

IRVINE, CA

CALIFORNIA MASONRY SUMMIT & EXPO

APRIL 30, 2026

Welcome!

www.CaliforniaMasonryCouncil.org



APRIL 30, 2026 @ IRVINE, CA

1st MASONRY ARCHITECTURE STUDENT'S DESIGN COMPETITION

**\$12,000
IN SCHOLARSHIPS**

Competition Sponsors:



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APRIL 30, 2026 @ IRVINE, CA

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We are honored to present the Jury for our 1st
Architecture Competition for Students in California.

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Honor Mention Concrete Block

Congratulations!

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FLIP
Honor Mention
Concrete Block
UC Berkeley

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FLIP

In 1873, a Catholic church was built but was mostly destroyed in a 1900 fire, leaving only its bell tower and some walls. This project represents a unique opportunity to transform an abandoned church into a community hub in Liverpool.

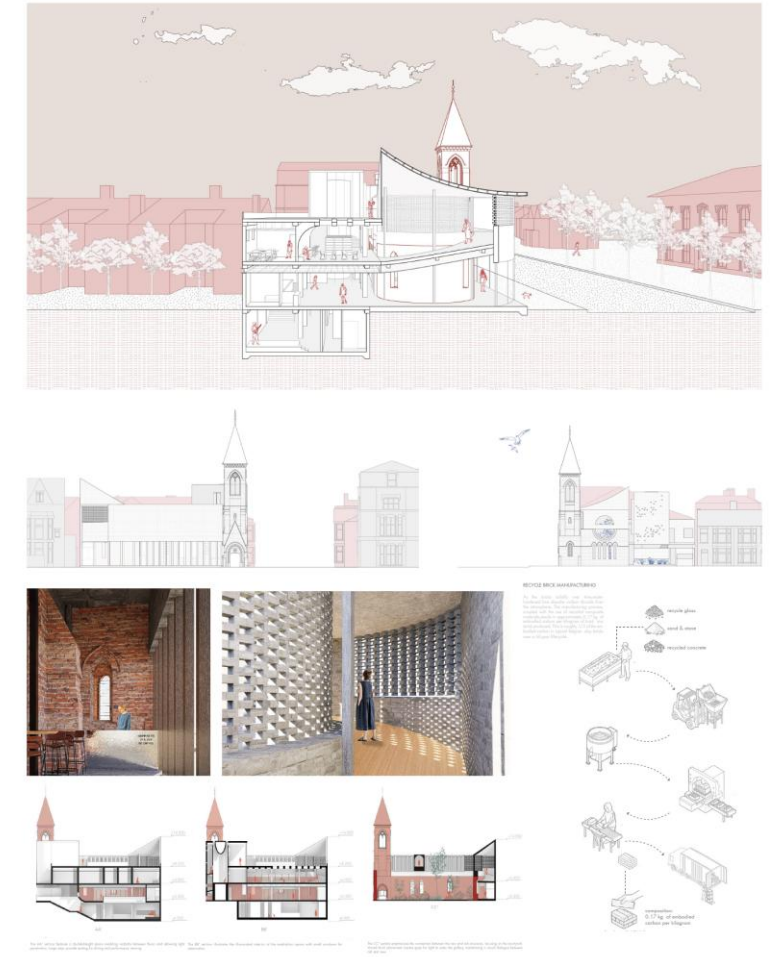
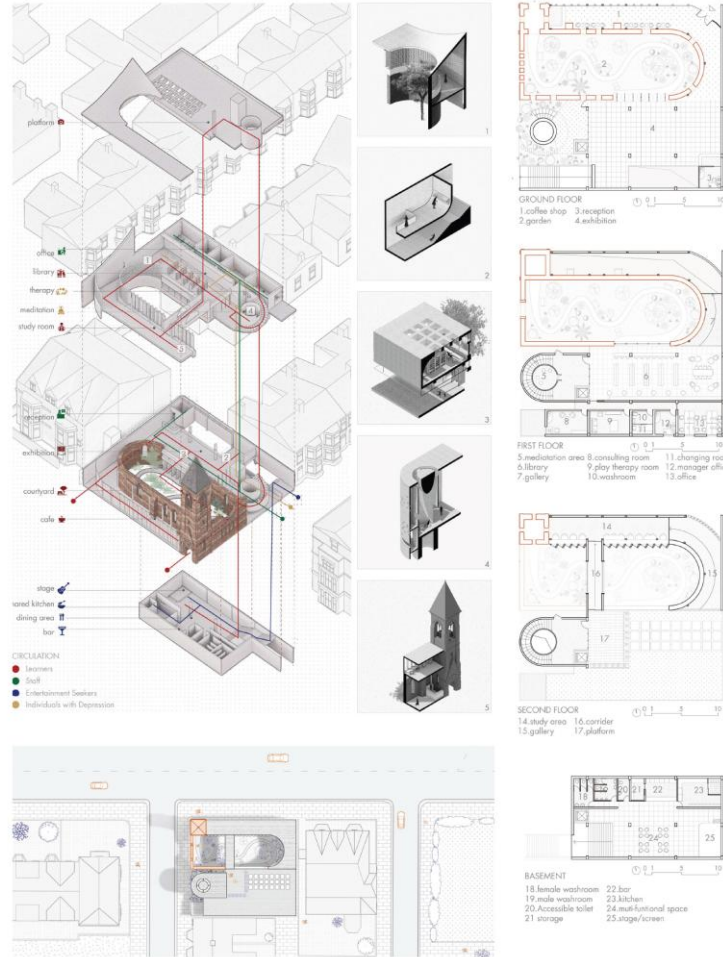
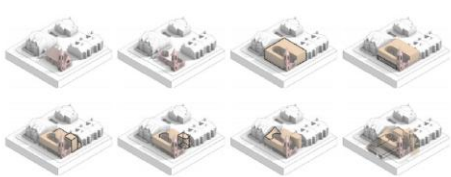
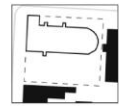
The site is largely surrounded by residential areas. According to research, twenty percent of people in this area grapple with profound psychological issues. So, the traditional church, as a place of refuge and spiritual healing, will help great relevance within the context of contemporary Liverpool.

Therefore, the restoration of this church is not merely about preserving its physical form; it is fundamentally centered on the reimagining of collective narratives while consciously providing individuals with a sacred refuge for spiritual solace.

Translating its interior into an courtyard, the original structure is now part of the local fabric, and exterior walls have become exterior. This change strategies on form the interior, creating a connection to the past but in present, dialogue with the future. The space, the old church remains the focal point, allowing the central garden to be viewed from multiple perspectives.

The project promotes sustainability by utilizing grey recycled bricks in its primary building material. Sourced from a nearby local brick factory and sorting center, these bricks are produced through a low-energy calcination and carbonation process rather than traditional high-temperature firing. The material achieves a remarkably low carbon footprint of approximately 0.17 kg of embodied carbon per kilogram, which is nearly equivalent to low-fired industrial clay bricks. Visually, the grey bricks create a sophisticated dialogue with the site's history.

The design flips the positive and negative spaces, turning interior church into exterior garden. The design philosophy involves natural memory, healing, and reflection. So, the community centre will be a reminder of the past, a critique of history and a place to find solace for the now.



Honor Mention Brick

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MARQUEZ CHARTER ELEMENTARY

Weaving Community with Earthen Threads

Honor Mention - Brick

Cal Poly Pomona

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MARQUEZ CHARTER ELEMENTARY

Honor Mention - Brick

MARQUEZ CHARTER ELEMENTARY

Weaving Community with Earthen Threads

The Palisades fire of January 2025 tore through the Palisades neighborhood in Los Angeles County, claiming 12 civilian lives and over 6,800 buildings, homes, and structures. Marquez Charter Elementary was one of them.

This project is a sustainable, radically accessible design for a new campus, where the community can heal and grow for years to come.

The design focuses on creating continuity throughout the site, leveraging walls of compressed earth blocks (unfired brick) as unifying elements, because of their capacity for both beauty and long-term safety.

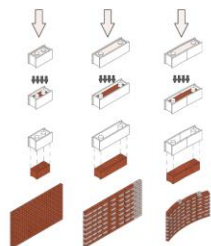


MATERIALITY/CONSTRUCTION

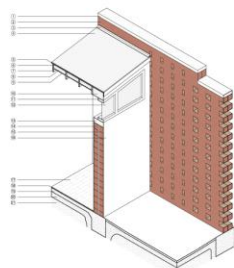
After comparing research across material types, we chose 8" x 16" x 8" Compressed Earth Blocks as our modular component for the design, as they were the best option between sustainability, structural stability, and fire resistance.

Production would be done by the Auram Press 3000 by DwellEarth equipped with a custom mold. Dirt from the site, and locally sourced clay and sand would be utilized.

Recycled concrete will act as a binding agent to further reduce carbon footprint, and maximize strength. The CEB blocks, as our base modules, now act as the origin and catalyst for the entire design, with the organizing geometry and spatial considerations emerging from the structural properties and dimensions of an individual block.



CEB Construction & Assembly Process Diagram



Construction Detail Axonometric

SITE RESEARCH

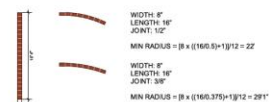
Our emphasis on continuity emerged from a careful examination of pre-existing conditions: the steep topography splits the site into 3 platforms, sloping 8-11 feet along their length, and dropping 13 feet between platforms.

This, in combination with the small student body and large square footage made the original campus feel fragmented, and necessitated separate circulation options for able-bodied vs. disabled students.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

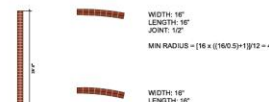
Utilizing the slenderness ratio of a CEB wall, maximum heights were determined and utilized to calculate the smallest possible radius for a circular arrangement of blocks. These circles, with tangents, allow us to create a series of ramps with enough length for 1:20, accessible slopes.

These ramps blend into the topography and serve as the single, ubiquitous circulation option for all users, solving the site's fragmentation. Programmatically, we maintained the previous campus's use of three distinct zones, with classrooms at the top, followed by shared amenities in the middle, and a kindergarten campus/play spaces at the bottom.

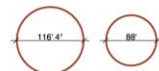


Base Geometry Diagram

RESULTING CIRCLE SIZES (NTS)



Parti/Circulation Diagram



Program Diagram

Structural/Geometric Calculations

DEVELOPED DESIGN



Site Plan & Section



Library Elevation



Upper-Grade Classrooms Elevation



Exterior Render



Interior Render



Auditorium Section



Kindergarten Section

SPATIAL EFFECT

Utilizing porosity within the walls as a strategy, as well as a natural material palette of wood and plaster for finishes and interior, we were able to lessen the spatial "heaviness" associated with block construction. This, in combination with varied roof types and strategic daylighting creates beautiful spaces for communal learning.



1/8"-1'0" Model Photo



1/32"-1'0" Model Photo

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3rd Place

Concrete Block

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THE IN-BETWEEN

3rd Place
Concrete Block
UC Berkeley

\$1,000
SCHOLARSHIP

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3RD PLACE
CONCRETE BLOCK CATEGORY

PROJECT: THE IN-BETWEEN

Lisa Zheng

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THE IN-BETWEEN

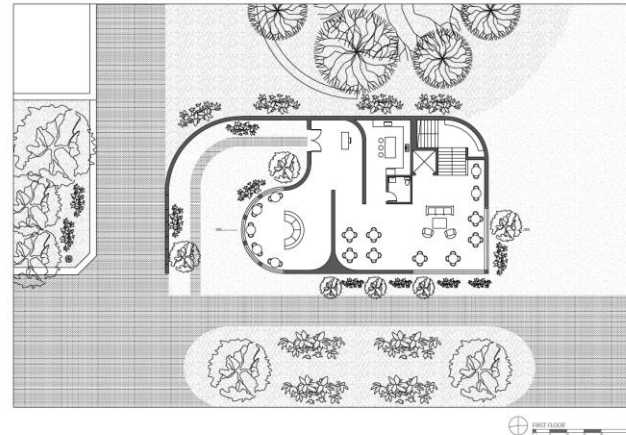
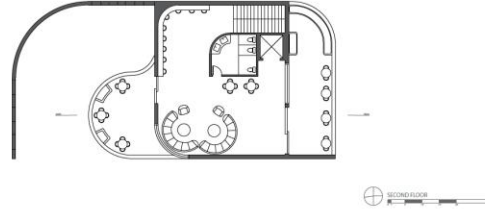
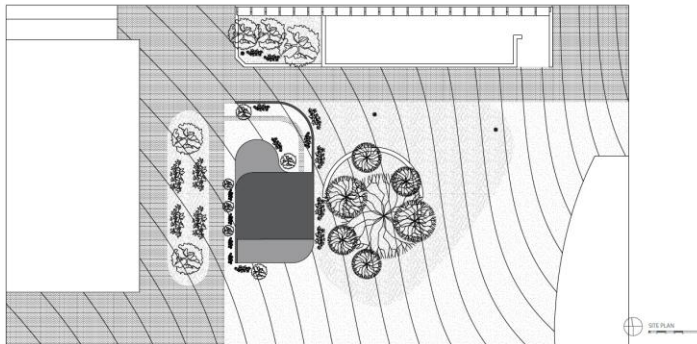
PROJECT DESCRIPTION-

At the University of California, Berkeley's College of Environmental Design, hard working students put in long hours meeting deadlines and creating the future built environment. These students need a comprehensive study space that goes beyond the normative hours of Bauer-Wurster Hall to accommodate their ongoing work. Our project, The In-Between, proposes a 24-hour lounge dedicated to undergraduate and graduate students for their idea development. Located south of the existing college, this site is optimal for both the sun path of the region and its proximity to the main building.

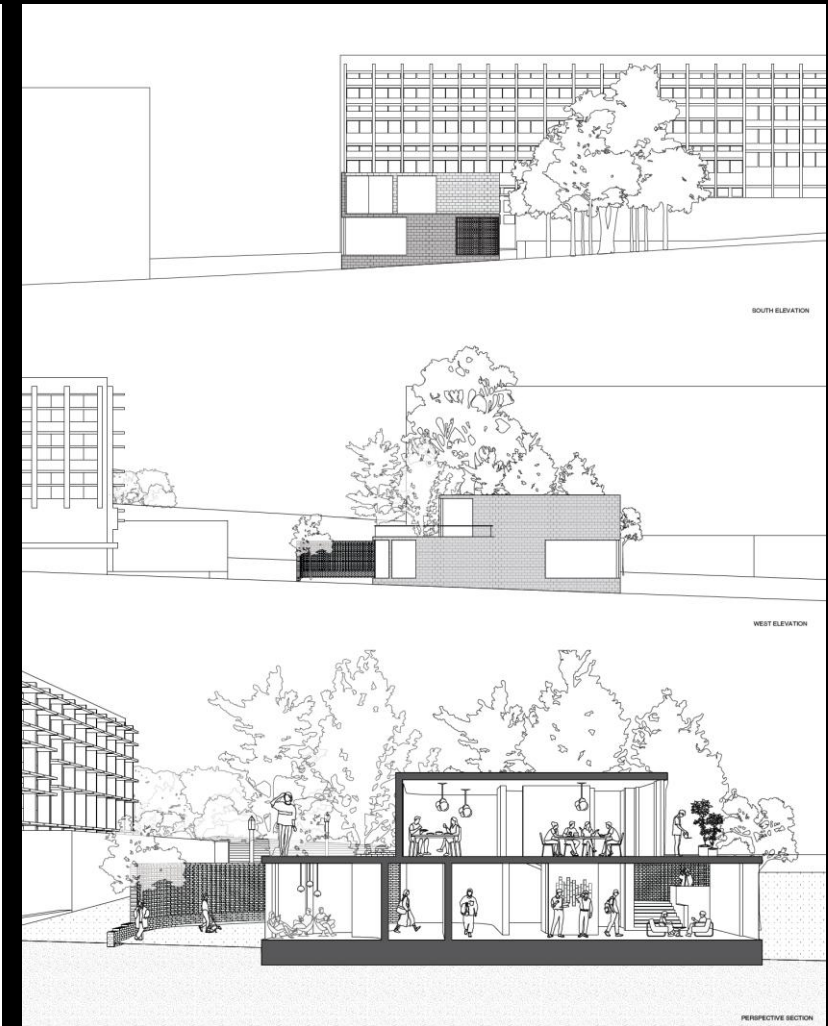
Organized as an open and cohesive space, it allows users to work both collaboratively and independently, accommodating a range of specific needs. This project emphasizes comfort, accessibility, and convenience that the existing college currently lacks.

Taking advantage of the sun path and orientation of our site, we explored different materials within the scope of masonry. Intrigued by the idea of a 'perforated facade', we created specific moments where the sun is able to shine through the holes of the brick wall, casting a diffused light throughout the space. This proposal integrates brick and glass, balancing the quality of light and thermal comfort present within the different pockets of working space. This is highly significant considering the insulation issues present within Bauer-Wurster Hall. These bricks are sourced from Pacific Clay Products, a local producer of masonry in Riverside County, CA. Its lighter appearance reflects sunlight, ensuring less heat absorption throughout the day. This acts as a natural cooling system, allowing for daylight to diffuse into the space through this 'perforated facade'. The use of brick and glass creates interesting visuals as the space is produced by juxtaposing material changes between transparent and solid. These contrasting visual conditions speak to the nature of the form as it creates moments that become private and public space for the users.

Designed as an annexed space to Bauer-Wurster Hall, this structure provides a comfortably lit lounge space that overlooks a pleasant view of the surrounding landscape and pedestrian traffic. The In-Between provides an alternative place that breaks away from the traditional work space, supporting a productive and welcoming environment for students.



3rd Place – Concrete Block



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2nd Place

Concrete Block

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BLOCK TO BREATHE

2nd Place
Concrete Block

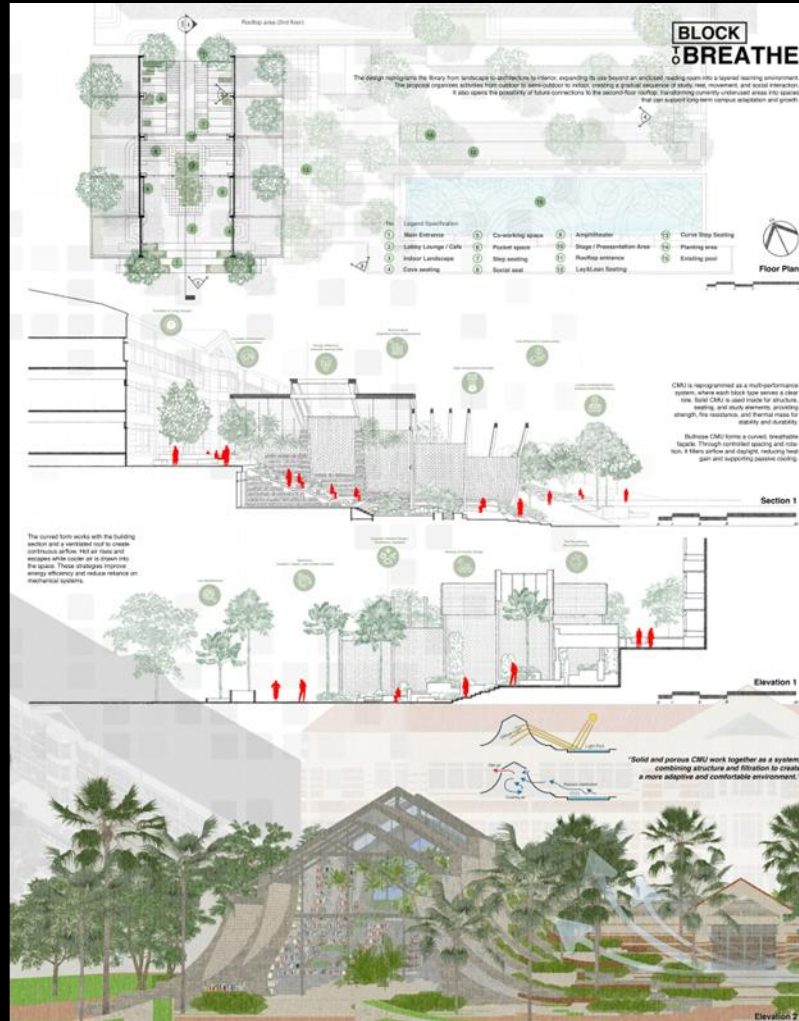
University of Southern California (USC)

\$2,000
SCHOLARSHIP

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1st Place

Concrete Block

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DOS MANTOS

1st Place
Concrete Block
College of the Canyons

\$3,000
SCHOLARSHIP

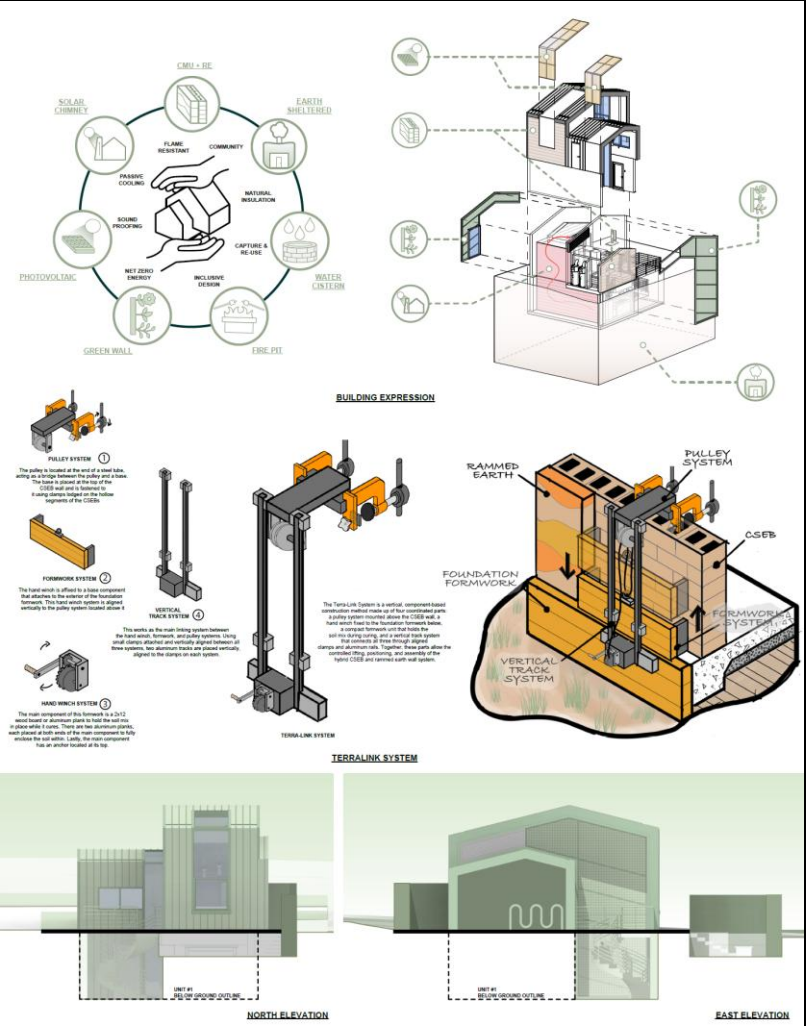
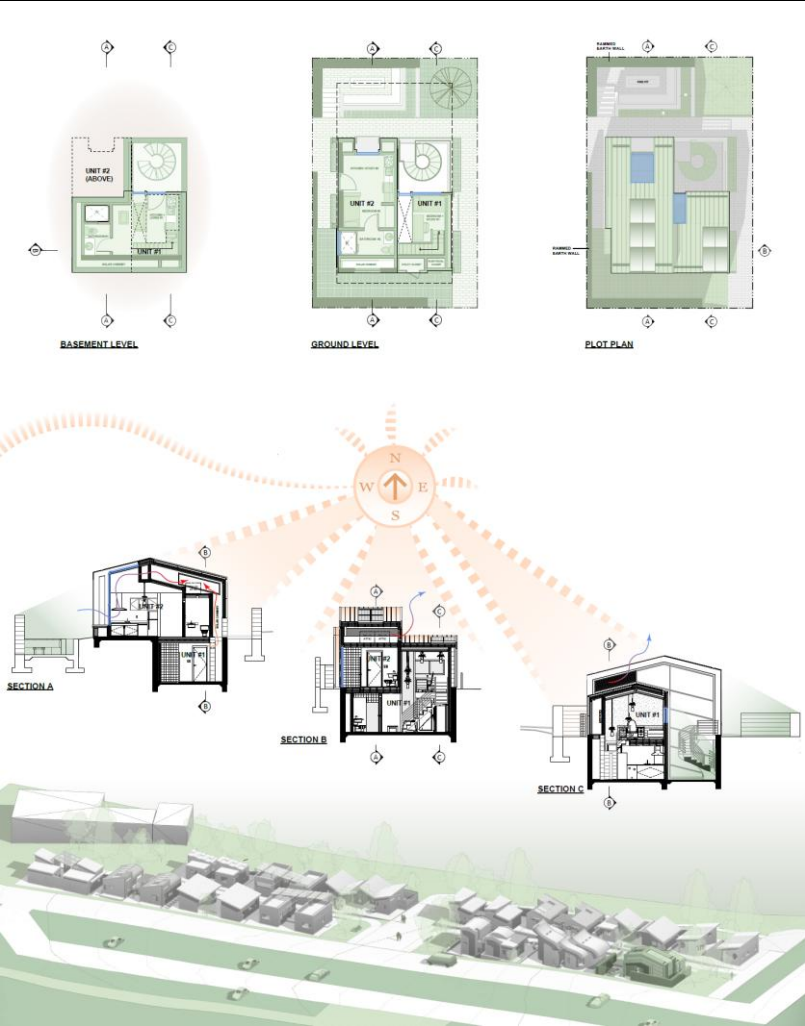
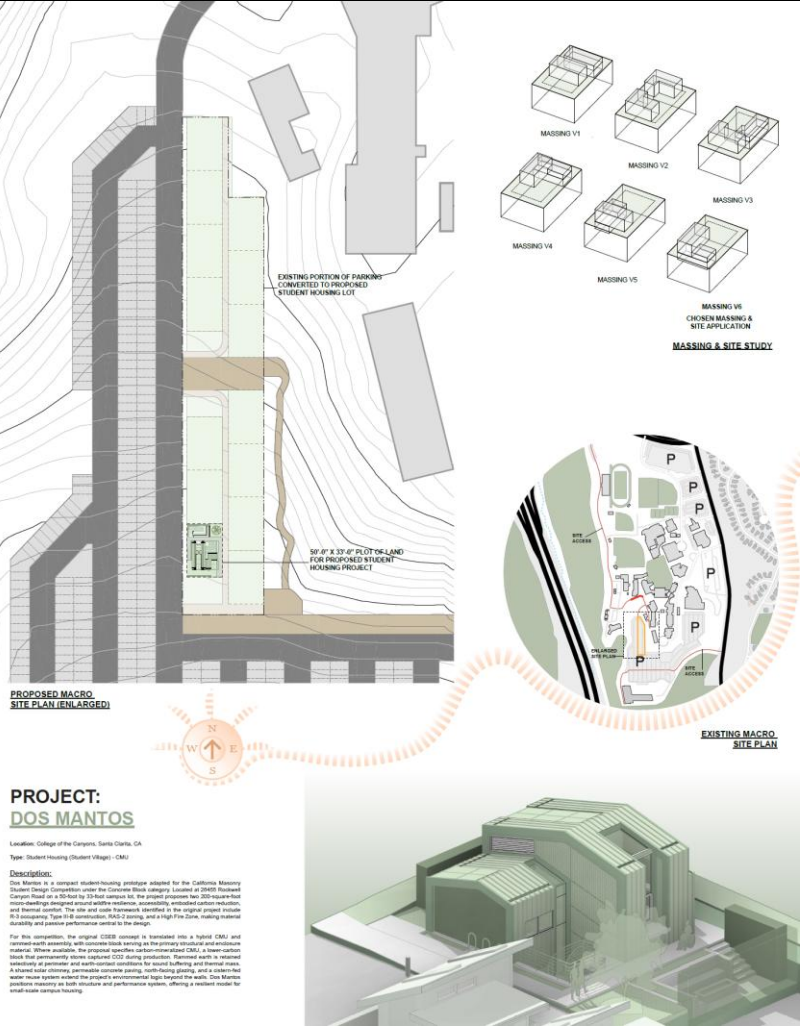
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DOS MANTOS

1st Place – Concrete Block



Congratulations!

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2nd Place Brick

Congratulations!

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EUCALYPTUS LANE

2nd Place
Brick

Cal Poly Pomona

\$2,000
SCHOLARSHIP

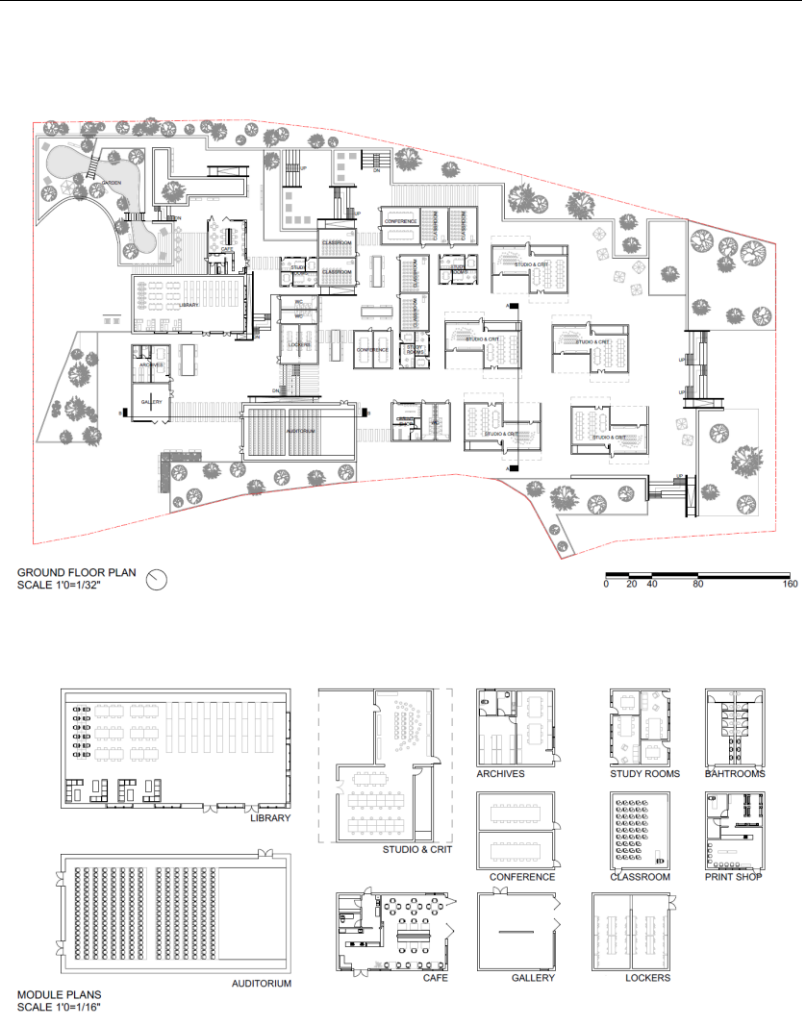
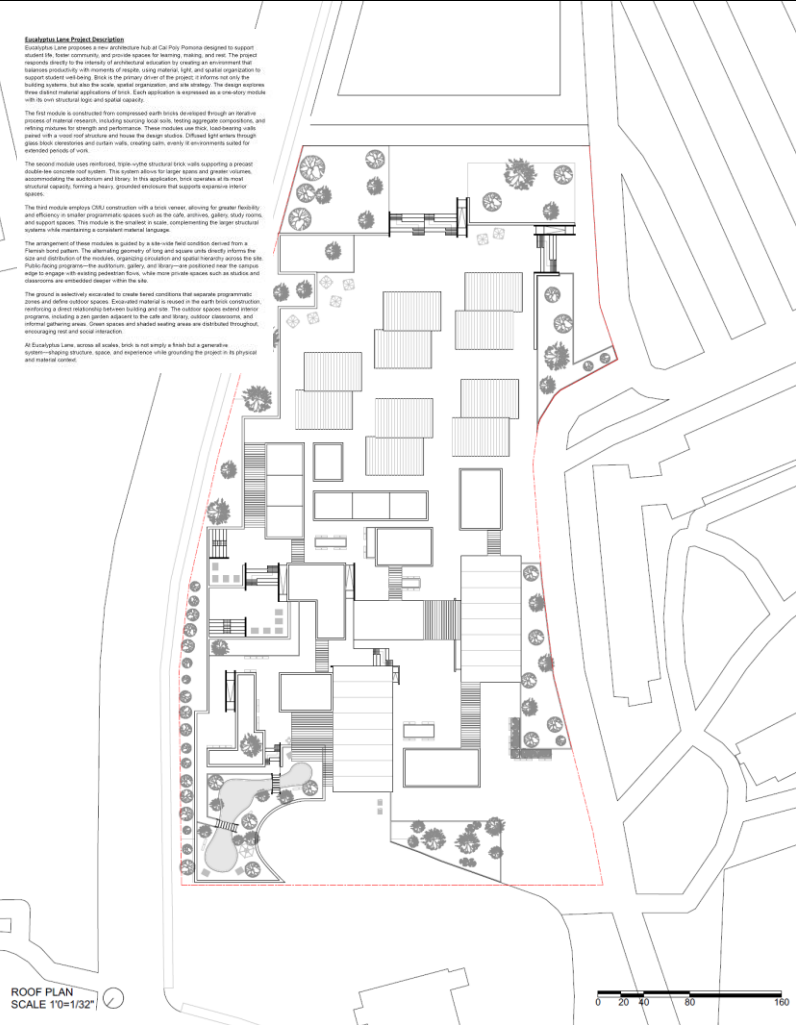
Congratulations!



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EUCALYPTUS LANE

2nd Place – Brick



Congratulations!

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1st Place Brick

Congratulations!

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matters

LUMINBRICKS PAVILION

1st Place
Brick
UC Berkeley

\$3,000 SCHOLARSHIP



Congratulations!

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An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely Santa Monica, California. The image shows a sandy beach, the ocean with waves, and a dense residential area with houses and trees. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

Thank You!

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MASONRY**
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