

# ENVISIONING GATEWAY

## NEW VISION FOR GATEWAY UNVEILED – WINNERS OF INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION OFFER NEW IDEAS TO IMPROVE TROUBLED NATIONAL PARK

*Winners include designers from Brooklyn, Canada and professors from Virginia Tech*

New York, N.Y. (June 4, 2007) — Van Alen Institute Executive Director Adi Shamir, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) Regional Director Alexander Brash and Vice-Chairman Tom Secunda, and President of The Tiffany & Co. Foundation Fernanda Kellogg, along with representatives from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP), announced today that a design team from Brooklyn received first prize, a landscape architecture firm in Canada won second prize and an interdisciplinary team from Virginia Tech won third prize in "Envisioning Gateway: A Public Design Competition for Gateway National Park." The competition, launched in January, was an open call for ideas to transform Gateway and begin a real dialogue about its future as an iconic national park. Stretching from Queens, across parts of Brooklyn and Staten Island, to the northern tip of New Jersey, it is one of the largest urban national parks in the United States.

Winners included:

- First prize (\$15,000) – **"Mapping the Ecotone"** by Ashley Scott Kelly and Rikako Wakabayashi, Brooklyn, NY
- Second Prize (\$10,000) - **"Reassembling Ecologies"** by North Design Office, Toronto, Canada
- Third Prize (\$5,000) - **"Untitled"** by Laurel McSherry, Terry Surjan, & Rob Holmes of Virginia Tech, Alexandria, VA
- Honorable Mention (\$500) - **[Un]natural Selection** by Archipelago Architecture and Landscape Architecture, NY, NY, **"Urban Barometer"** by Christopher Marcinkoski and Andrew Moddrell of loop|8, Larchmont, NY and **"H2grOw"** by Frank Gesualdi and Hayley Eber, NY, NY

The winning design, "Mapping the Ecotone," creates a microcosm of shifting habitats and landforms to capture the diversity of Gateway's "ecotones," or zones of ecological tension. The design suggests forming a new park at Floyd Bennett Field that would dramatically reintroduce water into the site by creating a series of new jetties and piers that would bring park visitors into direct contact with marshlands, tides and fluctuating sea levels, and educate visitors about the tension that occurs when ecological and human environments intersect.

"We are so pleased with the results of the Gateway competition," said Van Alen Institute Executive Director Adi Shamir. "Designers from around the world rose to the challenge and presented imaginative plans that unified Gateway's diverse landscapes and took into account its strong historical roots. It has been a pleasure to help plant the seed for the future of Gateway and we look forward to seeing all of the designs grow to best suit the needs of the park and the community."

Launched in January 2007, the Gateway competition drew 230 entrants from 23 countries. Of the 230 entries, 182 were from the United States, including 91 from the tri-state area, 16 from Virginia and 14 from Massachusetts. International submissions totaled 48, with 10 from Canada, 5 from Japan, 4 from France, 4 from The United Kingdom, and the remaining from Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Switzerland and Taiwan.

"Mapping the Ecotone," and all of the winning designs will be featured online at [www.npca.org/gateway](http://www.npca.org/gateway) and the public is invited to visit the website and vote on their favorite proposal.

"The designers have had their shot, the jury has narrowed the field, and now it is up to the American public to vote. We need public input on which designs and ideas should be chosen to make Gateway an iconic national park." said NPCA Regional Director Alexander Brash. "We hope that a transparent process, followed by extensive public input, will engage New Yorkers, regional residents and all Americans to ponder the park as it is, consider what it might be, and encourage our elected officials to support a new vision for Gateway."

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In May, the NPCA released a State of the Parks report that rated the park in poor condition. Gateway received just 53 out of a possible 100 -- the lowest natural resources rating of the 27 other national parks assessed to date. Essentially, the open landscapes of Sandy Hook, Fort Tilden, and Floyd Bennett Field suffer from chronic funding shortfalls, resulting in crumbling buildings and threatened natural resources. When Gateway was created 34 years ago, more than \$92 million was authorized for its restoration, but the funds were never appropriated. (This appropriation would be worth \$1.2 billion today.) New habitats, marshes, and modern recreational facilities are needed to welcome park visitors and to create an environment that is suitable for native wildlife and plants to flourish. A copy of the report is available at [www.npca.org/stateoftheparks/gateway](http://www.npca.org/stateoftheparks/gateway).

Van Alen Institute, NPCA, and Columbia University GSAPP collaborated to design the competition and The Tiffany & Co. Foundation made a \$500,000 grant to fund the competition.

Finalists were selected by a jury of design professionals and public representatives including: Ethan Carr, National Park Service Historian, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Andrew Darrell, Director, New York Region Environmental Defense; Nanette Smith, Chief of Staff for Patricia Harris, First Deputy Mayor of New York City; Marian Heiskell, Chair, National Parks of New York Harbor Conservancy; Walter Hood, Principal, Hood Design; Randall Luthi, Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Peter Latz, Principal, Latz + Partner Landscape Architects; John Loring, Design Director, Tiffany & Co; Anuradha Mathur, Principal, Mathur/da Cunha and Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Pennsylvania; Wendy Paulson, Trustee, The Nature Conservancy of New York and Board Chair, Rare Conservation; Steward Pickett, Plant Ecologist, Institute for Ecosystem Studies; Lindy Roy, Principal, Roy, Co.; Adi Shamir, Executive Director, Van Alen Institute (Jury Co-Chair); and Mark Wigley, Dean, Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation (Jury Co-Chair.)

Columbia University GSAPP prepared an extensive research report that examined Gateway's significance as an ecological, cultural, and recreational resource. The report provided background information on the park and served as a tool to inspire the entrants.

Van Alen Institute: Projects in Public Architecture is a New York-based nonprofit architectural organization whose mission is to promote inquiry into the processes that shape the design of the public realm. The Institute works with community and civic partners to inform debate and advance design through competitions and fellowships, related forums, publications and exhibitions. Past competition sites include Governors Island, the TKS Booth in Times Square, and the Parachute Jump at Coney Island, which drew over 800 entries. The Envisioning Gateway design competition was managed online at [www.vanalen.org/gateway](http://www.vanalen.org/gateway).

Since 1919, the nonpartisan National Parks Conservation Association has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. NPCA will present the winning entries of the design competition to the National Park Service for potential inclusion in the next planning phase of Gateway's General Management Plan, which is scheduled for 2009.

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