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Four architects from Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company won a national design competition sponsored by the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International, www.acuho-i.org.

Yang Tian, Suping Li, Yuzhu Zheng and Nathan Herald entered the competition as net+work+camp+us to explore what happens to campus residence life when “every space is a potential learning space.” The group was advised by Rob Reis, AIA, LEED AP.

The team’s concept conveys an essential message about what can be, about student’s new way of living and learning, about the impact of new technologies, about new methods of exchange, and new social relationships in an ever-changing information age.

ACUHO-I’s competition rules emphasized flexibility and sustainability. This solution was about the architecture, but also in thinking about how the architecture could participate in and foster community in a reality that is evolving in terms of technology, teaching and learning. New technology should facilitate connections among people instead of becoming a barrier in the real world. As a built environment, net+work+camp+us becomes a interface between individual students and the community, between the real and virtual world, between local and global.

The 21st Century Project www.21stCenturyProject.com is a multi-phased initiative leading to the construction of a new type of residential facility for colleges and universities. In addition to eventually creating one or more prototypical facilities based on competition ideas, the project will assist colleges and universities in designing residential facilities that reflect the ever-changing roles that residences play in the collegiate experience. The first competition in 2007 explored the “unit,” or student room. That phase was won by Jonathan Levy Architects of Boston. In the next phase, three colleges will be challenged to develop programs for new residence halls using ideas that the project has generated.