About the Competition

Sponsored by Kawneer and administered by the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), the program challenges students to learn about building materials, specifically architectural aluminum building products and systems in the design of a secure and sustainable municipal courthouse. While open to any student, the competition is designed for advanced students. Total prize money is $7,225, including $2,500 for the first place winning design.

The objectives of this competition are:
• To research, respond to and highlight the unique aspects of designing a municipal courthouse that serves the selected site and community
• To build knowledge about materials, products, and installation (primarily Kawneer architectural aluminum building products and systems that can help earn LEED® certification points)
• To design a sustainable facility utilizing the USGBC LEED® building standards*
• To design a facility that looks to the civic, cultural and service needs of the community both now and into the future
• To encourage the use of sustainable and universal design principles for development of both the building and site

Introduction

Courts have been an integral part of a community since the development of the in Roman cities. From local circuit courts and city halls to the Halls of Supreme Court, millions of Americans have utilized these facilities for civic, social and community involvement. Now in the modern era, how does a municipal courthouse continue to serve as the local identity of justice while ensuring a secure location for discourse and business?

As the preeminent symbol of authority in local communities, a municipal courthouse must express solemnity, stability, integrity, rigor, and fairness. Furthermore, the building must be the embodiment of the surrounding community’s history, religious and secular beliefs and cultural differences. Many courthouses strive to contribute positively to the architectural fabric of the local community.