

**ACE Mentor Program of Hawaii
Wins First Ever National Design Competition for ACE Affiliates
Sponsored by the Construction Industry Round Table**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 27, 2007). Making its long trip to the nation's capitol worth their time, the ACE Mentor Program of Hawaii took home top honors as the winning entry in the first annual CIRT-ACE Design Competition conducted in conjunction with the Construction Industry Round Table's (CIRT) Spring Conference in Washington, DC. Hawaii had been one of three national finalists vying for a first place prize of three thousands dollars and bragging rights as the best student design presented by an affiliate from among themselves, ACE of New York City, and the ACE Mentoring Program of Greater Kansas City. The inaugural competition was a great success due to the hard work and diligence of all of the teams involved.

"Our team has learned how to collaborate to create a final product, as well as meet deadlines – all of which are very important life skills;" stated the Hawaii team, which captures both the spirit and purpose of the competition. Chief Judge, Charles Thornton, pointed out that the official package also reflected these sentiments when it noted that, "[m]ore important than the actual design solution, is the methods and processes used to arrive at a solution."

The design competition was launched as a collaborative effort between CIRT, which represents the senior executives of many of the leading firms heavily involved with the ACE, and the ACE Mentor Program of America as a means for CIRT to support the program as well as bring attention and focus to its important efforts to reach out to high school students who may be interested in better understanding the design and construction industry. To that end, ACE has been expanding rapidly over the past few years with a volunteer network of mentors and students arrayed in a national Affiliates system.

The design challenges were actual projects that attempted to stress the practical aspects of the profession, particularly with respect to constructability, use of materials, meeting deadlines, and establishing reasonable expenses or budgets. The three national finalists submitted entries tackling different challenges:

- Hawaii's entry was entitled "A Honu World" which offered a whole new approach to children playgrounds where island history, tradition, ecology, and fun all came together in the shape of the sea turtle ("honu").
- New York City's team presented "The SHELL-ter" an innovative single person self contained shelter intended for use in case of natural disasters or emergencies that displayed a large number of people in a given area.
- Kansas City's designed a small sports complex using innovative sustainability approaches and methods named "The Darwiche Memorial Sports Pavillion" (in honor of a teenage girl killed in a nearby neighborhood) that would offer kids and young adults an oasis of sporting and community activity to escape the local streets.

The teams were judged on four major elements: creativity, quality of presentation, design process, and design elements/aspects. The thought and effort that went into each of the entries, including the honorable mentions (from

Fredrick, Maryland; Dallas, Texas; and Rhode Island), reflected well on the collaborative approach created between the students and mentors which is at the very heart of the ACE program.

“The true goal is to judge the ability of the students to make a coherent, well thought out, clear presentations on their team’s design/construction approaches within the project’s objectives,” stated Mark A. Casso, President of CIRT.

The Round Table intends to hold its second design competition in 2008, and looks forward to an even larger participation among the growing number of ACE Affiliates.

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CIRT is a national business trade association composed of approximately 100 CEOs from the leading architectural, engineering, and construction companies doing business in the United States; these firms’ activities include billions of dollars in both public and private infrastructure projects that improve the quality of life for all Americans. For more information on this and other issues affecting the design and construction industry, check out: www.cirt.org

The ACE Mentor Program serves high school youth who are exploring careers in Architecture, Construction, or Engineering. The mentors are professionals from leading design and construction firms who volunteer their time and energy. The program is designed to engage, inform, and challenge youth. To find out more about an ACE Mentor program near you go to www.acementor.org