



## University of King's College Unveils Design for One of the Largest Campus Renewals in its History



Concept Design of SEC Project - Exterior View from Quad

Diamond Schmitt/  
Abbott Brown

**For immediate release**

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(Halifax, NS) — Yesterday, University of King's College unveiled the architectural concept designs for one of the most ambitious campus renewal projects in the university's rich 236-year history. [The Southeast Corner Project](#) (SEC) will be home for the King's School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing, and include a new Athletic Centre with wellness and student services, along with ultra-modern residence space for up to 100 students.

President William Lahey hosted the unveiling of designs by architects Diamond Schmitt in association with Abbott Brown in the outdated gym, built in 1962, that the 86,000-square-foot SEC building will replace. This phase of the SEC design has been made possible due to a generous \$1-million donation

from the Alpha Aquilae Foundation, the family foundation created by King's Chancellor Debra Deane Little and her husband Bob Little.

"The Southeast Corner Project is an investment in excellence and a bold addition to our storied Quad," said President Lahey. "From the very beginning, almost two years ago, we have been committed to a uniquely collaborative process that requires active, meaningful input from faculty, students, community members, and Mi'kmaw and African Nova Scotian partners."

Ann Sylliboy, Director of Post Secondary Education, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, and member of the Indigenous advisory forum at King's (the Mawaknutma'tnej Circle) addressed the impact and outcome of the collaboration. "This remarkable act of inclusion and partnership ensures that a Mi'kmaw and Indigenous Student Centre inside the SEC becomes a place to celebrate the wisdom, storytelling, design traditions, material culture and history of the Mi'kmaw people," said Sylliboy.

Architects Diamond Schmitt and Abbott Brown believe they have delivered a concept design that echoes the many conversations that informed their work and contributes to King's storied Quad in a way that remains true to Andrew Cobb's original 1928 design.

"The Southeast Corner Project will be a unique structure that balances the insular and historic setting of the Oxford-inspired Andrew Cobb Quad with the needs of a more open and inclusive campus," explained Diamond Schmitt architect Martin Davidson, whose company boasts an extensive portfolio that includes work at many Canadian universities, the Senate of Canada, and the David Geffen Hall renovation at New York City's Lincoln Center. "We're excited to work with King's and its wider community in realizing this transformational project."





Concept Design of SEC Project - View onto Quad

Diamond Schmitt/  
Abbott Brown

The first three floors of the new building will be home to the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing and include Canada's first centre for excellence in podcasting, an open newsroom, audio, video and media labs, computer labs, offices and auditorium. The jewel in the design is a galleria that opens to the Quad and serves as a warm, welcoming gathering space. Below grade will be a modern, full-size gymnasium as well as weight, cardio and physiotherapy rooms. The upper floors will provide affordable, accessible and flexible on-campus housing for up to 100 students.

President Lahey emphasized that the design is more than a just an act of campus renewal, calling it a generational opportunity to reflect King's ambition to lead the future of journalism, truth sharing and diverse storytelling.

"This will be a worthy home for our Journalism programs that continue to impress on both local and national scenes, with a lengthy list of hugely accomplished journalists working across Canada," said Lahey. "At the same time, we are creating space for our growing MFA programs that have become huge creative and economic engines at King's, as well as building a comfortable home for our students and faculty, where we can live, learn and grow together."

"The Southeast Corner Project will provide a stunning venue for our mighty Blue Devils," said Lahey, noting that King's varsity teams "perennially punch above their weight, producing championship teams across the region and across this country."

In his closing remarks, Lahey stated that the SEC Project is delivering what our society and world needs more than ever. "We are building a home for truth sharing and diverse storytelling that authentically

reflects our communities, and indeed our nation,” he said. “With this project we are championing ambition over doubt.”

**More information:**

- [Learn more about the SEC Project](#) (including an animated video of the design concepts)
- [Read President Lahey’s remarks](#)
- [Additional quotes from community members in support of the SEC Project](#)
- [Image gallery and photo captions](#)

**About the University of King’s College**

Established in 1789, King's is Canada’s oldest chartered university and is associated with Dalhousie University. A small and extraordinarily lively academic community located in Halifax (Kjipuktuk), Nova Scotia, King’s is known nationally and internationally for its highly acclaimed interdisciplinary programs in the humanities, including its renowned Foundation Year Program, its professional programs in journalism and its fine arts programs in creative writing.

[ukings.ca](http://ukings.ca)

**About Diamond Schmitt**

Diamond Schmitt is a global architecture firm that designs transformative, purpose-driven, and highly sustainable buildings across sectors. Delivering innovative architecture that empowers people, communities, and organizations to harness change for the greater public good, Diamond Schmitt employs a collaborative research process to create bold designs recognized for their exceptional performance, meticulous craftsmanship and versatility of space. The firm has designed academic spaces for renowned post-secondary institutions across North America—including the Emily Carr University of Art + Design in Vancouver, the Peter A. Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia and Lazaridis Hall at the University of Waterloo. Current academic projects include The New Vic at McGill University and the Temerty Faculty of Medicine’s new James and Louise Temerty Building at the University of Toronto. Diamond Schmitt has offices in Toronto, Vancouver and New York.

[dsai.ca](http://dsai.ca)

**About Abbott Brown**

Abbott Brown Architects was founded in 2013 by Jane Abbott and Alec Brown, who between them have over 45 years of industry experience. The office has earned a reputation for cultivating bold, responsive design solutions, particularly in public and historic contexts. Abbott Brown has, over its short history, won nine Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor’s Awards for Architecture, in addition to other local and national accolades. The thrust of their work is on developing and championing effective architectural design that balances the richness of extant culture and context with a modern approach to form, space and the user experience. Current projects include the Pool Pavilion on the Halifax Common, renovations to the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown as well as the Turret Arts Space (Khyber Building) in Halifax.

[abbottbrown.ca](http://abbottbrown.ca)

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