must be registered as a student in an Architecture (related) Program in the state of California for the 2025-2026 academic year. Proof of enrollment will be required for submittals. Guidance from your faculty professors is highly encouraged, please provide name of the professors involved.
- Participants can be an individual, or a team of maximum number of 5 individuals. Each participant will be limited to submit only one project.
- Registration is Free.** Please send an email to info@californiamasonrycouncil.org requesting a Registration Form.

Digital Submission Format

Submissions must be presented on three 22" x 28" (vertical) digital boards (posters) in High Resolution. All files will be required to be uploaded through a link that will be provided after registration.

Files are accepted in the following formats: PDF, JPEG, JPG, or PNG.

The names of student participants must NOT appear on the boards, or in the project title or project title file name(s).

Design Abstract

An abstract/essay, 500 words maximum, is required as part of the submission describing the most important concepts, highlights and features of the design project.

The names of student participants must NOT appear in the design essay. This abstract is included in the final upload Submission in a PDF format.

Building Code:

Refer to the International Building Code and local Building Codes. All proposals must be designed to meet requirements for accessibility; for guidelines, refer to the Americans with Disabilities Act and the principles of Universal Design.

PROJECT PROGRAM

(brick & concrete block architecture)

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HIGHER EDUCATION BUILDING FACILITY

Students will have the freedom to design a building in a higher education campus of their choosing within California.

A significant component of campus life that would enhance the student experience in a campus. It can be a replacement for an existing building, or a new building you consider to be necessary.

Any of the following types of buildings are valid:

Administration:

Administrative offices and board offices.

Student Life:

Student housing (dormitories), dining halls, and student centers.

Recreation and Arts:

Sports complexes, stadiums, performing arts centers, and gymnasiums.

Specialized Learning:

Laboratories, libraries, research and science facilities.

Community:

Museums, community centers, and other shared facilities open to the public.

Site Selection:

The site for the competition is the choice of the student(s). However, the site should be located in an existing campus, accessible by multiple modes of transportation such as public transportation, biking, or walking. Submissions will be required to explain the site selection, strategy, and access graphically or otherwise.

Category:

Students will choose a category between Concrete Block or Brick.

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SUBMITTAL DELIVERIES & SCOPE (brick & concrete block architecture)

The minimum scope of deliverables for this competition is Schematic Design, including the following, and not limited to any additional materials:

Site Plan (minimum 1)

Floor Plans (minimum 2)

Elevations (minimum 2)

Sections (minimum 1)

Conceptual Renderings and Sketches (minimum 2, interior and exterior)

Project Narrative or Description (500 words maximum) including material descriptions.

All deliverables must be contained in the three posters 22" x 28' from your Digital Submittal.

****All projects will be required to submit high-resolution original files/images for use in competition publications and exhibit materials. By uploading your files, you agree that the California Masonry Council (CMC) has the rights to use your images and materials in publications, website, social media, and in promotional and exhibition resources. CMC will attribute authorship of the winning design to you, your team. Additionally, you hereby warrant that the submission is original and that you are the author(s) of the submission.*

Contact us at info@californiamasonrycouncil.org and Katia.Rodriguez@californiamasonrycouncil.org for any questions.

GOOD LUCK!

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING STUDENT COMPETITION – 2026

Criteria for the judging of submissions will be based on the following scorecard sections and weights:

Scorecard

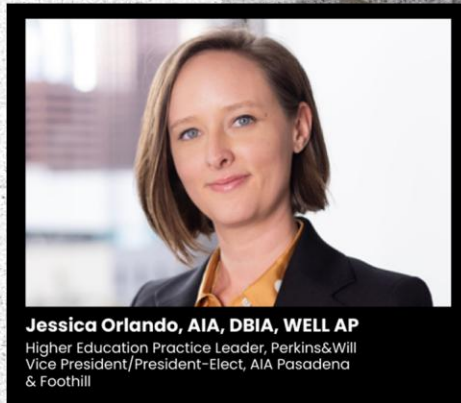
#	Criteria	Description	Weight
1	Design Aesthetics	Evaluates the overall architecture, visual appeal and design aesthetics, with an emphasis on masonry (brick & block).	15.0%
2	Material Selection and Usage	How effectively the masonry materials (brick & block) were selected, used, and integrated with other materials. Use of locally manufactured, locally sourced materials is encouraged.	15.0%
3	Functionality & Practicality	Practicality of the masonry design for its intended purpose.	5.0%
4	Craftsmanship/Detailing	Attention to detail in the design and execution of the block and brickwork.	10.0%
5	Technical Complexity	How technically complex is the masonry design.	10.0%
6	Innovation and Creativity	How innovative, thoughtful, and creative the use of (masonry) block and brick is.	10.0%
7	Integration with the Environment	How well the design fits into the surrounding environment.	5.0%
8	Positive Impact	How well the design impacts the user experience.	5.0%
10	Green Building & Sustainable Practices	How well does the building meet with Sustainable and Green Building Certification practices.	10.0%
11	Masonry Features and Advantages Considered	Fire resistance, thermal mass and energy efficiency, constructability, durability, resilience, ballistic resistance, and low maintenance costs.	15.0%

Total Scores: 100.0%

OUR JUDGES

STUDENT COMPETITION – 2026

The California Masonry Council (CMC) is honored to present the Jury for this competition, formed by exceptional professionals with outstanding backgrounds in both Architecture and Construction.



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The 2nd Masonry Summit & Expo in California, uniting our trade with the AEC Community is brought to you by:



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California Masonry Council (CMC)'s mission is to be a catalyst, advocate, and the best masonry resource in California.

Our organization promotes masonry as an essential design and building material while uniting our trade with the AEC community (architecture, engineering, and construction).

CMC is a non-profit organization.

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