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Fashion Institute of Technology Receives $74 Million from Mayor de Blasio to Construct State-of-the-Art Academic Building

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) today announced that Mayor Bill de Blasio has made a $74 million commitment in his executive budget to construct a new state-of-the-art academic building that will help the college continue its success as a leading institution of higher education and enhance its academic offerings in design and business. This will add 100,000 square feet of space, addressing overcrowding for 10,000 students. These funds, laid out in a multi-year financial plan, match a $74 million allocation from the State of New York, which was made in FY09 as part of the SUNY capital plan for community colleges. FIT is a campus of the 64-college system that makes up the State University of New York.

Over the past 30 years, FIT has experienced tremendous growth, doubling both its full-time student population and its degree programs. However, the physical campus has not kept pace with this growth, and the college currently suffers from a 400,000-square-foot space shortfall. The new building will help alleviate this issue and provide a much-needed new teaching and learning environment.

“Words cannot describe how delighted and grateful we are as we make this announcement today. We thank Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to public higher education and the creative industries of New York,” said FIT President Dr. Joyce F. Brown. “This will be the first new academic building constructed on our campus in over 40 years, and it will help us to continue our efforts to increase program offerings, expand recruitment of a diverse student population, and enhance the overall student experience here at FIT.”

The new building, with 10 stories and almost 100,000 square feet, will be built within the footprint of the existing campus, and will open on to West 28 Street. The LEED silver structure will incorporate state-of-the-art building management systems, a green roof, and a solar grid that uses both special lenses and a tracking technology to concentrate the sun’s energy to power the building. The facility will include both academic and student life spaces, including smart classrooms, studios, laboratories, and display and exhibition spaces. The building is welcomed by the community and has received a unanimous endorsement from Community Board 5.

Designed by the award-winning New York architectural firm SHoP Architects in a design competition sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the building will feature a glass facade, permitting passersby to see inside for a view of college life at FIT. The competition was the result of a $75,000 award from the NEA as part of its New Public Works initiative to help develop high-quality design in the public realm.

The building’s final design is anticipated to take one year and followed by three years of construction.
“FIT is unique because it is located directly in the heart of the industries that it serves. Yet, the current structures that comprise the campus miss the opportunity to express the dynamic interaction between the academy and the professional world. We see this project as a unique opportunity to reconnect and reevaluate these relationships,” said SHoP partner, Gregg Pasquarelli.

FIT is internationally recognized for its wide range of programs in design and business. The college offers an affordable higher education experience with real-world opportunities that are closely aligned with the rapidly changing creative industries. Its programs and students are key contributors to the retail, apparel, advertising, marketing, design, and other creative industries, including toy and beauty, all anchored here in New York City. FIT educates more than 10,000 students annually in these growing fields, drawing regional, national, and international talent to the city. As measured by retention, graduation, and employment-upon-graduation rates, the college is one of the highest achieving community colleges in the City and State of New York.


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**ABOUT THE FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**
The Fashion Institute of Technology, a college of the State University of New York, has been a world leader in career education in art, design, business, and technology for 70 years. With a curriculum that provides a singular blend of hands-on, practical experience, classroom study, and a firm grounding in the liberal arts, FIT offers a wide range of outstanding programs that are affordable and relevant to today’s rapidly changing industries. The college offers nearly 50 majors and grants AAS, BFA, BS, MA, MFA, and MPS degrees, preparing students for professional success and leadership in the global marketplace.

For more information, visit http://news.fitnyc.edu.