

CHICAGO, March 7, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined Illinois Tech President John L. Anderson today to announce that John Ronan Architects and Shepley Bulfinch will design the planned Ed Kaplan Family Institute for Innovation and Tech Entrepreneurship on the University's Main Campus in Bronzeville.

John Ronan Architects, a Chicago-based, internationally recognized architecture and urban design firm, is the design architect. Boston-based Shepley Bulfinch is the programming architect on the project. Construction on the \$40 million, 100,000-square-foot facility could begin as early as Summer 2015 with a completion date anticipated in 2017. The new facility will be located on Illinois Tech's Main Campus, which was designed by Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe; the specific site has not been determined.

Ed Kaplan, an IIT alumnus and long-time member of the University's Board of Trustees, along with his wife, Carol, made a gift of \$10 million to establish the Institute.

"The new Kaplan Institute at IIT further establishes Chicago as the place where the greatest 21<sup>st</sup> century innovations begin," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "This center will help today's students become the innovators of tomorrow—and provide businesses with a pipeline of new products, processes and talented graduates to hire."

With a focus on innovative thinking and transitioning new ideas into products and processes, the Kaplan Institute will house workshops, media labs, classrooms, collaborative spaces, and offices for the University's internationally-renowned Institute of Design, Idea Shop, and Entrepreneurship and Leadership Academies.

"The establishment of the Kaplan Institute is a defining milestone in IIT's history," Anderson says. "It will be transformational in terms of how we teach our students—and all IIT undergraduates will spend time here as part of their educational experience."

Kaplan, a Chicagoan who earned his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from IIT in 1965, co-founded Zebra Technologies, a global leader in bar code technology. "IIT will be transformed into a center of technical innovation in Chicago, says Kaplan. "The Center will help grow the tech-ecosystem here in Chicago and be a catalyst for innovation." Kaplan's \$10 million gift is a challenge grant and is in addition to the \$1 million he had previously given to support this initiative.

John Ronan, founder of John Ronan Architects, will lead the design of the new facility. Founded in 1999, John Ronan Architects rose to national prominence in 2004 with the winning design for the 500,000-square-foot Perth Amboy High School in New Jersey. The firm has been the recipient of two AIA Institute National Honor Awards—for the Gary Comer Youth Center and the Poetry Foundation, both in Chicago—and was recently ranked #3 in the nation by *Architect Magazine*. In 2010, Princeton Architectural Press published a monograph entitled, *Explorations: The Architecture of John Ronan*, and the firm's work has been exhibited internationally, including in *Iterations: John Ronan's Poetry Foundation*, an exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago that runs through March 2014.

"The aspirations for this project are nothing less than to transform the way in which students are educated at IIT to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. I am honored to play a role in this process and I look forward to the journey ahead," Ronan said.

Shepley Bulfinch, the award-winning programming architect for the Institute, is a national leader in the programming and planning of prototype collaboration spaces for some of the country's leading academic institutions, including the Harvard Innovation Lab; Duke University's Link Teaching and Learning Center; and collaborative engineering and learning environments for Johns Hopkins University. The firm has strong ties to Chicago that date back to 1892 when the firm (then Shepley Rutenburg & Coolidge) designed the Art Institute of Chicago as part of the World's Columbian Exposition.

"Shepley Bulfinch is honored to be partnering with IIT and John Ronan to create this ground-breaking institute for innovation," said Carole Wedge,

Shepley Bulfinch President

. "As a catalyst for the exploration of the nature of design and innovation, its impact will be felt from the IIT campus and the city of Chicago around the world."

**About Illinois Institute of Technology** Founded in 1890, Illinois Institute of Technology is a Ph.D.-granting university, located in Bronzeville on

Chicago's

South Side, with more than 7,800 students in engineering, science, architecture, design, applied technology, human sciences, business and law. Total enrollment in Fall 2013 was the highest since 1968—and the Fall 2013 full-time undergraduate enrollment was the largest it has been since 1981. Visit

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# Illinois Institute of Technology Names Two Architects With Chicago Ties for Planned Innovation Institute

Written by Australian Business

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