

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 5, 1999

Please Contact:
Lisa Westerfield
Administrative Director
312.427.4202 telephone
312.360.4551 telefax
somfoundation@som.com

**THE SKIDMORE, OWINGS & MERRILL (SOM) FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES
WINNERS OF THE CHICAGO INSTITUTE FOR ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM (CIAU) AWARD**

CHICAGO, IL -- The Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) Foundation announces the 1999 winners of the Chicago Institute for Architecture and Urbanism Award. Endowed by funds from the Institute, the award has been established by the SOM Foundation to encourage writing and research on the question of how architecture, urban design and physical planning can contribute to improving the quality of life in the American city.

The CIAU Award program, which provides \$5,000 total in prize money, honors the best unpublished essay or research paper addressing the question of how to redirect the physical development of American cities and their regions toward sustainability. Papers are nominated by accredited U.S. graduate programs in architecture, urban design, or physical planning, and must be written by faculty or students in these fields.

The 1999 first-place award with a stipend of \$2,500 goes to **Mr. Doug Hassebroek, graduate student of Columbia University**. Mr. Hassebroek's paper, entitled *The Future of Navigation: Suburban Space and Today's Freeway of Tomorrow*, proposes that "mobility itself is a place" and observes that "the two technological arenas that made sprawl possible – transportation and communication – are now converging." Rather than making cities more livable, the advances in technology may in fact compound the problems of urban expansion.

Two papers share second place awards of \$1,250 each. **Graduate student Ellen Miramontes of University of California at Berkeley's** "*Parking Lot Parks: The Parking Lot as Multi-purpose Space*" urges designers to be proactive in recapturing pavement for larger community purpose. While hoping for a future of less parking, she proposes creative solutions and approaches for parking lots today. The other second place paper is as abstract as the first is specific. In his paper, "*Meaningful Urban Design: Teleological/Catalytic/Relevant*," **University of Michigan Assistant Professor Aseem Inam** advocates renewed moral conviction to be embodied in both the education and practice of urban design.

The jurors, **Michael Kwartler of Michael Kwartler Associates, Robert Geddes, Professor Emeritus of Princeton and New York Universities**, and **Marilyn Taylor, Partner at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP**, underscored their positive response to the set of papers received and the range of subjects addressed. "These papers are terrific," said Geddes, "and they address both the

critique and the proposition. It's hard dealing with incommensurability, . . .but that's what urban design does."

The jury also underscored that two papers sounded resonant cautionary notes. "If the profession continues to ignore the more relevant architecture of the quasi-architectural, then it may be as ill-prepared for the next phase of suburban sprawl as it was for the previous one." This is exactly why the SOM Foundation has an important and continuing role to play in eliciting and publishing thoughtful papers about the urban future.

SOM Foundation

Since 1980, the SOM Foundation has awarded \$755,000 to 90 students and professionals. The programs of the SOM Foundation are funded through an endowment established by the Partners of the architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP. Established in 1936, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP is the first two-time recipient of the prestigious AIA Architecture Firm Award. Some of the firm's design projects include the Sears Tower (Chicago), the John Hancock Center (Chicago), Lever House (New York), the Bank of America World Headquarters (San Francisco), and the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre Extension (Hong Kong). The Foundation's activities are wholly separate from those of the firm.