

## **Historic Virginia Key Beach Park is featured in Design Competition**

The South Florida Chapter of the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) is participating in the Natural Talent 2007 Design Competition and Historic Virginia Key Beach Park is the center of attention.

The Natural Talent 2007 Design Competition is being led locally by the USGBC South Florida Chapter's Founder and President Carolyn Mitchell, Director of Landscape Architecture for the architecture and design firm Zyscovich, Inc. The Competition provides an applied learning experience in the principles of integrated design, sustainability, innovation, and social consciousness; all of which are components of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System.

"Along with the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust's mission to honor and share the rich cultural history of Historic Virginia Key Beach with the world is our responsibility to foster the perpetuation of the natural, native environment that exist on the natural barrier island of Virginia Key," explained David Shorter, Executive Director of the Trust.

The competition is open to all university level students and individuals with less than five (5) years experience in the building industry. The competition challenges the students to design a LEED Platinum beach pavilion (the highest LEED level) to serve as "home base" for nature study programs, group camping and as a rental space for parties. The pavilion should have an environmentally sensitive and regionally appropriate design theme and embody the principles of Green Building in a visible and educational way. The pavilion should be a building that teaches and fascinates.

"We've been paying close attention to historic and environmental preservation during the restoration of the historic beach park," said, Guy Forchion, Director of Operations for the Trust, "this design competition is another step in that direction; I'm excited to see what the students come up with."

The local competition's top winner will move on to compete for a national award at Greenbuild LA 2007, the USGBC's Annual Green Building Conference and Expo, where finalists' entries will be displayed and where final judging will occur. Greenbuild 2007 will be held in Los Angeles, CA, October 17-19, 2007.