

Progress Report by Martin Kwon

Use of Scholarship Funds and Scholarly Growth

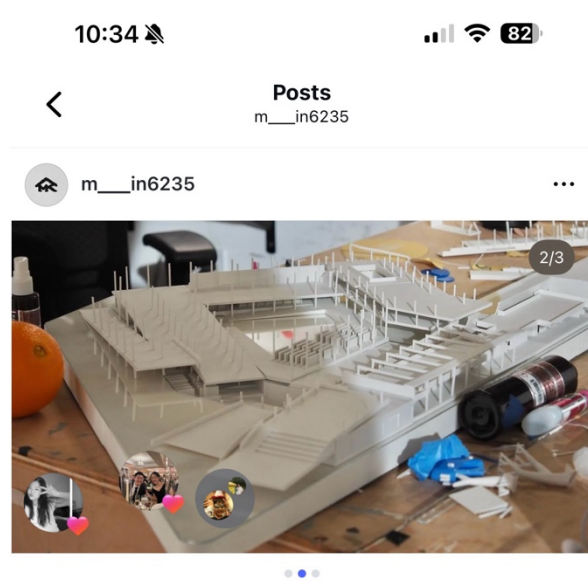
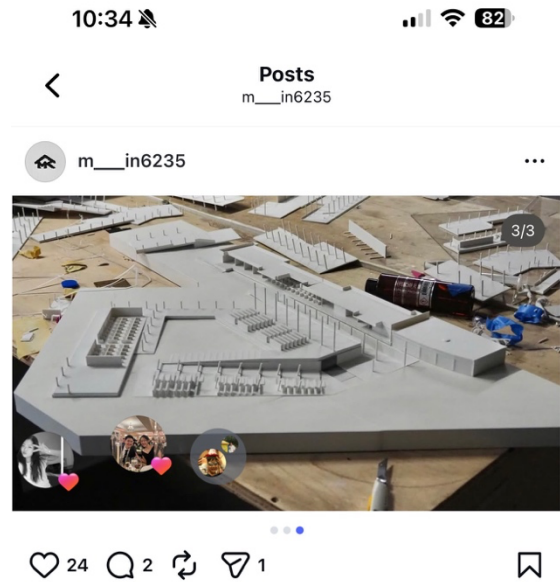
This past year was a time of real growth for me, both academically and professionally, as I studied architecture. The scholarship made a big difference by helping me learn outside the classroom. It gave me the chance to experience architectural spaces, see how professionals work, and explore real design environments in New York City.

Most of the scholarship funds went toward my tuition and academic fees, allowing me to stay enrolled and focus on my studies without worry. This financial support let me spend more time on studio work, research, and model-making, all of which are important parts of learning architecture and require both time and materials.

The scholarship also let me explore New York City with a focus on architecture. I studied buildings, urban spaces, and new design ideas up close. Walking through the city and seeing its architecture in person helped me understand much more than I could from books or drawings. I saw how materials change over time, how people move through spaces, how light affects buildings, and how architecture influences daily life.

During this time, I had an unexpected and important professional experience. While I was in Manhattan, I was invited to help set up and renovate the new American Express Centurion (Black) Lounge for a week. A curator on the project, who knew a friend of mine and had seen my architecture work on Instagram, was interested in my model-making and design skills and asked me to join the project.

This experience had a big impact on me. I helped prepare the space and install artworks and paintings to create the right atmosphere in the lounge. Watching the team make design decisions together, balancing looks, branding, function, and how people would use the space,



taught me a lot about real-world architecture. It was a rare opportunity to see how ideas become finished spaces, especially in such a well-known part of Manhattan.

The attached photo shows this time of growth and discovery. It was taken in New York, where I am standing with my older sister in front of an important city landmark. She supported and joined me on this journey. Even though the photo looks casual, it marks an important part of my academic journey, shaped by learning, guidance, and real experience with architecture.

Looking forward, I want to use what I have learned from this scholarship to help others through architecture. I am especially interested in designing spaces for communities in need, such as schools, community centers, and affordable housing, that prioritize dignity, accessibility, and well-being. Architecture can change



lives, and I hope to use my skills to create places that support and empower people who are often left out.

This scholarship gave me more than just financial help. It led to experiences that strengthened my academic foundation, broadened my professional outlook, and helped me find my purpose. I am very grateful for this support and am committed to using what I have learned to make a real difference in architecture and in the community.