

Architectural Education: Chapter Helps Students

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The teaching of Architecture in any university is teaching by substitution, for Architecture starts with a client, is disciplined by the site, program, materials and erection, and is completed when the building is occupied. No school can educate in this way. It can only create hypothetical situations without benefit of client or building program.

The gap between the practice of architecture and the education of architects becomes wider as one realizes who is educating these future architects. The faculty usually consists of men who teach design, but who have never really designed a building (myself, for instance). Or they may teach other aspects of architecture although they have little practical experience in the subject. In this academic environment the realities of architecture are seldom discussed.

How can a school overcome this deficiency? At UNM, the Educational Committee of the New Mexico Chapter, AIA, offered a solution which is peculiar to this University.

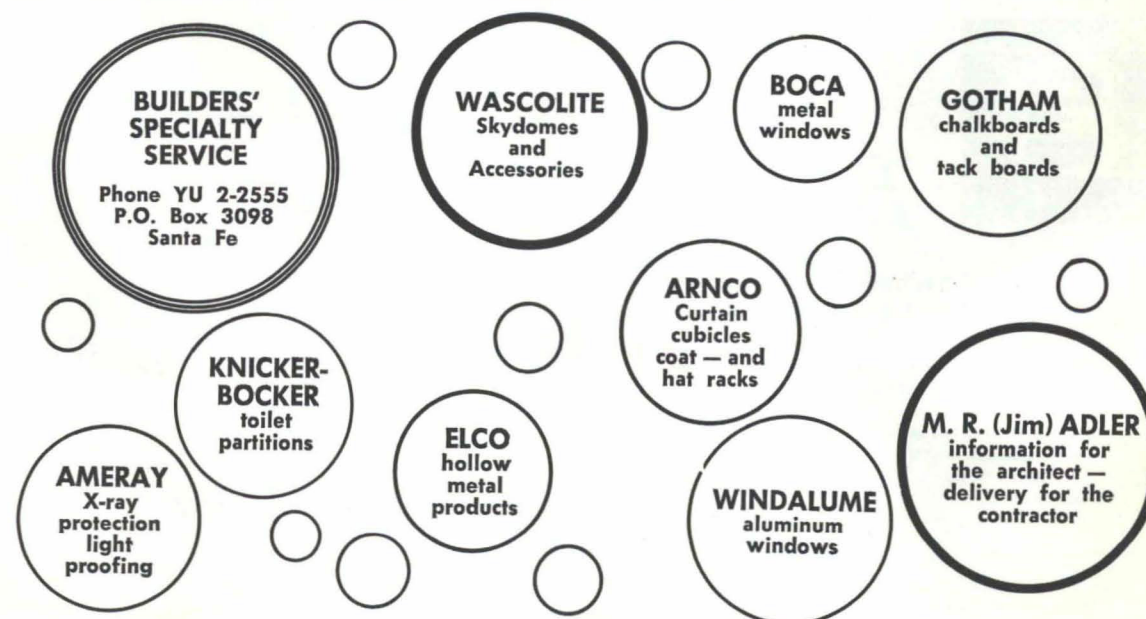
In the teaching of design, for example, a local architect is consulted in the writing of a program. This architect has been selected by

the Educational Committee of the Chapter for his experience in this particular type of problem. The architect then meets with the students, explains the program, and goes over the many problems which are involved in this type of building.

As the student evolves the design, the architect reviews each problem, and gives his professional advice to the student. (He does this without financial remuneration). At times, various people are brought in to act as clients, and engineers are brought in to discuss mechanical and electrical equipment of buildings. To a great extent, this type of educational program gives the students a more realistic view of the actual practice of architecture.

This donated time is no small item, for each design class experiences the advice of an architect on six problems a year for a four year period. This means that each year, twenty-four New Mexico architects donate anywhere from three to fifteen hours of their time to student education and the student has received the advice, criticism and theories of as many practicing architects as possible. As a result, architectural students at UNM are better equipped to practice their chosen profession.

If the Architectural Division at UNM has succeeded in giving students a truer picture of the practice of architecture by bridging this substitution gap, we must give the credit to the architects who participate, and to the New Mexico Chapter, AIA. ◇



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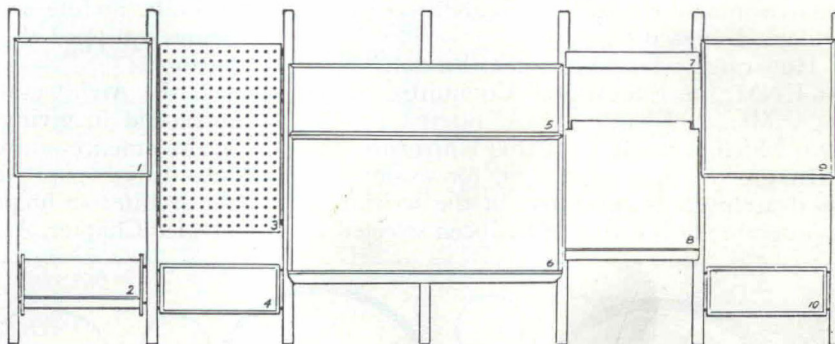
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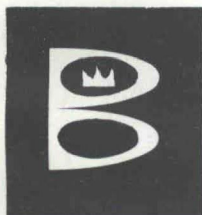
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