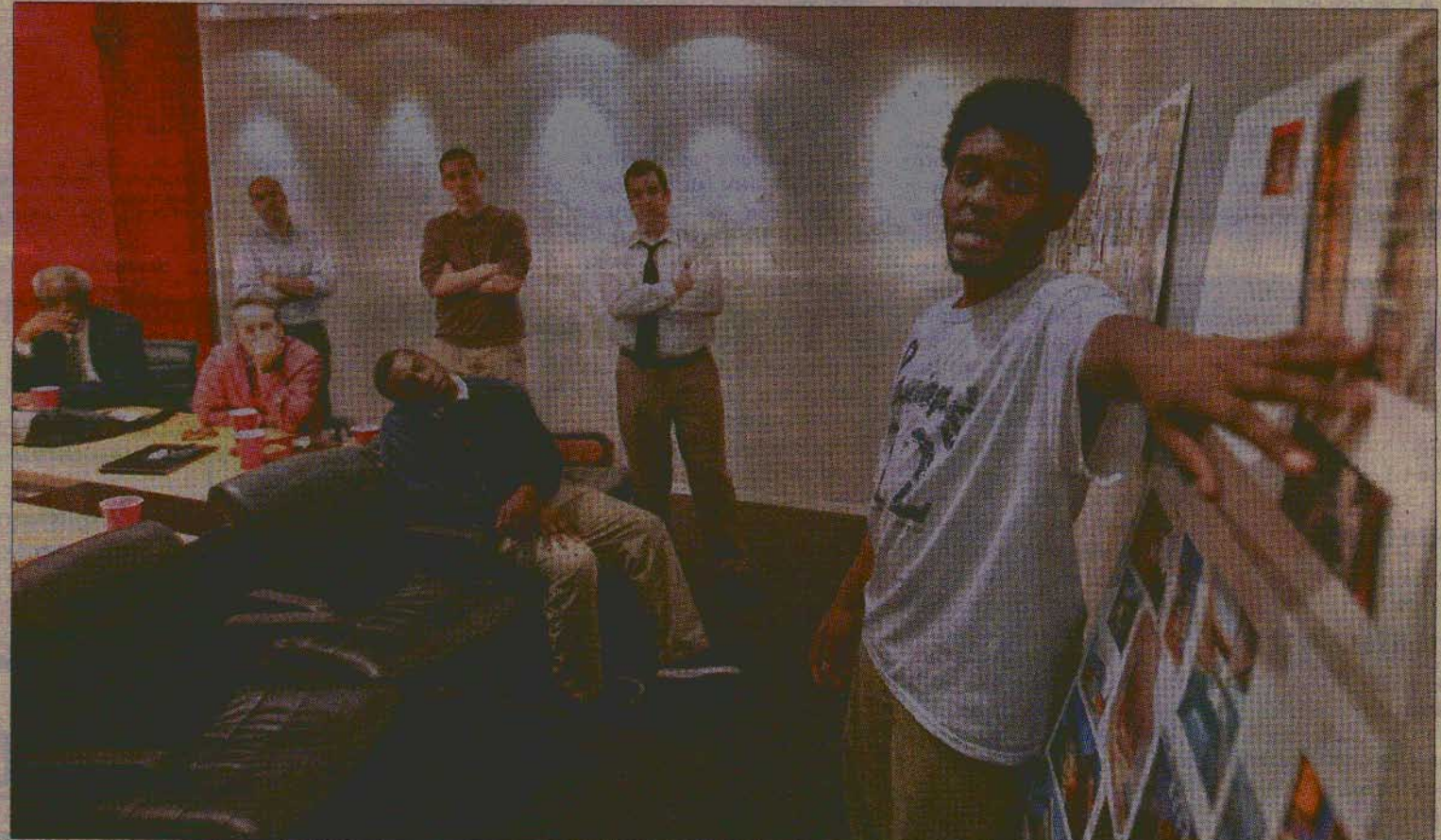


Mentors help build careers

Burke High students get boost in architecture, construction and engineering



WADE SPEES/STAFF

Burke High School senior Travis Salley makes a short presentation to fellow students and architects, construction managers and engineers during a mentoring tour at LS3P. A group of Charleston professionals in architecture, construction and engineering has formed to help students at Burke High School prepare for careers in their fields.

BY DIETTE COURRÉGE
dcourrage@postandcourier.com

Burke High School senior Darryl Lee knows he wants to be an engineer or an architect, but he's not sure which one.

He's learning about them, though, through a new mentor program that encourages students to pursue future careers in architecture, construction or engineering.

"It's a big opportunity to gain exposure to an area that I could be choosing as a career," he said. "It makes me even more interested."

A small group of Charleston professionals in those fields formed the



When I was a kid coming up in high school, I had no idea what was entailed in building a building. I wish I could've gone through this program.

Rob Turner, engineer who chairs the local ACE board



state's first affiliate of a national nonprofit program, ACE, and they kicked off the after-school program in January.

They're working with about

10 students at downtown Burke High, a high-poverty, academically struggling school. Statistics show building and construction industries will have up to 2 mil-

lion job openings in the next 10 years, and there aren't enough skilled workers to fill those jobs, said Rob Turner, an engineer who chairs the local ACE board. Finding diversity within that pool is an even greater challenge, he said.

The ACE program addresses both issues.

"When I was a kid coming up in high school, I had no idea what was entailed in building a building," he said. "I wish I could've gone through this program."

The program has seven mentors from ACE fields, and they'll meet

Please see **MENTORS**, Page 7A

ACE mentors help build careers

MENTORS From Page 1A

with students twice a month after school for two-hour sessions. They're introducing students to what's involved in those careers and taking them on field trips to local businesses.

On Wednesday, students visited LS3P, an architecture firm on the peninsula. Ben Anderson is one of the program's mentors and an LS3P architect, and he gave students a tour of the office, answering questions about everything from the interior architects' sample library to whether employees have to pay for the MoonPies in its vending machines (they do).

Anderson was a mentor for a well-developed ACE program in California, and he's looking forward to expanding the program here to more students in

more schools.

"There's been so much enthusiasm (from students) so far," he said.

Students, such as senior Quintra Gathers, said they had no idea that so much went into constructing a building.

Gathers has taken health science courses and plans to be a pediatrician, but she's had little exposure to architecture and construction courses. This gave her a chance to learn more, she said.

"I like math, and they say engineers do a lot of math," she said. "I'm always excited to learn something new and different."

Students soon will be working on a project in which they must design a senior lounge. With the help of their ACE mentors, Turner said they'll do every-

thing from researching cost estimates to figuring out the foundation needed to support a vending machine.

They'll present their project at the end of the year, and Turner said he'd love to find the funding to make it happen. The program doesn't require students to execute their plans, and research shows the model works. ACE participants nationally graduate high school at a higher rate than their peers, and 40 percent go into an engineering field, according to an ACE report.

In the future, Turner hopes to take the program to multiple Lowcountry schools and raise money so ACE students could apply for scholarships.

"We need support," he said.

Reach **Diette Courrégé** at 937-5546.

Obama: Israel unsure about strike

OBAMA From Page 1A

between our two countries than we've ever had," Obama said, adding, "We are going to be sure that we work in lockstep as we proceed to try to solve this — hopefully diplomatically."

The United States is leading that persuasion initiative, even though Washington largely has concluded that outside argument will have little effect on Israeli decision-making.

"Any kind of additional military activity inside the Gulf is disruptive and has a big effect on us," Obama said. "It could have a big effect on oil prices. We've still got troops in Afghanistan, which borders Iran."

As for the danger of retaliation by Iran against the United

We are going to be sure that we work in lockstep as we proceed to try to solve this — hopefully diplomatically.

President Barack Obama on working with Israel



States, Obama said, "We don't see any evidence that they have those intentions or capabilities right now."

Obama said Iran is feeling the pinch of sanctions but Israel is

rightfully worried about its security.

On the economy, Obama was pressed about a prediction he made three years ago on Super Bowl Sunday: "If I don't have this done in three years, then there's gonna be a one-term proposition." Republican leaders, including Mitt Romney, the front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination, have seized on that remark as millions of people are still hurting economically.

Obama said Sunday, "I deserve a second term, but we're not done."

He said the direction of the economy has turned around significantly since three years ago, pointing to a new jobs report last week that showed a surge in hiring.



22 WINDERMERE BLVD.
(843) 571-2755

*King Street
Quality,
West Ashley
Prices*



4 AVONDALE AVE.
(843) 225-4230