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DREAM TEAM OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS CREATES MODERN HOUSING SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS – WINNERS OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE'S 1000 HOMES COMPETITION

Jed Tarr (William Warren Group), Derek Leavitt (Modative, Inc.), Connor Humphreys (Budget Finance Co.), Laura Leavitt and Idalia Santos (Douglas Emmett Builders) Use Competition to Answer the Question: How Can Los Angeles' Homeless Population Benefit from a combination of Preservation and Modern Design Intervention?

LOS ANGELES, CA (June 8, 2010) – To many people, the idea of modern design as a solution to homelessness might seem impractical, if not paradoxical. What does one have to do with the other? Quite a lot, especially for Team HETED (Homeless Empowerment Through Efficient Development), the winners of the Urban Land Institute's *1000 Homes Competition*. Going up against strong competitors—teams formed from young local experts in architecture, design, development, finance, construction and social work—Team HETED delivered the most viable housing solution to a serious problem endemic to Los Angeles.

With the current homeless population in Los Angeles now well over 48,000, the Urban Land Institute created the *1000 Homes Competition* to see what solutions the brightest young stars in the housing industry could bring to the table. Each team was given six weeks, and a specific city within Los Angeles County where chronic homelessness—that is, homeless citizens with significant mental or physical disabilities—is in dire need of a solution. Team HETED, tasked with Glendale, realized that creating housing solutions for the homeless might actually have more to do with the *non-homeless* population.

“Constructing large scale public housing in unsightly towers in less desirable parts of town is not an effective solution,” says Derek Leavitt, a member of Team HETED and Principal of Modative, Inc., a modern architecture firm based in Los Angeles. “The key is using a neighborhood’s existing architecture to its advantage.” In doing so, Team HETED discovered that local residents might actually embrace the idea of government-subsidized Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) instead of fearing it.

Glendale, like many cities within Los Angeles County, is home to small clusters of bungalows, a design product of the 1920s where eight to ten single-story units horseshoe around a courtyard. Instead of tearing down the bungalows and building from the ground up, the team of young professionals brainstormed ways to adapt the existing structures in a way that would please both its future residents and the surrounding neighborhood. Their final design, the “HETED Hybrid Bungalows,” is a victory in more ways than one: a precise fusion of old and modern, private and communal, and a small glimpse into what the future may hold.

In their proposed design, each of the existing two-bedroom/one-bath units would be stripped to the studs and converted into two separate studio units. This efficient use of space provides more bang for the buck from a PSH standpoint. Additionally, the dilapidated garages and back units would be torn down completely. In their place, a new parking area, laundry room, counseling offices, multiple community spaces, and modern second story units would be constructed. The idea of creating communal spaces for a group of people used to living in the most dire of conditions was important for Team HETED. The courtyard—which traditionally serves little purpose in these bungalow configurations—would be the new home to a raised deck, which offers more communal gathering areas as well as level, handicapped-accessible entries to the raised ground-floor units. This concept of multi-function filters through each of the design’s elements, not the least of which are the community gardens. Placed on either side of the front entrance, these quaint gardens would promote a sustainable lifestyle by allowing the residents to grow their own food, while also encouraging interaction with the neighborhood.

If there’s any downside to the *1000 Homes Competition* it’s that with imaginary budgets, we may never know just how seamlessly these modern PSH units might possibly mesh into Los Angeles’ current cityscape. But it’s the hope of Team HETED, and the other teams that competed, that people will take notice of the work they’ve done and see that change is possible; and it can be affordable, and modern. Team HETED will be honored on June 24, 2010 at the Los Angeles County’s Supportive Housing Innovation Awards held at Los Angeles City Hall.

For press inquiries, questions or more information, please contact Modative, Inc.’s Christian Navar at cnavar@modative.com or 310.526.7826 ex 02. More information on this project can also be found here: <http://www.modative.com/heted-hybrid-bungalows/>