

The Arizona Challenge 2.0

Written by Ashley Pearlstein

Vernon Swaback, founder of the Two Worlds Community Foundation, teamed up with University of Arizona students in order to create The Arizona Challenge 2.0. The challenge is an international student design competition that focuses on a positive future of design based on Arizona's unique energy.



About the Foundation

The foundation, founded by architect and city planner Vernon D. Swaback in 2010, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the art and technology of high-performance communities. The organization focuses on sustainability and innovation in its designs, aiming to capture the natural energy of our environment. The foundation believes in community efforts, encouraging all community members to participate in the creation of practical, beautiful, and economically viable solutions. With the help of volunteers, generous sponsors, and academic and business partners, the foundation engages the community through published works, forums, outreach programs, and academic events such as The Arizona Challenge.

Vernon D. Swaback

As the founder of the foundation and an avid community enthusiast, Swaback is both experienced and passionate. He has worked in architecture and city planning for over fifty years, and has completed dozens of major projects. Swaback's innovation inspires others to think about design with a higher humanitarian purpose. Some of Swaback's amazing expertise was gained through his close collaboration with famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Swaback began his architectural career under Wright and also served as chairman of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Swaback created the foundation in order to advocate for future-focused design for living in balance with each other and nature.



The Challenge

The Challenge is co-sponsored by the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Arizona. The challenge competition is a framework for encouraging applicants to apply their personal and collective insights beyond the production-driven focuses of the present. The competition featured student teams who co-convened once a week, under joint instruction, to address 11 background issues with their projects. Issues included items of locational sequence, transportation, home maintenance, schools, employment, economics, housing, density, and more.



Winners

The Gold Award winning team, who won \$2,500, was team "20 Minute City" by Anh Luc, Nada Asadullah, and Meredith Abrams. The team masterfully integrated personal mobility, amenities, and day-to-day activities within a purpose centered community. The project addressed challenges facing communities today and featured creative planning and architecture.

The Silver Award winning team, or "Recipro[city]," was created by Daniel Aros and Brian Underwood. The project winners, who won \$1,250, provided an exciting, solution-based alternative to communities by focusing on community engagement, public and private ownership, and flexibility of design.

The Bronze Award winning team, or "Desert Sponge," consisted of Alex Zee, Elizabeth Lorenz, and Mitch Edwards. The team, who won \$750,

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featured inventive techniques by which the community can be cultivated with water, the desert's most precious resource.

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