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Texas A&M Team Earns First Place in Skanska's University Grant Project Competition

Emergency Solutions for New Orleans Hospitals Praised for "Great Strategic Thinking"

Skanska USA Building Inc. announces that a team of students from Texas A&M University was the first place winner of its first annual University Grant Project Competition. The prize was for the students' work in planning and recommending the construction of emergency medicine spaces in New Orleans to assist the city after Hurricane Katrina. Established by Skanska, the University Grant Project Competition fosters the relationship between education and the construction industry to better prepare tomorrow's construction management professionals. The competition includes more than \$8,000 in awards. College students were offered three detailed "real world" situations in the healthcare industry to choose from and were given 45 days to present the best solution for their chosen topic.

The winners included:

First Prize: Building New Emergency Hospitals for New Orleans

The first-prize Texas A&M team, formed by Ashley Dias, Lauren Johnson, Elisha Killgore and Jackie Russel, addressed the management of emergency department overcrowding. In its proposal, the team presented short- and long-term recovery options for the Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans, including the design and placement of a network of new modular clinics to temporarily replace Charity Hospital and University Hospital, which treat patients in a wide range of specialties but were rendered inoperable as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

The winning project description points out that the "primary goal is to create fast and available healthcare resources when hospitals fail due to man-made or natural disasters." Through several phases, ranging from zero to three months, newly built modular units, or "quick-construction clinics," would become replacement health facilities until a new and improved Charity Hospital building - also designed by the Texas A&M team - is completed. At this stage, the modular units would become specialty clinics that support the new hospital and adapt to the city's larger hospital system.

Second Prize: Creating the Convertible Hospital

The second prize in the University Grant Project Competition went to a

team from the University of Washington. Their idea was to design and construct a high-quality hospital facility that could be partially subleased for retail use (a restaurant, fitness center and/or convention hall) and eventually be converted into a full-blown hotel, maintaining or even enhancing the value of the property. "A thoughtfully designed and luxurious hospital can attract business even when the market is down," said proposal co-authors John Swartz, Garcia Jean-Baptiste and Kenji Hoshide.

Third Prize: Redesigning Today's Emergency Room

Another University of Washington team - Stephanie Brown, Kyle Larson, Byron Nesvog, Brian Opp and Nik Williams - earned the third prize of the University Grant Project Competition. It proposed to eliminate the overcrowded conditions seen in many hospitals' emergency departments via architectural design and system management design techniques.

Fourth Prize: Achieving Faster Movement Through Emergency

The fourth prize was earned by Kevin Krejci, Xiangyu Li and Jeff Tollefson from the University of Washington, whose team proposed the application of a grid-based design concept in newly constructed hospital emergency departments. The goal: to increase the speed with which patients move through the emergency room, streamlining the patient flow and diminishing wait times.

"We were very impressed with the strategic thinking, attention to detail and high quality of work presented by the first-place Texas A&M team," said Kelly Hilands, Marketing Coordinator of Skanska's Healthcare Center of Excellence. "At the same time, it's important to say that the other teams in our competition presented commendable proposals to improve the quality of healthcare design and construction."

Skanska presented the University Grant Competition awards to the four teams on January 19 at College Station, Texas, and on January 20 in Seattle.

Skanska USA Building Inc. is a leading national and local provider of construction management, pre-construction consulting, general contracting, design-build and pharmaceutical validation services to a broad range of U.S. industries, including healthcare, pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical, educational, high-tech, aviation, transportation and sports and entertainment. The company, part of the Skanska AB global group of companies, is headquartered in Parsippany, New Jersey, and has approximately 4,100 employees.

Skanska AB, based in Stockholm, Sweden, is one of the world's leading construction groups with expertise in construction, project development of commercial and residential projects and public-private partnerships. Skanska is committed to finding innovative solutions by cooperating closely with customers and combining the company's international expertise with local presence. The Group currently has 53,000 employees

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