

NKBA | KBIS

Student Design Competition

2025-2026 | Official Rules & Entry Requirements



About the NKBA | KBIS Student Design Competition

Winning this prestigious competition increases industry visibility and peer recognition, offers valuable publicity and networking opportunities, and acknowledges the talent of aspiring kitchen and bath designers. Students must plan beautiful, safe, and functional spaces, incorporating creative design statements and aesthetically pleasing design solutions.

NKBA Student Members may enter the kitchen competition, the bath competition, or both. Their designs must be based on the client requests and plans provided.

Who Can Enter

Entrants must be NKBA Student Members enrolled in an educational institution on the date of submission. No cost for students to join NKBA.

Visit [here](#) to register as an NKBA Student Member. Except for experience derived from an internship, entrants must neither have worked in a professional residential design capacity (including interior design, architecture and related fields), nor have been paid for any design services rendered. This includes professional experience gained outside the United States and Canada.

Projects entered must be completed individually by the student designer. Co-designers are not permitted.



How to Enter

NKBA uses Award Force, an awards management software program, to manage the student design competition entries. Students can log on and create an account, submit a portion of the project and return to make final revisions before submitting the completed project by the deadline date.

Please include a headshot with your Award Force entry. Headshots can be any appropriate image (including portrait selfies).

Students can upload items individually as each section is completed. There is also the flexibility to edit the project, while it's in progress. No edits will be accepted after June 5, 2026. Submissions do not have to be in one PDF.

Entries must be submitted no later than June 5, 2026 at 5:00 PM Eastern Time. Incomplete entries will be disqualified.

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR PROJECT](#)

Winning Entries

The top winners in both the kitchen and the bath competitions will be recognized by their peers and industry professionals at the Design Competition Awards ceremony held during the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) 2026.

The winning designs will also be featured in an NKBA newsletter article, and awarded the following:

- First Place \$5,000 Scholarship**
- Second Place \$2,500 Scholarship**
- Third Place \$1,000 Scholarship**

Award winners will receive complimentary KBIS 2027 registration in Las Vegas, including one expo floor pass, admission to the design awards ceremony, hotel accommodations, and airfare.

Entries Must Be Submitted No Later Than Friday, June 5, 2026, 5:00 PM Eastern Time.

The NKBA is not responsible for those entries that are not submitted by the deadline.

Submission Requirements

- Review attached rubric for full list of expectations.
- Separate entry forms are required for each project submission; one entry for kitchen and one entry for bath.
- Drawings should be clean, easy to understand, and professionally presented. Entries must be submitted digitally utilizing 11" x 17" page size or larger, such as 18" x 24".
- Drawings may be hand or computer-drafted black-lined originals or scans.
- Required drawings include a floor plan with construction changes identified, renderings, and elevations (of every wall with cabinets and/or appliances) following NKBA Graphics and Presentation Standards (fully dimensioned). No color may be used on drawings, other than on perspectives and renderings.
- Design statements must be typed and should not exceed 500-1000 words in length. Design statements may be in narrative or bulleted format. Entries submitted without a design statement will be disqualified.
- A concept board must be submitted digitally. This should include images and may include a material legend or labels for each product.
- **Personal identification and school identification must not appear anywhere on the drawings, file names, or concept board. Inclusion of personal identification information on any of the previously mentioned items will result in an automatic failure.**
- Colored perspectives and detailed drawing(s) of special construction to convey the concept are required.



Entry Checklist

Please review this checklist before submitting your entry:

- Separate entry form for each submission: one for kitchen and one for bath.
- Separate design statements detailing the creative solution for the kitchen and/or bath projects.
- Include color perspective and/or detailed drawings of special construction design features.

The following drawings must follow the NKBA Graphics & Presentation Standards (1/2 inch" scale) and may be submitted on one or multiple floor plan pages:

- Floor Plan (fully dimensioned with specifications with construction & mechanical changes).
- Elevations of every wall with cabinets and/or appliances (fully dimensioned).

Judging

Entries will be judged on visual appeal, creativity, the elements and principles of design, the NKBA's 4th Edition *Kitchen & Bath Planning Guidelines* and NKBA Graphics & Presentation Standards. These topics can be found in the Kitchen & Bath Design Presentation and Kitchen & Bath Design Principles volumes of the NKBA Professional Resource Library or Knowledge Base. Students should refer to these resources when designing their projects.

The NKBA reserves the right to disqualify an entry before, during, or after the contest judging.

In the case of disqualification after an awards ceremony, the entrant will be required to return the award, and the association may make a public announcement.

The NKBA reserves the right to determine the number of entries that will be recognized with an award.

Individuals selected to judge the NKBA Student Design Competition are practicing, NKBA certified professionals.

The judges' decision is final.

Competition Scenario

This year's competition invites you to reimagine the kitchen and primary bath for Camila and Mateo Williams-Garcia and their vibrant family of five. Residing in the lively Dallas-area neighborhood of Preston Hollow, the Williams-Garcias are deeply rooted in their community and envision their home as the heart of family, friendship, and function. With three active children, plus a rotating door of friends, neighbors, and relatives, this household regularly hosts gatherings of all sizes. Your challenge is to design spaces that support their lifestyle now and into the future, with bold style, thoughtful organization, and warm hospitality at the forefront.

Meet the Williams-Garcias

Camila is the CFO of a successful Dallas-based law firm, while Mateo works as a nurse at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Outside of his career, Mateo is a board member of their neighborhood HOA and co-chairs the quarterly block party. Camila and Mateo have three active children, ranging from middle school to high school. Their eldest daughter, Elena, is a high school junior who enjoys playing soccer and competing in her school's annual robotics competition. Emilio, their son, is an eighth-grader who plays football and participates on the debate team. Their youngest, Gabriela, is in sixth grade and loves tennis and theater. Each of the kids enjoys cooking and frequently initiates baking projects or helps their parents in the kitchen.

With one child already thinking about college, Camila and Mateo are thoughtfully preparing their forever home to grow with their family. They know how quickly time passes and want to create a space that not only supports their kids into adulthood but also welcomes them back with open arms. For them, this home is a foundation for every chapter to come.

**Exterior images of the home are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be exact interpretations of the design competition scenario or floor plans. Renderings are provided by Yasir Mehar.*



The Great Indoors: Texas Edition

Kitchen Remodel:

The kitchen is the epicenter of the Williams-Garcia home, and they are seeking a design that enhances both everyday living and frequent entertaining. The new kitchen must accommodate dual cooks with induction cooking, expanded fresh food storage, and a discrete “back of house” scullery area equipped with an additional sink and dishwasher to manage cleanup behind the scenes. A designated beverage station outside of the main fridge is essential, and the layout should support casual weekday breakfasts with at least three counter-height seats, while also offering flexibility for larger table gatherings. The design should celebrate Camila’s love of maximalist style, with curated color and pattern combinations, and Mateo’s passion for biophilic design, ensuring a seamless visual and spatial connection to their well-used backyard and patio.

Primary Bath Remodel:

The couple’s primary suite must offer a serene escape from their bustling household. Think spa-like sanctuary with a cozy, sophisticated atmosphere. Camila and Mateo envision a spacious, dual-temperature shower, two vanities (together or separate), and a layout that allows for some commode privacy without the need for a separate room. While reconfiguring the closet space is optional, maintaining equivalent storage is key. Enhancements such as a small built-in fridge for sparkling water and skincare, and access to warm towels, will elevate their daily routine. Walls within the primary suite may be relocated freely, offering flexibility to design a retreat that truly reflects their needs and personalities.

**Exterior images of the home are for illustrative purposes only. They are not intended to be exact interpretations of the design competition scenario or floor plans. Renderings are provided by Yasir Mehar.*



The Great Indoors: Texas Edition

Key Property Information:

- The overall home design, including the exterior, is considered transitional, blending traditional and modern elements.
- No changes may be made to any exterior windows or walls in the entire home: the client recently replaced all their doors and windows.
- Walls surrounding the two stairways cannot be modified.
- Appliances from any brand are permitted.

Kitchen-Specific Information

- The garage door entry cannot move.
- The load-bearing beam between the kitchen and breakfast/family rooms must remain: it cannot be recessed into the floor above. The 30” wall to the right of the beam cannot be moved.
- Walls around the downstairs half bath may not be moved, but the two pantries can be deleted/relocated.
- The entry from the kitchen/pantry area to the dining room may be opened or relocated. Other than altering the entry, the dining room cannot be changed.
- There is a mudroom space in the garage; no need to add a mudroom space to the kitchen.
- The same flooring continues throughout the kitchen, breakfast nook, dry bar, and pantry areas. Changes to flooring are welcome but must be addressed accordingly.

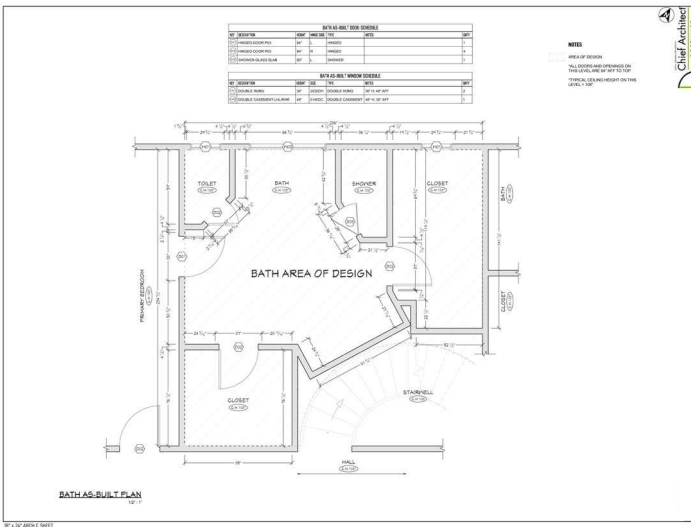
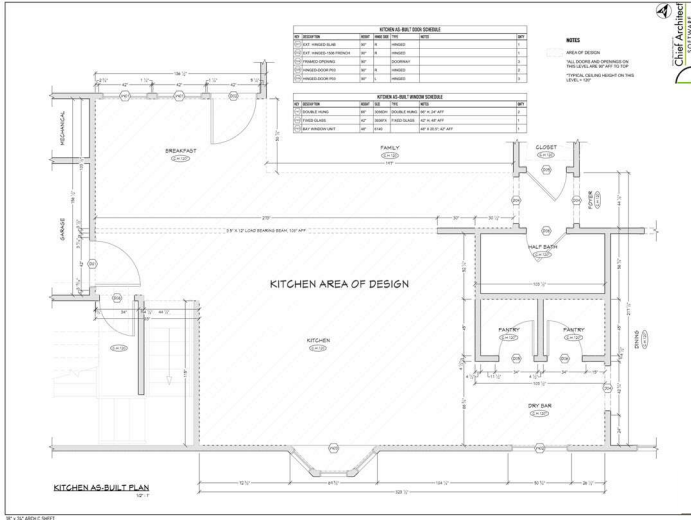
Primary Bath-Specific Information

- Upstairs, the primary bedroom, hallway, and bath/closet off bedroom 3 may not be modified: all the walls inside the primary bathroom/closet suite may be deleted/relocated.
- The entry from the primary bedroom to the bathroom/suite may be relocated.
- The gym already includes a full bath.

The Floor Plans

The floor plans below are for reference only and are NOT to scale.

[Please click here to view full 18"x24" floor plans built to scale on nkba.org](http://nkba.org)



Submission Scoring Rubric

This rubric is designed to assess multiple aspects of a design submission, balancing creative, technical, and practical considerations. Each category includes guidance bullet points for context, though these should not be interpreted as equally weighted criteria within their sections.

Category	Value
<p>Overall Design Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses client requests • Demonstrates functional use of space, including effective appliance integration. • Is executable and possesses real-world “sales potential” 	20
<p>Design Statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly articulates design concept • Explains connection between concept and execution • Expresses innovative, user-centered solutions 	10
<p>Integration of NKBA Kitchen & Bath Planning Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egress and passageways • Fixture and equipment planning • Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and safety • Activity centers and adjacencies 	30
<p>NKBA Graphic and Presentation Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of title block, scale, and text • Inclusion of legends, specifications, notes, and details • Dimensioned floor, construction, mechanical, and elevation plans 	20
<p>Aesthetics and Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual appeal • Creative problem solving • Use of materials, including appliances 	20

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