

NEWS

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BGA Completes 9th Season of Washington Architectural Foundation's *Architecture in Schools* program

Bowie Gridley Architects' (BGA) community work with Kelly Fister's First grade class at Ross Elementary School in Dupont Circle concluded on December 7th. As the second successful pairing with Ms. Fister's class, the project marked BGA's 9th consecutive year working with Washington Architectural Foundation (WAF) on their *Architecture in Schools* program.

BGA's Fall 2012 project, entitled "Building Our Workplace within the Community," involved the assignment of a different profession from an air force officer, a mayor, a nurse, a judge, to a zoo keeper, among others and challenged the students to consider the structural and aesthetic qualities that define a building housing their professions. The 8-week long program—driven by an open dialogue and hands-on work—began with several weeks of introductory information on architecture, communities, and patterns or designs, including a walk-around of their own community to give the students a grasp of different architecture styles and periods. With guidance and oversight from BGA volunteers, the students designed corresponding structures from beginning to end, with increasing levels of detail.

WAF's *Architecture in Schools* program is part of a growing national movement to incorporate science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) into school curricula. The program enriches learning by teaching young children valuable STEM skills in addition to design, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving. Once completed, all projects are showcased in a week-long exhibit at the District Architecture Center in Penn Quarter in Washington, DC. At the end of the week, all firms, teachers, and students who participated in the program attend a reception thrown by the WAF, during which each classroom presents their projects to the attendees. This year, BGA utilized photography in their classroom to produce a time-lapse video that demonstrates the progression of the students' projects from beginning to end. The video can be found online at <https://vimeo.com/55376778>.

Volunteers from BGA this year included Sebastian von Marschall; Karen Andrews; Sarah Naranch; Heather Wnuk, RA; Barbara Crail; Richard Lyew, AIA and Dimitar Dimitrov. "It's important for BGA to be involved in the DMV's school programs," stated Sebastian von Marschall, who has served as BGA's coordinator for the project for the past 3 years. "As a DC architecture firm known for its work in educational institutions, we recognize the importance of

giving back to the community in a meaningful way. The kids are always the highlight of the experience, and it's just fun!"

BGA looks forward to continued involvement with WAF on their *Architecture in Schools* program and the opportunity to work with outstanding teachers like Kelly Fister. More information on the program can be found online at www.wafonline.org/architecture-schools.

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Founded in 1981, Bowie Gridley Architects specializes in work for institutions of community significance - academic and student life facilities for major schools and universities, performing arts centers, libraries, athletic and recreational facilities, museums and cultural centers. The architecture, planning and interior design firm is based in historic Georgetown and works with clients throughout the U.S and abroad.