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National Ideas Competition for the Washington Monument Grounds

www.wamocompetition.org

Washington Monument Competition Opens Registration

September 1, 2010 Washington, DC – Individuals 12 or older with an idea for making the Washington Monument grounds more welcoming, educational, and better used by the public can now register for the National Ideas Competition for the Washington Monument Grounds. Registration must be done online by October 31st at www.wamocompetition.org.

“We’ve heard from people all over the country excited about the Competition so we’re expecting a flood of registrations especially now that schools and universities are back in session,” said architect James Clark who chairs the Steering Committee for the Competition.

The competition, Clark said, is about ideas, and they don't have to be just design ideas, so professionals won't have an advantage. “It has something for everyone – art, architecture, landscape architecture, history, civics, geography, ecology, environmental science, even engineering.”

The idea for the competition came out of a realization by local historians and designers that past designs for the Monument grounds were never realized and maybe are no longer the best solution for the American people. The aim is to spark a lively national conversation about the monument, George Washington, American history, founding ideals, and the importance of this 60-acre symbolic public open space in the heart of the capital.

The Competition website includes further information about the program, registration, and educational materials. The “Resources” page has been developed to help people learn more about the Monument. It includes a short history video, historic maps and views, the latest FEMA flood map, aerial views, and engineering studies.

Among intriguing historical facts is an explanation of why the Monument grounds were never completed. Few people realize that the Washington Monument was built on the banks of the Potomac River and that the land around it is fill. Historically, this has caused concern that cutting into the soil for new construction could undermine the Monument’s foundation, which is not built to bedrock. Clark says that while this condition might inspire some Competition entries to take on the problem, it will not be a factor for the jury evaluating ideas.

Entries are welcome from individuals or teams of up to 10 people. The cost per entry is \$25 for individuals or teams 18 and older and \$10 for under 18.

For more information, go to www.wamocompetition.org

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