



## News from ACE National Spring 2011

### Several Firsts at the Fifth Annual

### CIRT-ACE National Design Competition Finals

The Construction Industry Round Table-ACE National Design Competition set new records in 2011. The number of competition entries almost doubled from the previous year. Thirty-seven entries, the most ever, were received from 21 affiliates, several of which participated for the first time.

Nine teams won awards, six runners-up and the three finalists from Frederick, Maryland, New York City, and the Palo Alto, California branch of the San Francisco Bay Area Affiliate. The 2011 competition marked the first time that all top three contenders were repeat finalists from earlier competitions.

Until now never before in competition history has the same affiliate earned top honors twice. After its win in 2008, Frederick walked away this year with another first place and a \$3,000 prize for its design of the Serenity Health Clinic in Baltimore. The highly green facility is designed to help alleviate the anxiety and boredom which patients feel when they visit a doctor.

In its second appearance in the competition finals, the Palo Alto team totally reconceived their school, Mountain View High School. This project won second place and a \$2,000 award. The third-place winner, Team 8 of New York City which placed first in 2009, designed a master plan for "Aquila Village," a military retirement community situated in Waco, Texas.

One student from each of the three top teams presented their project to a seven-person jury composed of CEOs from leading construction and design industry companies. Jurors posed probing questions to the student presenters.

Linda Figg, one of the competition jurors and CEO of Figg Engineering Group, found the students impressive. "The National Design Competition demonstrates the incredible talent, creativity and passion of students who will design and construct tomorrow's built environment. It is inspiring to see the knowledge they gained from this experience."



*(l to r) Charlie H. Thornton, Chairman/Founder of ACE, along with the presenters for the three winning teams; Joseph Chang (Peninsula Team 1, Palo Alto, CA), Malini Nambiar (Frederick, MD), and Shanna Ramsmoorj (Team 8, New York, NY). Followed by Mark Casso, CIRT President.*

Teams from Nashville, Washington, DC, and Connecticut (New Haven) were named first runners-up in the preliminary judging round. Chicago, Connecticut (Greater Bridgeport) and San Diego teams were second runners-up.

A more detailed report about the National Design Competition, as well as images of the three finalists' presentation boards, can be viewed [here](#).



*1st place winner presenter Malini Nambiar (Frederick, MD), 2nd place winner presenter Joseph Chang (Peninsula Team 1, Palo Alto, CA), and 3rd place winner presenter Shanna Ramsmoj (Team 8, New York, NY).*

## **Fast Start in Twin Cities**

The Twin Cities affiliate in Minnesota is ACE's newest program and also one of the fastest to get started. In less than a year, affiliate organizers ramped up from preliminary explorations to the first mentoring session.

During the first half of 2010, representatives from Mortenson Construction, PCL Construction, Associated Builders and Contractors, and Zurich (an insurance-based financial services company) initially discussed starting ACE. In the early fall via a conference call, the ACE national office reviewed with them the necessary start-up steps. By December, five other companies joined the original four, and a board of directors was created.



*Mentor Vicki Hooper (HGA) discusses the finer points of material properties while, Josh Cooper (PCL) and students look on.*

On March 1, 2011 six mentors began working with 11 students from Roosevelt High School in a Minneapolis inner city neighborhood. Affiliate organizers opted to start small with an abbreviated program. Counting a construction tour and the final presentation event, the program extended over seven bi-weekly sessions.

“Our pilot program has been completely dedicated to mentor development and student engagement,” explained Dylan VanAvery, one of the co-leaders of the program who is with Mortenson Construction. “We hand picked mentors from various backgrounds and aimed for a 1:2 mentor/student ratio.”

At each session mentors started with a short “day-in-the-life” discussion about various career paths in the integrated construction industry. Then students were challenged with hands-on activities developed by the mentors.

Many activities and the final project were linked to a timely theme of replacing the Metrodome stadium roof which collapsed late last year after a heavy snowfall. In early June at the final session, two teams will present their design concepts for a new roof.

Thanks to contributions from various companies, especially PCL Construction, the Twin Cities affiliate raised \$20,000 to give it a good financial foundation for its first few years. It plans to award two \$1,000 scholarships to students in the pilot program.

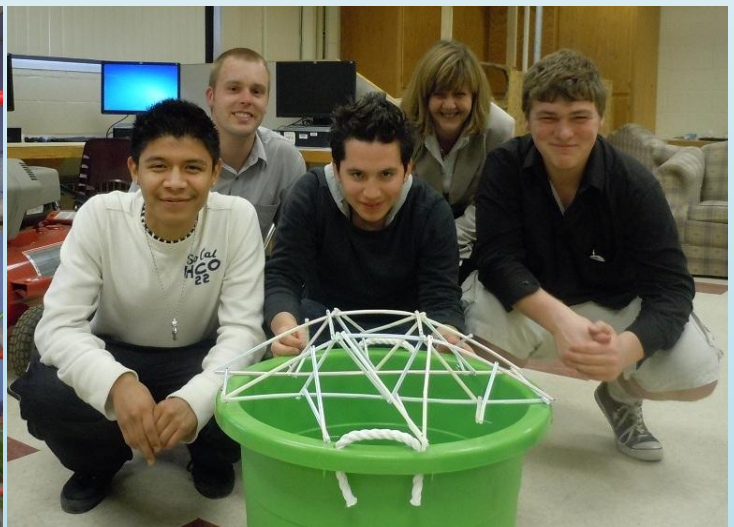
Beginning this fall, the Twin Cities affiliate will expand to three more inner city schools. Affiliate board members believe it important to work with populations under-represented in the building industry.

“We recognize the need for more females and minorities in our industry,” explained Paris Otremba, a co-leader of the program with PCL Construction. “ACE allows us to reach out to these demographics and encourage them to consider a career in design and construction.”

Recruiting mentors apparently will not be a problem. “We already have a waiting list of mentors for 2011-2012,” Otremba said. “This is a great problem to have!”



*Students and mentors posing after a tour and scavenger hunt at the Lakewood Mausoleum project site.*



*Oscar Martinez, Norberto Urgiles and Brennan Pulver (front - left to right) demonstrate their structural design for the Metrodome roof replacement. (back - left to right) Team mentors Josh Cooper from PCL and Vicki Hooper from HGA.*

## A Trio of Winning Mentors

In ACE's book, all mentors are winners because they successfully nurture the next generation of construction and design industry professionals. Three mentors, however, were standouts this spring. Aimée Lopez of the San Francisco Affiliate, Bryan Burke from the Frederick, Maryland Affiliate, and Miguel Cedeño with the Greater New York City Affiliate led their teams to the finals of the Construction Industry Round Table-ACE National Design Competition in Washington, D.C.



**Bryan Burke**, a civil engineer who runs his own company, Millennium Resource Engineering, has mentored for four years. He became interested in ACE after making a presentation to students several years ago.

Bryan leads a group of several mentors who work exclusively with students in their second or third years of ACE. His teams have enjoyed unparalleled success in the National Design Competition, having won first place in 2008 and 2011. This year all three teams he worked with entered the competition.

He has a simple tip for future teams entering the competition. "When in doubt about what to do, read the design guidelines. It's real easy to place all of your focus on what you think the project is, and to forget what the judges are looking for."

"The daily grind of the real world can really wear a mentor down," Bryan explains about his motivation to continue mentoring. "Contract deadlines, budgets, and sub-contracts, etc., just don't seem important – at least for a little while – when I am working with the future of our industry."



**Aimée Lopez** has mentored for five years, first with the Los Angeles Affiliate and during the past two years in Palo Alto with the San Francisco Bay Area Affiliate. She brings to her ACE students several years experience in construction management. Currently she is a project manager with O'Connor Construction Management.

Three Palo Alto teams entered the National Design Competition this year. Each team had its own set of one or two mentors, while Aimée and another mentor guided and worked with all three teams. One team earned second place in the competition. In 2008 another Palo Alto team won the same distinction.

Aimée loves mentoring. "I especially like how some ACE affiliates mentor students in rural and underprivileged areas, where those students, especially, are reminded that they too can become engineers, architects, and construction professionals."

Her advice to next year's competition contestants: "Learn SketchUp, do lots of research, put in more time into the project than the regular ACE program, and practice public speaking."



**Miguel Cedeño** has participated in the finals of the National Design Competition in two out of his three years as an ACE mentor. In 2009 Team 8 of New York City won top honors, and this year Team 8, led by Miguel and four other mentors, placed third. During his "day job," Miguel is a Registered Architect working at the New York City Department of Design and Construction.

The fact that Miguel did not have a program like ACE when he was in high school attracted him to become a mentor. The head of his agency also encouraged him to mentor since he had prior teaching experience.

The development of students as they take a project from conception to final presentation is what motivates Miguel to continue mentoring. "The students are highly motivated and appreciate good design and the impact which the execution of that design has on their surroundings."

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**FLASH!**

## National Happenings

ACE has just received its first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts after a competitive peer-reviewed process. The funds will help support a new ACE project – Green House Design Basics (GHDB) – primarily targeting high school freshmen and sophomores. Over the next two years, ACE will develop, test, and disseminate a curriculum for an eight-session program focusing on a sustainably designed house.

The GHDB will allow students, typically freshmen and sophomores, who are unsure about a career in the integrated construction industry to get exposed to it without a major commitment of time. Likewise, mentors who have limited time to devote to the full-scale ACE program will have a less burdensome option to mentor with GHDB. Finally, start-up affiliates not ready to deliver the regular 15-session program can use GHDB.

Stay tuned for more information as the project progresses.

### Friendly Reminders

#### **Call to Action**

#### **Students**

Your cooperation in completing a survey is urgently needed. If you have not done so already in the past three weeks, please fill out the web-based survey [NOW](#). ACE needs at least 2,000 current students to complete the survey in order to measure the degree of the program's impact.

#### **Students**

As the end of the school year comes to a close, please keep in mind that student registrations will also close for the summer. Registration will re-open for the 2011-2012 year on Monday, August 15, 2011.

#### **Students**

Juniors and seniors interested in deepening their knowledge of green design can sign up for the ACE-U.S. Green Building Council Sustainable Design Award at <http://sustainabledesign.acementor.org>.

This web-based program offers a chance for virtual one-on-one mentoring with green design experts. August 15 is the deadline for completing award requirements.

#### **Volunteers**

The Volunteer online registration (formerly called Mentor registration) has been updated to accommodate all participating volunteers in the ACE Program. Please register online and follow the background check directions carefully. Depending on your role with the organization a background check may be required.

#### **Affiliate Leaders**

The Annual Affiliate Program Report will be an electronic form this year and will be posted on the ACE Website on July 1st, in the *behind the scenes area*. A follow up email will follow with detailed instructions. All affiliate reports will be due on **July 29**. Please stay tuned for an email with more information and the required guidelines.

#### **Affiliate Leaders**

The ACE *behind the scenes area* of the website now has a new section that will allow each affiliate to confirm its compliance status. Affiliate leaders are encouraged to log into the database and select the "Access Affiliate" tab to see your status. For additional information please contact Catalina Warrick at [CWarrick@acementor.org](mailto:CWarrick@acementor.org).

#### **All**

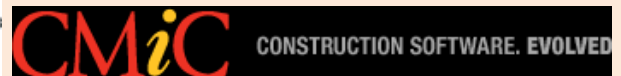
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## Calendar

<b>June 26-27, 2011</b>	<b>National Affiliate Council Meeting</b>	Hartford, CT
<b>July 22-23, 2011</b>	<b>Western Regional Affiliate Conference</b>	Sacramento, CA
<b>August 2011 dates pending</b>	<b>Great Lakes Regional Affiliate Conference</b>	Indianapolis, IN
<b>October 18, 2011</b>	<b>Fall National Board Meeting</b> (in conjunction with McGraw-Hill's Outlook Conference)	Washington, D.C.
<b>October 18, 2011</b>	<b>ACE is COOKING! 1st ACE National Chef Fundraiser</b>	Washington, D.C.

### New National Sponsors

ACE would like to welcome Liberty Mutual Insurance Company; Clark Construction Group, LLC; CMiC; F.J Sciamé Construction Company, Inc; Fugro Consultants, Inc; Plaza Construction; Rodgers Builders, Inc; Textura Corporation; Day & Zimmermann and Hunter Roberts Construction Group as our newest national sponsors. Beyond supporting ACE on a national level, these companies have strong regional presence and are anxious to get involved. If you would like to work with any of ACE's national sponsors, go to [www.acementor.org/sponsors](http://www.acementor.org/sponsors) to find one in your area.



ACE is a not-for-profit organization established in the District of Columbia in 2002 under Section 501(c)3 of the Federal tax code. Its 62 affiliates in 32 states operate in more than 200 cities.

[Make a tax-deductible gift](#) to ACE Mentor Program of America, Inc.

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