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## **Duran receives 2024 Hoffman Diversity Advancement Scholarship**

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Alyssa Duran

New Haven, CT Hoffmann Architects + Engineers, a design firm specializing in the rehabilitation of building exteriors, has named the 2024 recipient of the Hoffmann Diversity Advancement Scholarship. Now in its second year, the Hoffmann Scholarship was established in collaboration with the Connecticut Architecture Foundation (CAF) to support students from underrepresented racial or ethnic groups who are seeking degrees in architecture or engineering.

Alyssa Duran, a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Architecture at the New York City College of Technology, has been selected as the recipient of the 2024 Hoffmann Diversity Advancement Scholarship. Duran was selected from a competitive applicant pool of high-achieving students, many the first in their families to attend college, who were inspired to enter the design professions to pursue environmental justice, protect heritage sites, and improve the daily lives of their communities.

“We were captivated by the talent and drive of this year’s applicant pool as they overcame challenges to pursue careers in architecture and design,” said Alison Hoffmann, chair of the Hoffmann Diversity and Inclusion Committee. “They describe experiences with housing insecurity, with surviving natural disasters and conflict in their country of origin, with the responsibilities of caring for siblings and holding down jobs while managing schoolwork. Yet their narratives overwhelmingly focus on a passion for architecture and for the ways it can shape a community. Many of the applicants cited preserving culturally important structures and uplifting neighborhoods through design as motivations for pursuing their studies. Our committee was inspired and humbled by these ambitious young people.”

#### A dream of safeguarding the living environment

Alyssa Duran grew up in the Dominican Republic, where she observed firsthand the challenges of preserving the island’s historic architecture. The tropical climate accelerated deterioration and led Duran to consider how to address the increasing threats to the built environment due to climate change. When she came to New York, she was drawn to historic restoration.

“I became inspired by the innovative methods employed to rehabilitate, give new life, and restore existing structures,” Duran said. “I believe historic restoration represents the future of architecture, showcasing that sustainable design can be achieved in this industry in so many ways without having to start from scratch.”

With a focus on the rehabilitation of building exteriors, the specialized practice of Hoffmann Architects + Engineers aligns with Duran’s goals to reduce climate impact through the restoration and reuse of existing buildings. Hoffmann’s scholarship committee was impressed not only with her impeccable academic record and perfect 4.0 GPA, but also with her sense of place. Deeply connected with the spaces where she lives and works, Duran interned with the NYC Department of Design and Construction, contributed to research with NYCCT architecture faculty, and currently serves as a digital fabrication specialist for the Architecture Department. Bilingual in English and

Spanish, she brings a forward-thinking design sensibility to the practice of restoration, which Hoffmann champions as a key priority of this scholarship program.

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