As a result of CoA student work, a piece of San Antonio’s Fort Sam Houston will soon be included in the Library of Congress Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Following strict archival quality standards, students in Professor Sue Ann Pemberton’s Measured Drawings class submitted drawings of Building 2157, an ammunition building located at Fort Sam Houston, to the national competition. The winning drawings will become a permanent part of the HABS collection at the Library of Congress, the largest and most heavily used section of the Library’s holdings.

In addition to winning the third place National Peterson Prize in the HABS competition last year, UTSA’s College of Architecture has forged a new relationship with the Society for the Preservation of Historic Fort Sam Houston. The students provided the architectural drawings free of charge as a class project and the Society presented scholarship money to further support the documentation and appreciation of historic buildings.

The relationship between Fort Sam Houston and the CoA started four years ago when, in Lt. General John McGiffert’s name, a scholarship was offered to graduate students who had successfully completed course work in historic preservation. McGiffert, a three star general, graduated from Virginia Military Institute, completed a distinguished career as the Commander of the Fifth U.S. Army, and studied architecture before becoming a general. When he retired to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, he became the executive director of the Institute of Texan Cultures.

For the past three years, retired General Ralph Haines has been chairman and official donor to the Society. Haines, a four star general, graduated class valedictorian from Texas Military Institute in 1935 and went on to graduate from the United States Military Academy in 1935. He is one of the most decorated generals in United States history, having served as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1968. Both McGiffert and Haines went on to support the Society out of their extreme interest in historic preservation.

UTSA CoA has submitted six similar projects at the national and state level, placing four times. The annual competition is endowed by the National Park Services, the American Institute of Architects, and The Athenaeum of Philadelphia. The Society for the Preservation of Historic Fort Sam Houston also plans to continue the annual scholarship, adding drawings to its own museum and staying committed to increasing knowledge and appreciation for historic preservation.