CITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD:
QUESTIONS OF CULTURE, CLIMATE AND DESIGN

• Paper / Proposal Title:
ARCHscholars – Calling all Qualified and Passionate Architecture Students

• Author(s) Name:
Naomi Langer-Voss, RA

• University or Company Affiliation:
Naomi Langer Studio, Principal

• Abstract (300 words):
Architecture is a profession that is suited to address the complexity of our world’s modern metropolises. As architectural academics in New York City, we are presented with a unique opportunity to tackle our country’s deficiencies in public housing while simultaneously addressing educational inequalities. One approach to implement change is to educate youth living in low-income housing developments about the role and opportunities in architecture. The City Tech NYCHA ARCHscholars Program brings formal, college level architecture and design study to New York City Housing Authority youth residents. These students are joined by City Tech architecture students who have already been studying formally. It serves to reach young adults from less privileged communities to help them tap into their interest, curiosity, or passion for architecture.

Together the ARCHscholars critically investigate the realities of the architecture, infrastructure, and planning found within the housing developments. The students propose design solutions for urban and architectural conditions that they have identified as needing improvement. They also introduce programmatic elements that energize and enhance the communal spirit. NYCHA resident leaders will be consulted to address and
advise on the proposals. Through site specific investigations and discussions about the built environment we can empower them to engage their neighbors in a dialogue on how they can lead and support change in their community.

The exchange of ideas and experiences between the City Tech and NYCHA young adults is critical to the personal and intellectual growth of all the participants. The ARCHScholars will spread this mutual understanding to the larger urban community. As this course progresses, the ARCHScholars will be mentors and leaders to other youth in the community and empower them to change from within. NYCHA youth will begin their path to a professional career in architecture, as the City Tech students march ahead with community-based knowledge.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Naomi Langer-Voss is a licensed architect in both New York and California and has over 30 years of experience in architecture and design. She received a Bachelor of Science in Architecture in 1986 from The University of Michigan and a Master’s in Architecture from UCLA where she graduated with honors in 1992. Ms. Langer-Voss worked in a variety of architectural and planning offices including The Jerusalem Center for the Planning of Historic Cities, Beyer Blinder Belle, and Frank Gehry Architecture.

Naomi Langer Studio was formed in 1997 after her 5-year tenure at Gehry’s studio. Over the last 20 years, she has designed, permitted, and administered the construction of over 90 residential, institutional, and commercial projects. Lasting relationships with clients, devotion to programmatic needs, and the integrity of architectural design has been the firm’s commitment. Ms. Langer-Voss concurrently taught design studios at Woodbury University, Pasadena City College and Otis College of Art and Design.

Her current pursuits, coupled with a renewed focus on academia, center on studying the urban fabric, public housing, and architectural education. She is currently co-teaching a pilot course that introduces architecture to youth living in public housing together with City Tech architecture students.