

## For Immediate Release

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### **The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Announces the 2024 Rising Black Student Architects & Designers Scholarship Awardees**

(New Haven, CT, August 7, 2024) The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Connecticut) recently announced eight recipients of the newly launched Rising Black Student Architects & Designers Scholarships.

The scholarship program was developed to grant scholarships to deserving Black/African American students pursuing degrees in Architectural Programs and provide opportunities for more diverse voices across the entire architectural, engineering, and construction industry.

According to the 2020 census, nearly 11% of Connecticut's population identify as Black/African American. Of the 4,641 licensed architects in the state, fewer than 20 are of Black or African American descent. In developing this program, it is our hope that it will also incentivize the recipients to begin their architectural careers in the state of Connecticut.

#### **2024-25 Awardees**

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#### **Felix Aboagye, Yale School of Architecture**

Raised in Ghana. Felix earned his Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 2022. Currently, he is in his second year of the MArch 1 program at the Yale School of Architecture, where he was awarded the Francis Kere Scholarship for 2023-24 and the Dean Scholarship.

Prior to his admission to Yale University, he participated in a collaborative workshop with Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences on designing inclusive urban spaces, and a joint summer school program with the University of Toronto - John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, which focused on sustainable design strategies for transforming and improving communities in Canada and Ghana.

In 2023 while employed by the Ghanaian company Avangarde Design Services, Felix supervised the construction of the Legon Sports Stadium which was intended to hold the 13th African Games. He is currently an intern at Jobe Moore and Partners in Greenwich, CT



**Samuel Boakye, Yale School of Architecture**

Samuel Boakye is a dedicated and passionate aspiring architect from Ghana. He graduated with First Class Honors in Architecture from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana, earning a spot on the Dean's List of Best Graduating Students in 2022.

Growing up in a traditional home in Kumasi within Ghana's Ashanti region, he developed a profound appreciation for regionalist architecture. This early exposure ignited a sense of discontent with design practices that often neglect cultural heritage, favoring contemporary constructions that lack contextual relevance.

Among his proudest achievements are his contributions to community projects targeting critical architecture-related challenges in rural and low-income regions of Ghana, providing astute counsel on sustainable building practices, and spearheading sustainable environmental design initiatives, all while still a student.

Currently, Samuel is pursuing a Master of Architecture degree at the Yale School of Architecture (YSOA). Majoring in Architectural and Building Technology, he aspires to emerge as a dedicated Sustainability Advocate in the field of architecture and undertake endeavors imbued with ingenuity and an unwavering commitment to influencing positive change through his practice.



**Janiyah Hunter, Morgan State University**

Janiyah Hunter is currently entering her sophomore year at Morgan State University (MSU), where she is majoring in Architecture and Environmental Design. Before attending MSU, she obtained her Associate's Degree in Business from Montgomery College while simultaneously earning her high school diploma.

During her freshman year at MSU, Janiyah maintained a 4.0 GPA, made the Dean's List, was named a 2024 PowerLIVE Awardee, and won a Best In Studio Award. She was also selected by the Dean of the architecture program to be one of two student representatives for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Committee.

Janiyah is currently working at Davis Construction, completing a 12-week summer internship program. During this time, she has also completed the 30-hour OSHA training, conducted site visits, hosted coordination meetings, completed site scans, and imported files received from the different trades to construct a building information system (BIM) model.



**Jaden Lazaro, New York Institute of Technology**

Jaden Lazaro, from Stratford, CT, is an undergraduate student at the New York Institute of Technology in Manhattan. Having just completed his second year, he was recently accepted into the prestigious five-year accredited architecture program and works for the School of Architecture and Design's social media team. Jaden holds leadership positions in both the NOMAS and AIAS organizations on campus and is actively involved in his local Stratford community.

During the summer and winter, he works with town recreation camps, providing services to kids, and volunteers at his local church. In his free time, he pursues photography, which he has successfully turned into a business, collaborating with various companies and clients across NY and CT. He continuously seeks knowledge, applying it to innovate in his field and inspire others through his actions.

Jaden believes that pursuing an education will open doors and broaden his mind to new possibilities while helping him discover his passion. As he continues his Bachelor of Architecture program, Jaden aims to intern near his community and aspires to design and renovate environmentally friendly buildings professionally.



**Johnathan Lyn, University of Hartford**

Johnathan Lyn is a dedicated and versatile individual with practical work experience in both the architecture and construction industries. His educational journey and career experiences reflect a commitment to becoming a well-rounded designer. His achievements in sports, particularly as an award-winning swimmer and triathlete representing Jamaica, further underscore his discipline and drive.

In high school, he attended St. George's College in Kingston, Jamaica, graduating in the class of 2020 with the Physics Award and a diploma. At the University of Hartford in Connecticut, USA, he is enrolled in an accelerated Master's program in Architecture. His achievements include being on the President's List, the Honor Roll, the Honors Program, and being a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society.

In 2024, he was a Project Management Intern at Consigli Construction.



**Jose Martinez-Paulino, University of Hartford**

Jose Martinez-Paulino is an undergraduate student at the University of Hartford. He attended Saint John’s High School in Shrewsbury, MA. His educational journey is characterized by a unique blend of creativity, dedication, and intellectual curiosity.

At Happy Haus Design, LLC in Stamford, CT, Jose has been an Intern, since May 2024. In this role, he has been using CAD software based on project requirements. His work also involves 3D modeling and rendering architectural designs.

Previously, Jose was an Intern at ViaCad LLC in Worcester, MA, where he created detailed architectural drawings using AutoCAD, including floor plans, elevations, sections, and door and window schedules, under the guidance of the lead architect.



**Yossias Mulualem, Wentworth Institute of Technology**

Yossias Mulualem will be pursuing a degree in Architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Born and raised in Ethiopia, he moved to the United States in 2016. Adapting to life in America has been a challenge, but he has put in significant effort to learn and grow. As a recent graduate of Platt Technical High School in Milford, CT, he focused on the architecture program. He was actively involved in SkillsUSA, a national organization that hosts local, state, and national competitions where students can demonstrate their skills in various fields, including architecture, construction, and engineering. Yossias earned first place at the state level and represented Connecticut at the national competition in Atlanta for two consecutive years.

His goal is to establish his own architecture firm and become a successful architect.



**Ramona Williams, Howard University**

Ramona Williams is a senior architecture student at Howard University.

Over the past two summers, she has worked as a Summer Associate with Clark Construction Group. In this role, she gained valuable experience while working on-site in Washington, D.C., including at the National Air and Space Museum.

Currently, she is an Architectural Intern with Target’s Design Apprenticeship Program. Ramona holds a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Certificate in Construction Quality Management for Contractors and serves as a board member of her university’s Classics Club.



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*About AIA Connecticut:*

AIA Connecticut, a statewide chapter of the American Institute of Architects, serves the architectural profession, encourages design excellence, and works to improve society through a concern for the quality of the built and natural environments. Members commit themselves to the highest standards of practice and code of ethics that addresses responsibilities to the public, clients, the building industry, and the art and science of architecture.

AIA Connecticut serves as a resource to architects and the public. Its membership of over 1,500 is comprised of architects, associates working towards licensure, students, and professionals in affiliated fields.

For more information, visit AIA Connecticut's website at [www.aiact.org](http://www.aiact.org)