

Press Release March 1st 2014

William V.S. Tubman University Forges Historic Partnership with African American Universities

William V.S. Tubman University (TU) once again steps forward as a leader in innovation. It has entered into a relationship with three historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Howard, Morgan State, and Tuskegee Universities.

Architectural students from these universities arrive in Liberia today, March 7, 2014, for a spring break visit at TU. The young American architects will showcase their creative talents by designing a state of the art, futuristic and innovative learning center where e-books, as well as traditional learning materials will be available to the TU and larger community. The nine students accompanied by three instructors from each institution will be involved in a charette challenge at the TU campus for three days followed by selection of the final/semifinal designs by members of the Liberian Chamber of Architects and Mr. Nathaniel Baker, Architect/Program Advisor. The E-brary will have four wings, with dedication to a student development center, faculty development center, information communication technology center, and the main library. The project is called the Harriet Tubman Centennial Architectural Design Challenge.

Tuskegee University in Alabama has had a long history in building educational institutions in Liberia since 1920. Howard University in Washington, DC and Morgan State University in the State of Maryland have all played pivotal roles in educating Liberians.

The selection of the visiting students to Liberia resulted from a grand design competition during the fall semester of the three universities. Three design programs and students were selected for their creativity, innovation, environmental and sustainability attributes. Finalists were blended into teams (one member from each school). Hence the “Challenge” requires students from each school to form partnerships with persons other than their school mates.

The vision started off as a means to assist the William V. S. Tubman University build a state-of-the-art 21st century library on its campus which was destroyed during the civil war in Liberia. The university to university public diplomacy is a pilot project that will be of mutual benefit to the students traveling to the new market place in Africa, interacting with their counterparts, and learning more

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about the architectural designs and builders in Liberia. The E-brary will be a learning center for the students and the community of Maryland County, Liberia. Dr. Elizabeth Davis-Russell, President of Tubman University will host the team at a luncheon in Monrovia on March 8, International Women's Day. The group travels to Harper on March 9th when they will begin working on their final version for the E-brary. The public is invited to see their work in progress on Tuesday, March 11th from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm in the Academic Complex Gallery on Tubman's Campus in Tubman Town near Harper City in Maryland County, Liberia.

The students return to Monrovia on March 13th and will tour the U.S. Embassy the morning of March 14th. Their final presentations will be given to a panel of Liberian architects at the Monrovia City Hall from 11 am to 12:30 pm.

This project is organized by the William V.S. Tubman University Foundation, promoted by Marylanders for Progress (Liberia) Inc., donors in the USA and Liberia, the State of Maryland-Liberia Sister State program, the Embassy of the Republic of Liberia, and the U. S. Embassy in Liberia in keeping with the recently signed bi-lateral partnership agreement.

Tuskegee finalists are Clarence Jefferson, Autumn Roberts and Saadiq Yarbrough with Assistant Professor Roderick Fluker as faculty advisor. Morgan State finalists are Zola Jenkins, ThuyThanh Do, and Zahra Naserdehghan with Adjunct lecturer Stanford Britt serving as faculty advisor. Howard finalists are Drew Meekins, Evan Smith, and Lawrence Wyman with Assistant to the Professor LogosouKudayah serving as faculty advisor. Architects Nathaniel Baker and Wencelaus Wallace serve as program advisors, Barbara A. Simmons, J.D., Dean International Education at TU serves as project coordinator in Liberia.

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www.wvstufoundation.org

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[Photo attachments follow]

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Students travelling to Maryland County, Liberia and their Programs

TEAM 1



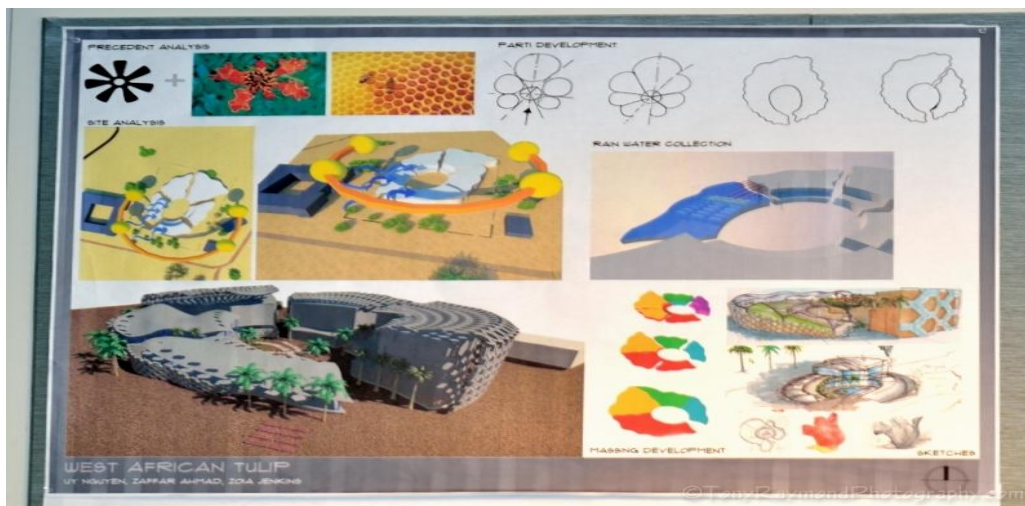
Mr. Clarence Jefferson
Tuskegee University



Ms. Zoia Jenkins
Morgan State University



Mr. Drew Meekins
Howard University



IMAGINATION ** INNOVATION ** VALUES ** PRINCIPLE

- Site and Building Integration.
- Celebration of Liberian Culture.
- Apply Sustainable Practices and Technology.

TEAM 2



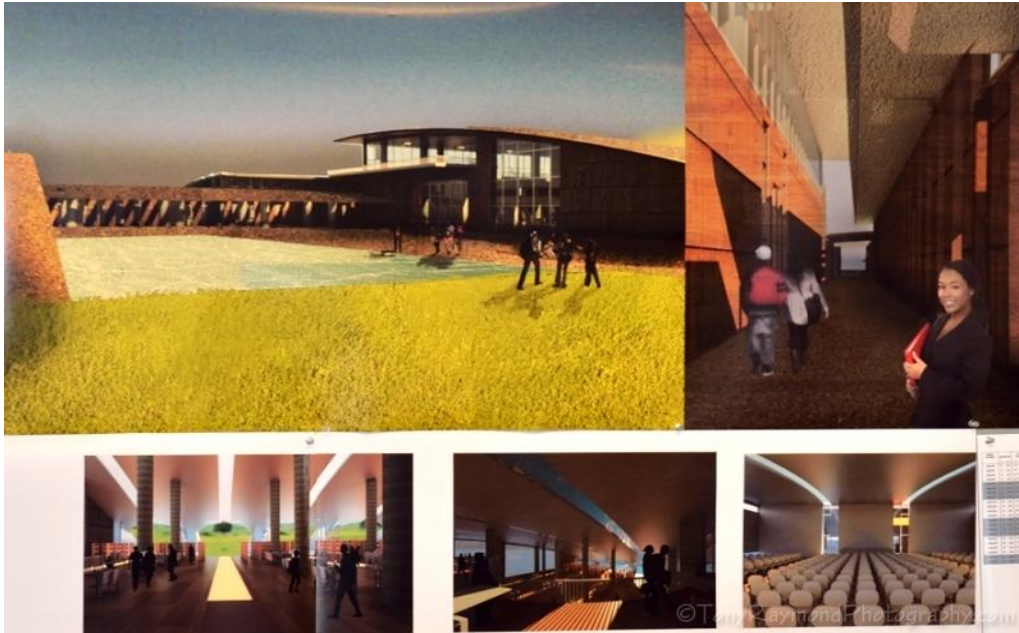
Mr. Lawrence Wyman
Howard University



Ms. Zaafar Ahmad
Morgan State University



Mr. Saadiq Yarbrough
Tuskegee University



TEAM 3



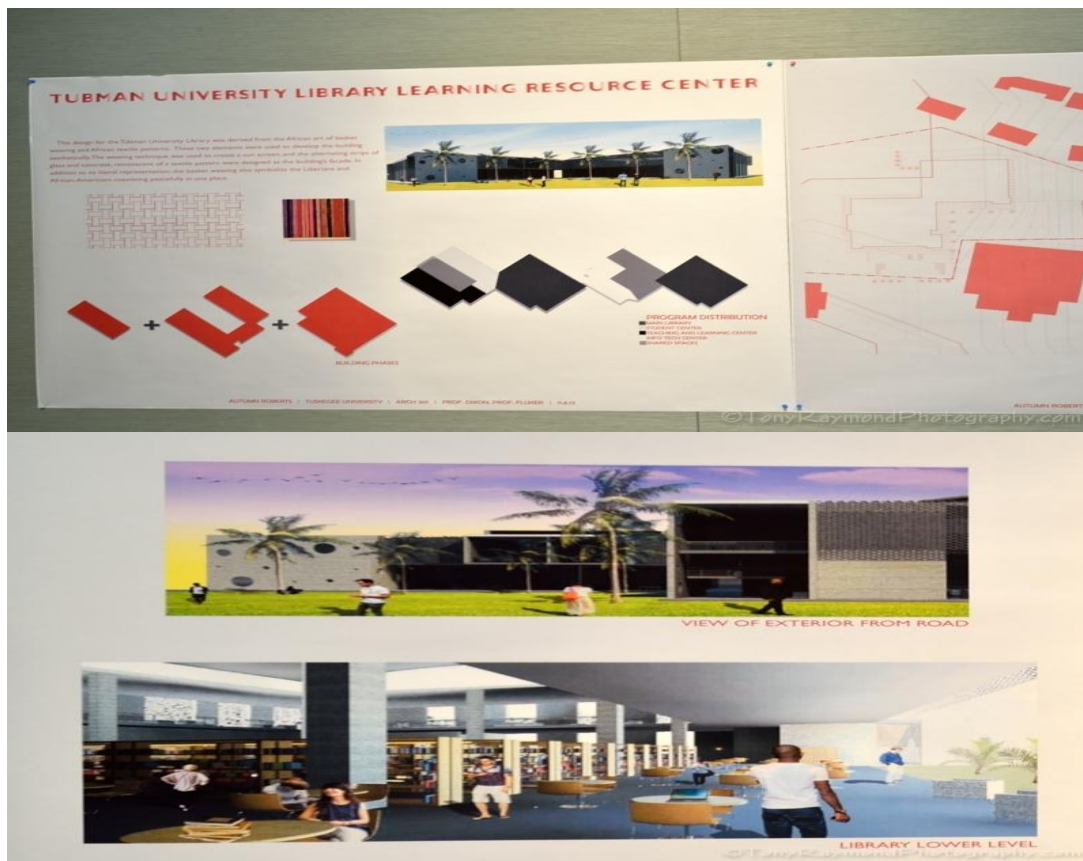
Ms. Autumn Roberts
Tuskegee University



Mr. Evan Smith
Howard University



Ms. Dy Nguyen
Morgan State University



Nine students from Howard, Morgan State and Tuskegee universities were organized into teams of three to travel to the construction site at William V.S. Tubman University, Harper, Maryland County, Liberia for the final design program.

Testimonials of Students:

- I considered transitioning in my third year to another college, but because of this challenge I can envision the potential of a professional global career.
- I was considering dropping out of the Architectural College because not anymore.
- The challenge has built up a lot of confidence within us.
- Pleasing to know that we are helping a University in Africa.
- This program has allowed us to showcase our talent, Thanks.
- Thanks for providing us an opportunity to travel internationally.

The William V.S. Tubman University Foundation sponsored the trip with donations from generous givers who believe in the benefits to the student population at Tubman University and HBCUs. Visit the Foundation's web site at www.wvstufoundation.org and give. The Tubman University Foundation is an American 501 (c) 3 organized to support the University in Liberia.