DESIGNS FOR REAL LIFE

A panel of architects evaluated DASH students' ideas for formerly homeless housing units.

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Eric Hankin, teacher at Design Architecture Senior High, a magnet school in Miami’s Design District, created a project for his students that would give them hands-on experience, as well as benefit the homeless.

“I like the idea of exposing students to real-life projects,” said Hankin, who has been teaching at DASH for 11 years. “This project will help teach them about the community and value of work.”

Hankin and 20 of his architecture/design students teamed up with Carrfour Supportive Housing, a nonprofit organization that develops, operates and manages innovative housing communities for individuals and families in need, and they are designing a living unit for a formerly homeless person.

On Thursday, students at DASH presented their drawings and models of homeless housing units to a panel of professional architects who critiqued the students’ projects and will later determine how to use ideas from the work to incorporate into future affordable housing projects.

Sandra Newson, vice president of Carrfour Supportive Housing, talked about the display by the students.

“I was impressed mostly by the focus on making the space functional,” Newson said. “You can see it in their design. It was all about the use of space and making sure there was a place for everything.”

A panel of architects gave the students feedback after their displays.

Javier Font, who graduated from the University of Miami in 1986 and opened his own firm in 1999, was one of the architects on the panel and gave his input.

“It was really refreshing to see how realistic the designs are and how they applied it with what we need to do,” Font said. “A lot of times, designs are so theoretical and don’t relate to what’s going on in the real world, but these were very realistic.”

For two hours, students took turns explaining their work, taking questions and receiving feedback from the panel.

One of the students, Kayla Montes de Oca, 15, said her main focus was to design a space that would be comfortable.

“I looked at my room and wondered how I can design something that would be as spacious,” said Kayla, who is a junior at DASH and hopes to be an environmental architect. “You see how they live and you want to find a solution for them.”

Another junior, De’Naric Mickle, 15, focused on keeping his design simple.

“I tried to create something that was cool for a formerly homeless person,” said De’Naric, who plans on working in landscape archi-

For More Information
Visit carrfour.org or www.dashschool.org.

PROJECT DESIGN: De’Naric Mickle, DASH student, presents his shotgun-style design to professional architects. He incorporated a sliding track for a large-screen television that could be seen from any angle in his design.

FEEDBACK: Sandra Newson, of Carrfour Supportive Housing, critiques students work Thursday at DASH where nineteen architecture/design students presented their models of homeless housing units to professional architects.