



Courtesy, Nonya Grenader

Rice Building Workshop and Project Row Houses in a planning session. The collaboration was recognized in 2004 with an award by NCARB.

Rice Building Workshop Winner of 2004 NCARB Prize

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards recently honored the Rice Building Workshop as a 2004 NCARB Prize winner. "BW + RH (Rice Building Workshop + Project Row Houses)" was entered into competition by workshop director Danny Marc Samuels, FAIA, and associate director Nonya Grenader, FAIA.

The NCARB Prize is awarded each year to educational initiatives that creatively pair the classroom with the professional environment. The Rice Building Workshop, in its eight-year partnership with local non-profit Project Row Houses, has allowed students to participate in the revitalization of Houston's traditionally African-American Third Ward neighborhood, and to undergo a complete real-world design/build process while still in school. The workshop carefully mimics the office dynamic in the design and planning phases, introducing students to the give-and-take involved in working with clients.

NCARB Prize jurors were impressed with the flexibility the workshop offers students. Following the first year of their education, architecture students may join the workshop for consecutive or non-consecutive semesters, as their schedules allow. Jurors also commented positively on the workshop's longevity and its grounding in both the university and the community. The \$7,500 prize was awarded to the Rice Building Workshop in late June.

UH Students Build Outdoor Stage for Arts Magnet Elementary School

A public magnet school in the Southgate neighborhood of Houston now has an outdoor performing arts stage designed and built by graduate students in the University of Houston's Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture. Oran M. Roberts Elementary draws students from all over HISD who are gifted in the arts and has one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse student bodies in the city.

The UH Graduate Design/Build Studio offers architecture students the opportunity to participate in all stages of a building project. Eighteen Master of Architecture students spent the months of July and August constructing the Roberts concrete stage and steel trellis frame. The project is integrated into the surrounding live oak canopy—a feature that takes advantage of the studio's years of experience in erecting outdoor classrooms and multipurpose shade structures.

The performance environment also blends in artist Fletcher Makey's painted tiles, which cover the school's entry and gardens. A long bench near the stage incorporates the tiles, which were painted by Roberts students and their families.

Former UH Band Annex to Become LEED-Certified Architectural Workshop

The new Burdette Keeland Jr. Design Exploration Center, which opens its doors

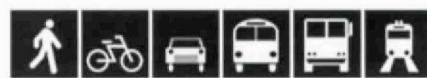
to University of Houston College of Architecture students in Fall 2005, will be more than a much-needed space for hands-on projects—it will also be the university's first LEED-certified structure.

The galvanized metal building began its life at Camp Wallace in Galveston and was moved to

the UH campus after World War II. There it served as a vocational auto body shop for returning veterans and later a print shop before being turned into a marching band rehearsal hall in 1970—all without much remodeling. When the structure was abandoned by the band in 1998, the architecture school set its sights on it (easy enough, since the structure sits just outside the school's main Philip Johnson-designed building).

Using generous donations of money, labor, and materials, the building is expected to come in at a quarter of the cost of building new. The interior will stay mostly open: 10,000 square feet of floor space and a hangar-like ceiling will provide ample space for student projects. The exterior will feature banks of new windows, cladding, and the slanted green roof that will help qualify the building for LEED certification.

The workshop is named for former UH professor of architecture Burdette Keeland Jr., who was known to say, as the flyer for the September 9 roof raising proclaimed, "Teach 'em to do, not just to draw."



Citizens' Transportation Coalition

For Citizens' Transportation Coalition, the Future Is Now

Quality of life, at least in cities, has a lot to do with transportation. Transportation influences a city's air quality, aesthetics,

and real estate values, not to mention the time it takes to get from A to B. Citizens groups often have formed to address one of these specific issues—or to address general transportation issues in a particular corridor—and have met with varying degrees of success. But a new group, the Citizens' Transportation Coalition, is starting with an advantage: By bringing together members of groups with targeted aims, such as the Katy Corridor Coalition, the Sierra Club, Mothers for Clean Air, and the Gulf Coast Institute, the CTC is joining forces to address members' common concerns cooperatively.

Taking its cue from Mayor Bill White's comment to City Council that concerned citizens need to start looking at projects planned for five and ten years out—and members' own experiences trying to oppose the passage of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's draft 2025 Regional Transportation Plan—the CTC is taking the long view. "We learned the hard way that the only way communities can meaningfully affect transportation planning is by becoming involved long before plans are officially opened up for comment," writes CTC steering committee co-chair Robin Holzer by email. Despite significant public opposition, the draft 2025 RTP was approved with few changes. "The CTC intends to ensure future plans are better," continues Holzer, "by helping involve communities from the beginning and emphasizing alternatives over 'roads only.'"

Community involvement is a big part of what the CTC is going for. The coalition hopes to, in the words of its mission statement, "identify neighborhood aspirations and the best transportation options to achieve them." So while the inhabitants of one neighborhood may long for density (and the sidewalks, buses, and rail routes that support it), in another they may aspire to a sleek fleet of park-and-ride buses. And who better to make those choices than the people who will have to live with them? Writes Holzer: "The idea is to help community leaders jump start the conversation about how transportation choices relate to their community. Communities were not considered, much less consulted, in the development of the [draft 2025 RTP]." And the members of the CTC know now that they have to get communities to the table early in order to make a difference. As Holzer notes, "The flawed plan was allowed to pass because it was too late to fix it."