



Berkeley-Albany YMCA
2070 Allston Way, Suite 101
Berkeley, CA 94704

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 20, 2008

CONTACT: Cynthia Peterson
Telephone: 510-486-8408
Email: cpeterson@baymca.org



YMCA Teens Hire Architect for Berkeley Teen Center

Eight local youth, charged with designing and implementing the construction of a new Berkeley YMCA Teen Center, took the first step towards that goal today by hiring an architect for the project. Noll & Tam Architects, a Berkeley firm, began working with the Teen Task Force on June 16th to plan the renovation of a former PG&E service center into an innovative center for teen programs.

The building, located at 2111 Martin Luther King Jr. Way was donated by Pacific Gas & Electric Company to the Berkeley-Albany YMCA in October, 2007 for this purpose.

Working alongside seasoned professionals, this diverse group of teen participants is gaining exceptional professional and leadership training while playing a decisive role in the formation of a Center that will provide personal, educational and professional opportunities to teens for generations to come. Hourly stipends provided by a grant from Bayer HealthCare have allowed teens from all economic backgrounds to participate in the program.

As part of the selection process, teens wrote Requests for Qualifications & Proposals, which they sent to several firms in the East Bay. They also learned to conduct interviews and took tours of the architectural firms. At the completion of the process, the Teen Task Force unanimously voted for Noll & Tam.

"After a thorough interview process, I felt confident that we could identify a firm that would be the proper fit for the project. We learned that what we needed was a firm with experience, professionalism and enthusiasm for the process. Now the momentum is going to build since we have completed the first of many important steps in the project", said Teen Task Force Member and High School Senior Antonia DeMichiel.

The teens were guided through the hiring and selection process by adult members of the Task Force, who include volunteers with experience in commercial development, project management, teen programming, construction and finance.

Noll & Tam Architects will work closely with the Teen Task Force and actively engage them in the design process, allowing them to broaden their understanding of planning, design, sustainability, and construction.

"This project is important for so many reasons," says Janet Tam, AIA, Principal of Noll & Tam Architects. "We are a Berkeley firm, committed to sustainable design, and we value the tremendous impact the Y makes on our community. The best part, by far, is collaborating with the Teen Task Force, who have already shown great leadership skills. We hope that this facility will become a youth development model that reaches out to everyone."

About the Berkeley-Albany YMCA Teen Task Force

The Teen Task Force is a collaborative work group comprised of 8 teens and 6 adults who are actively planning the design and programming of the Berkeley-Albany YMCA's new Teen Center. Task Force members will also take part in the management of the physical renovation of the Center after ground breaking in Summer 2009.

Noll & Tam Architects

<http://www.nollandtam.com/>

Berkeley-Albany YMCA

www.baymca.org

###