ACE Mentor Program Yearbook 2021
Raising Awareness, Creating Opportunities, Making a Difference
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 2021 CMiC-ALLEN BERG MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Carrying on the tradition of community stewardship: The 2021 CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship grant, in partnership with the ACE Mentor Program of America, opens the doors to myriad opportunities for 37 gifted students.

As an organization committed to inspiring and supporting up-and-comers in the fields of architecture, construction and engineering, CMiC — a leader in construction ERP and project management software — continues its tradition of supporting the ACE Mentor Program of America through the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship grant.

Designed to provide financial assistance to students with limited means, this year’s grant of $400,000 will support 37 students as they pursue post-secondary programs in architecture, construction and engineering (ACE). To this end, the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship creates opportunities for underprivileged students to realize their academic and professional aspirations.

Scholarship recipients were selected on the basis of merit and financial need. This fall, all award winners will enroll in accredited college programs in ACE fields as well as interior design.

“To our delight, within the past few years, we’ve seen a steady increase in the number of female participants and winners as well as those who represent minority groups,” says Mauricio Barberi, Chief Marketing Officer at CMiC. “We sincerely hope this trend continues as current students become leaders and inspire future students.”

The grant was established back in 2018 in memory of late CMiC founder, Allen S. Berg. The spirit of the grant is to preserve and extend Mr. Berg’s rich legacy. Allen Berg was a lifelong learner, devoted to educational and community causes. This scholarship in his memory carries on his legacy as an advocate for equal opportunities to drive positive change in the world.

“We are very proud of the exceptional students who were awarded this year’s scholarships,” says Jeff Weiss, Chief Revenue Officer at CMiC. “We look forward to following their journeys and learning about their contributions as they grow into professionals in the ACE industry.”

CMiC’s partnership with the ACE Mentor Program of America is an essential component of the company’s broader commitment to corporate social responsibility.

Allen S. Berg
1948–2015

To learn more about CMiC, please visit www.cmicglobal.com
Once again, I was amazed at the resilience, commitment and flexibility of our mentors, students and our organization overall to succeed in our mission even under challenging times. The creativity employed by all to stay connected was impressive. Our affiliates did an outstanding job of organizing effective mentorship for our thousands of students. Just as significant, we were able to give hundreds of thousands in scholarships. We greatly appreciate CMiC for once again awarding over $400,000 in scholarships through the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship Program, an initiative that honors industry visionary Allen Berg.

In this challenging year, we were also able to introduce two big initiatives that I believe are expanding our ability to make a difference.

The first was the Summer Mentorship Experience, initiated by ACE National Board Member Ross Myers, chairman and CEO of Allan Myers Inc., that helped place hundreds of high school ACE students in externships within the industry. Students and sponsor companies have both lauded the success of the program as a way to build excitement and raise awareness about careers in the industry. I believe through this program students and mentors will build even stronger bonds, which will further strengthen support through college or trade schools, and then into the profession.

The second initiative is the work by our ACE National Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), led by Mark Cain, president of Smoot Construction and ACE National Board Member. Through that committee, we’re evaluating every aspect of our program under the DEI lens. Our program is built on outreach to underrepresented groups, but we must also ensure equity, among our students, mentors, staff and board members—the complete fabric of ACE.

To that effort, we welcomed a number of new board members this year including Paul Blandini (Autodesk); Antoine Bryant (National Organization for Minority Architects); Mary Kelly (StrataTECH Education Group); Manolis Kotzabasakis (Trimble); Stu Lerner (Stantec); Cheryl McKissack Daniel (McKissack); Deryl McKissack (McKissack & McKissack); Brad Nystrom (Skanska USA); and Todd Young (Ferguson), as well as new Advisory Council members John Gavan (KPF), Dave Papak (Bentley Systems) and Lauren Permuy (Power Design). We believe their participation will further strengthen our organization as we continue to build the workforce of the future.

I hope you enjoy the stories from affiliates, mentors and students in the following pages and that they inspire you personally and professionally as they do all of us.

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Chairman, ACE National Board, 2017–Present
President and CEO, Turner Construction Co.
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ACE Expands DEI Initiatives, Building on History of Inclusion

Since its founding, the ACE Mentor Program has been focused on creating equity within the design and construction industry.

Dr. Charles H. Thornton’s desire in 1995 was to excite inner city high school students in New York City about careers in architecture, engineering and construction. His vision has become a nationwide program reaching 78 affiliates in 37 states as well as Washington, D.C., and Canada.

And it’s maintained its focus on introducing young people to opportunities in the construction industry: About 70% of ACE participants are students of color and around half come from families with economic challenges. Slightly over 40% of all students were female this last year, a number that has increased every year within ACE for the last eight years. That percentage far exceeds the national average for women architects and engineers (16.5%) currently in the industry.

Over 80% of ACE affiliates are actively recruiting students from schools predominantly drawing students from underrepresented communities. As well, these affiliates are developing relationships with organizations made up of professionals underrepresented in the industry.

In recognition of national events around social justice, equity and inclusion in recent years, the ACE National office and its affiliates have amplified the emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion.

Strategic Adjustments

In 2019, ACE National adopted a Strategic Plan with much greater emphasis on all core values, specifically inclusion. As part of this plan, the executive leadership performed an equity review of the entire organization, evaluating leadership and mentor diversity within the organization as well as the acceptance of ACE alumni in the industry. With an eye on continuous improvement, ACE National subsequently formed the ACE Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

The goal of the committee is to evaluate equity across all aspects of the organization.

Chair of the DEI committee, Mark Cain, president of Smoot Construction and ACE National Board Member, says, “We’re more deliberate in our actions, from recruitment and training to community partners.”

That deliberate focus led to a partnership with the National Organization for Minority Architects (NOMA). Along with ACE, NOMA shares a commitment to diversity, inclusion and workforce development. Moving
forward, NOMA will encourage its chapters to become involved with ACE’s local affiliates both as mentors and board members. ACE will recruit from NOMA’s Project Pipeline, a program that introduces minority middle school students to architecture. As part of this partnership, ACE National welcomed Antoine Bryant, director of Detroit’s Planning & Development Department and director of Strategic Partnerships for NOMA, to the ACE Board of Directors. He is also on the DEI Committee.

As well, the National DEI committee is fostering ways to provide students with access to a diverse group of mentors, many with similar backgrounds. As well, while mentor training has long focused on tools and techniques to excite and energize students about the industry and professional opportunities, the committee also plans to add acceptance and belonging training to the existing mentor education program.

Broadening Opportunities

Diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives are an integral part of many ACE affiliate activities, and the ACE Mentor Program of Greater Boston is one of the leaders.

During this last school year, the affiliate established a partnership with the Boston Chapter of NOMA, better known as BosNOMA, to feature a series of ACE Presents NOMA workshops for ACE students.

Led by Elyse Ayoung, an executive member of BosNOMA, co-founder of the MiD Collective, and designer at Gensler, the program included a series of three interactive webinars. One session featured design professionals in the field talking about day-to-day activities. A second focused on the college program with insight from faculty and department heads at colleges and universities. The third was a panel of current undergrad and graduate students discussing the college experience. Coincidentally, one of the speakers was Brandon Rodriguez, currently a first-year student in the School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation at Roger Williams University—and an ACE alum.

Jennifer Fries, executive director of the ACE Mentor Program of Greater Boston, says, “Besides the panel discussion, we hosted breakout sessions so our ACE students could ask questions. They were really engaged and especially enjoyed the interaction with the speakers. After the speaker series wrapped, we recruited Elyse to join our board of directors, and we are thrilled that she agreed to serve.”

Of note, over 75% of the over 130 students in the affiliate this past year are students of color and about half are young women. The program draws from 40 local high schools, with more than 90% of the students attending public or charter schools.

Fries adds, “We’ve done a good job with recruiting a diverse mix of students. Now, as part of our strategic plan, our goal is to increase the racial diversity of our board and our mentors to better reflect our students. Deeper relationships with organizations like NOMA will hopefully increase our

[Image of students and mentor]
Gilbane’s ACE board members, mentors and volunteers are all dedicated to encouraging students and schools to explore the design and construction industry. Through our partnership with the ACE Mentor Program, we are committed to engaging, inspiring and mentoring future industry leaders.

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profile in the Boston area and interest from professionals from diverse backgrounds who would like to mentor.”

**Indy’s Interaction**

The ACE Mentor Program of Indiana, which is celebrating 15 years, is also taking a direct approach to ensure outreach to young people traditionally underrepresented in the industry.

“We’ve found that we need to be very intentional about our DEI focus,” says Akilah W. Darden, president of The Darden Group, LLC and president of the Indianapolis Affiliate. “We talk about finding ways to encourage more diverse involvement with our organization, in the community and even with our students.”

She points to the affiliate’s focus on ensuring that its minority students filled out scholarship applications as one example of involvement. As a consequence, the affiliate shares that it has had a huge uptick in scholarships awarded to women and minorities this year. That board emphasis on community involvement similarly led to several dozen contacts at minority-owned companies who hadn’t heard about ACE or hadn’t previously considered mentoring.

“We publicized our ACE alum who are currently in college on social media, and we re-established our Junior Board this last year,” says Darden. “Now our former ACE students, many of them minority and women, that are in college have a forum to share their experiences and raise awareness.”

**Continued Opportunity**

Scholarships and internships are another way ACE supports its young people and their pathways into the industry. ACE has distributed on average over $2 million in scholarships in each of the last few years.

Also in 2021, Gensler and Stantec each established scholarships for minority ACE students going into architecture. Then there is the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarships grant, now in its third year, which has provided $1.2 million in scholarships to 85 high school students since its inception in 2019.

Read on to learn about more ACE activities that excite the next generation of industry professionals. ♦
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Anniversary Affiliates Build Diversity with Intent

Longevity is a sign that an affiliate is meeting the needs of students, the community and the industry. This year, a number of ACE affiliates celebrated milestone anniversaries of 20, 15, 10 and 5 years. Each has grown in terms of students, mentors, support and, most significantly, in the way they engage and excite young people about the construction industry. The following highlights some of the creative ways a few of these affiliates are changing the face of construction.

Upstate and Uplifting

Since its founding two decades ago, the Upstate New York affiliate has grown by leaps and bounds in its quest to attract young people, particularly those in historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged areas, to the construction industry. What was a relatively small affiliate with a few mentors and about 15 students in 2001 now have a presence at all three major high schools in the cities of Albany, Schenectady and Troy. It's also attracted the interest of non-traditional groups such as GED programs and home-schools.

Brendan Manning, vice president of Education and Environment at the Associated General Contractors of New York State, founding member of the Upstate New York affiliate and current board secretary, says, “While our affiliate is not large by some standards, we have grown to become a well-known and prominent part of the community by providing support for our mentors, building bonds with students and through partnerships inside and outside our industry.”

These partnerships include Union College Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) program, the SEAT Center in Schenectady, a GED/trades training non-profit affiliated with Youth Build, and coming soon, the Hudson Valley Community College’s TEC-SMART (Training and Education Center for Semiconductor Manufacturing and Alternative and Renewable Technologies) program.

The affiliate has found that college and community connections not only build program support but have helped further strengthen communication between mentors and students as students move on to higher education—bonds that proved invaluable during the past year.

Chelsea Klender, partner at LK Architecture Design Consulting and lead mentor/board member for the affiliate since the early days, says, “We had concerns about keeping our students’ interest in a virtual environment. However, along with strong mentor support, we had several of our ACE alum contact us to host virtual sessions as junior mentors. These sessions combined with a little creative programming for the project themes worked amazingly well.”

The success of including ACE alum in the program sparked an initiative to establish a formal junior mentorship program that will focus entirely on the college experience.

Klender concludes, “The heart of our program is our mentors, who put in time and energy to form, for some, bonds that change the lives of students and families for the better.”

Texas-Size Connections

What began in 2006 with two high schools has grown to 12 schools with over 130 students and 120 mentors. With a school-based focus, the pandemic didn’t stop this affiliate’s dedicated school champions, team leaders and mentors from exceeding goals.

When asked about success, Laura Hall, an associate with Ford Powell & Carson and founding chair of the Greater San Antonio affiliate, points to “dedicated school champions, high mentor commitment and corporate sponsorship. In many cases, an all-virtual program made mentor participation much easier as they were able to stay engaged and not worry about long commutes to high schools.”

Through generous sponsorship, the affiliate awarded 21 students with college and summer camp scholarships totaling $55,500, a record number for the San Antonio program. Summer camps were hosted by the University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas at...
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San Antonio and Texas A&M University. In addition, one of the affiliate students, Olivia Salinas from Construction Careers Academy, earned an ACE National CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship.

New this year is an internship program headed by Guillermo Moya. For the summer 2021, nine sponsor companies signed up to offer internships for high school students. The internships ranged from architecture and engineering firms to contractors.

Mary P. Stewart, shareholder with Civil Engineering Consultants (CEC) and current chair of the Greater San Antonio affiliate, says, “We received 16 applicants for summer internships, and thanks in part to ACE National’s internship stipend and our sponsors stepping up, we were able to place all of our students. It’s just one more demonstration of the dedication of our champions and mentors to make a difference. It’s been an exciting milestone year.”

Oregon Expands Opportunities

With a focused outreach to higher-poverty and marginalized communities, ACE Mentor Program of Oregon, staffed by the nonprofit Portland Workforce Alliance, has continued to fulfill its mission to introduce young people to construction career opportunities. Now in its 15th year, the affiliate has students from over 40 high schools, largely in the Portland area—though lessons learned from the pandemic have provided unexpected opportunities to expand and improve.

Kari Smith Haight, program manager for the Portland Workforce Alliance and for the Oregon affiliate, adds, “Our virtual program this year went extraordinarily well, with 110 students making up 16 teams. They completed the program thanks to the hard work of nearly 100 mentors, many of whom were first year mentors.”

Perhaps the biggest win from last year was lessons learned from virtual meetings.

“We’ve got interest in our program from as far away as Bend, which is 3.5 hours away, too far to attend our in-person program,” explains Smith Haight. The affiliate welcomed mentors and students from Bend, Eugene and Cottage Grove for this year’s virtual program, which would have been impossible in the traditional in-person format.

“It was so successful that now we’re evaluating ways to formally extend our outreach,” she adds.

The affiliate also expanded opportunities for ACE students to get a close-up look and feel of the construction space through internship programs such as the ACE National Summer Mentorship Experience [see sidebar ACE Expands Summer Student Opportunities, page 30].

Smith Haight adds, “We’re really excited and appreciative of this initiative. We had five students earn internship opportunities through the Summer Mentorship Experience initiative.” Other Portland-based high school students received summer internship opportunities at sponsor companies that include Mortenson and JE Dunn.

Further, thanks to generous donors, along with support from the Andersen Construction Foundation, the philanthropic arm of general contractor Anderson Construction and Howard S. Wright, a subsidiary of Balfour Beatty Construction, ACE students once again attended (virtually) the ACE Summer Camp at the University of Colorado Denver to learn about the design and construction of real-world systems.

At its annual end-of-year event, the affiliate awarded 17 scholarships, totaling $112,500—a huge jump from the first year that netted four scholarships for $12,000. Since its founding, the affiliate has given $827,500 in scholarships.

Around the Country

Congratulations to ACE Programs of Western Pennsylvania, Greater Kansas City, Indiana, Atlanta and Northeast Florida, who all celebrated 15-year anniversaries. Also Florida’s Broward County and Palm Beach/Martin County affiliates, the Lexington affiliate in Kentucky and Greater Charleston affiliate in South Carolina are each celebrating a decade, while the Midlands affiliate (Columbia) in South Carolina celebrates five years.

Further ACE welcomed two new affiliates, ACE California Capital, bringing the program to the Sacramento area, and ACE Capital Region Michigan for Lansing-area students. Sarah McIlroy, a civil engineer and vice president with Stantec, serves as chair of the ACE California while Traci Bower estimator/planner at Clark Construction chairs the ACE Capital Region Michigan.◆
Tomorrow’s bold achievements live in the imagination of today’s youth.

Every year ACE inspires more than 10,000 students to dream about a future in Architecture, Construction and Engineering.

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ACE ALUMNI MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Mustapha Williams
Associate, Architect
Gensler

Williams joined the ACE Mentor Program of Nashville during his sophomore year of high school at the recommendation of one of his engineering class instructors.

“A family member told me about the field of architecture when I was in middle school, and I honestly haven’t thought about doing anything else since, so joining ACE seemed like a good start,” says Williams.

During his ACE involvement, he developed connections within the local design community, which led to an internship at the Nashville Civic Design Center, fueling his passion for urban design.

Williams adds, “The education and inspiration I received during those years propelled me into the architecture profession. One of my ACE mentors, Joseph Cole (CEO at Nashville-based Culture Architecture and Design PLLC) continues to be my go-to mentor for many aspects of my architecture career. He assisted me throughout college helping me find a way to balance academia, work and college life.”

He attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude with a professional bachelor of architecture degree in 2018. During that time, he also won Gensler’s National Diversity Scholarship Competition, leading to a summer internship in Gensler’s Chicago office.

Upon graduation, he went to work full time for Gensler’s Chicago office, a sponsor of the ACE Chicago affiliate, and returned to ACE as a mentor. Williams says, “The volunteers and mentors in the Nashville program, especially Joseph, put a lot of time and effort into helping students learn about the industry. I wanted to pass that down to other students.”

He also developed mentorship relationships within Gensler and the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). By promoting diversity and education of the design industry to youth, he aims to continue mentoring the next generation of designers.

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The Legacy of a Leader

The CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship was established to preserve and extend the rich legacy of the late Allen Berg, who passed away prematurely from cancer in 2015.

He left behind a legacy as a builder, a creator and an advocate for education. Berg’s devotion to education, community service and Jewish causes was rooted in his connection to his past—he was born in a refugee camp to Holocaust survivors who continued to suffer emotionally from the traumas they experienced during the war. He grew up in a modest home and the hardships the family experienced were magnified when Berg was 13 years old and lost his father.

In memory of Allen Berg, CMiC pledged $10 million to help advance the construction industry.

Berg realized that the way to help his family and create a good life for himself and those around him was through education. He went on to earn scholarships to study applied mathematics and computer science, followed by an advanced degree in aerospace engineering and work toward a PhD. in mathematics. In 1974, at age 26, he founded CMiC—which grew to become the leading innovator of software solutions for the construction industry.

Today, Berg is fondly remembered for his support of numerous community initiatives and for serving on the boards of several religious, government and technology organizations. He is also remembered by all those he mentored personally and all the individuals and families he touched on a personal level.

“Allen’s early childhood experience shaped his worldview and became a guiding light throughout his life,” said Judith Berg, chairwoman of the CMiC Board of Directors. “Our goal with the CMiC-Allen Berg Initiative, in the form of scholarships and funds for mentoring programs, is to inspire and empower students underrepresented in the industry by providing coaching, exposure and financial support to help them pursue enriching careers in construction and related fields.

“Allen’s greatest joy was providing opportunities to people in need. He cared about the world around him and thought that the best way to drive positive change in the world was to help others become self-sufficient and create better lives for themselves, their families and their communities. We believe there is no better way to extend and amplify Allen’s legacy as a builder, creator, mentor and education advocate.”

In memory of Allen Berg, CMiC pledged $10 million to help advance the construction industry. The initial $3 million was designated to scholarships to help outstanding high school students who are seeking careers in architecture, engineering and construction.

This year, the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship Program awarded another 37 ACE Mentor students from across the country college scholarships valued between $2,500 and $20,000—totaling $400,000.

Selected on the basis of merit and financial need, scholarship winners are all on track to enter accredited college programs in architecture, interior design, construction management, several engineering fields and a skilled trade program in the fall.

Patricia A. Coleman, ACE Mentor Liaison Thornton Tomasetti and chair of the ACE selection committee for the CMiC-Allen Berg Memorial Scholarship, says, “Each year as our committee reviews the applicants, we enjoy the...
personal reward in knowing that such great talent awaits our industry. Each student is a unique individual who has gained so much from the mentoring provided and is better prepared for their future.”

For many, these scholarships represent life-changing opportunity to attend college and reach their dreams. As one young woman noted, ACE is the program that got her interested in mechanical engineering and a chance to reach her dreams.

Scholarship recipients were notified via a Zoom announcement that included ACE national staff, the student’s local ACE affiliate program leaders and their mentors.

“We congratulate the exceptional students who were awarded this year’s scholarships,” says Jeff Weiss, chief revenue officer at CMiC. “We look forward to following their journeys and successes as they grow into professionals in the AEC industry.”

To date, $1.2 million in scholarships have been awarded to 85 students in affiliates across the country. Visit ACE National’s YouTube page to see the 2021 CMiC Scholarship video.
2021 ENR—ACE Outstanding Mentors

A jury composed of the 2020 ENR-ACE Outstanding Mentors selected six 2021 mentors. Their contributions to students, fellow mentors and affiliates epitomize the dedication and effectiveness of ACE’s over 4,100 mentors. Each of their affiliates has received a student scholarship to be named after them. Engineering News-Record and its parent company BNP Media generously support this program. Winners were awarded at the June ACE National Board Meeting. Here are the 2021 ACE Outstanding Mentors.

Amy Hufnagel
ACE Houston
Senior Manager, Genesys Works

Her passion for the industry and students was particularly evident this last year. She was integral in taking steps to help move ACE Houston’s competition to a virtual setting, so students were able to show off the projects. Hufnagel strikes a balance between dreaming big and then setting realistic expectations and actionable steps to turn those dreams into a reality. These include a presentation to the associate board, including a detailed virtual Prezi highlighting roles and responsibilities that had not been previously well documented.

Orlando Taylor
ACE Cleveland
Senior Project Manager, Turner Construction Company

An active ACE mentor for more than a decade, Taylor also serves on the ACE Cleveland Board of Directors, the ACE Curriculum Committee, the Golf Outing and Scholarship Committees and has assisted with the year-end scholarship banquet. But for students and other mentors, it’s his student engagement that really stands out. As the ACE Lead Mentor at Cleveland’s James Ford Rhodes High School, Taylor has a knack for keeping students engaged, an ability that has helped customize a mentoring approach that best fits the students, even during a year of virtual meetings.

Kate MacKinnon Kiser
ACE Oregon
Manager, TriMet

As one of the affiliate’s first founding mentors, MacKinnon Kiser joined ACE Oregon as a college graduate and has since also served as a lead mentor and an ACE Oregon Board Member. She’s also a member of the Program and Scholarship Committee and secretary on the board’s Executive Committee. As head of the scholarship committee, she is leading the way to ensure underrepresented students in the ACE fields have scholarship opportunities. As one student noted, MacKinnon Kiser is like “a well-placed skipping stone [that creates] a ripple effect on everyone around her.”

John Rizor
ACE West Michigan
Architect, Progressive AE

Rizor’s initiative helped found the ACE West Michigan, an effort facilitated by his participation in Progressive AE’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and his work as a mentor in Chicago. Rizor worked tirelessly to gain the support of Progressive AE’s leadership as well as the largest construction management firm in West Michigan, Rockford Construction, to establish the affiliate. He also worked with the largest employers in West Michigan, Meijer Corporation and Steelcase Inc., for financial support. In its first two years, Rizor raised over $21,000 for five students to further their education.

Ben Miller
ACE Greater New York
Senior Project Manager, Gilbane Building Company

Miller has been a mentor for ACE Greater New York’s Team 31 for many years, mentoring over 200 students in that time. Along with organizing ACE activities, he has helped countless students with college applications, internships and first-job interviews. He’s an inspiration, guide and role model for students and alumni as they enter college and the workforce. As one student summed up: “He showed me what it means to love what you do. I hope to one day follow in his footsteps and become an ACE mentor and inspire students to find and pursue their passions.”

Allie Alu
ACE Charlotte
Community & Citizenship Coordinator, Turner Construction Company

As a mentor and member of the ACE Charlotte Board, Alu leads the ACE Charlotte’s Sponsorship Committee where she helps plan fundraisers bringing in $20,000 in scholarships for students pursuing careers in the industry. On this committee, Alu also is hands-on in planning, coordinating and successfully executing ACE Charlotte’s Annual End of Year Banquet. She’s also developed a custom ACE Charlotte Social Media Strategic Plan to increase the nonprofits exposer and appreciate contributors.

Alu’s students call her positive and personable. One student summarized Allie’s influence: “She was an instrumental part in my positive experience with ACE. She is an outstanding mentor for her personable, positive, organized and engaging mentorship.”
Alliant proudly supports ACE in connecting students to careers in construction.

Alliant is committed to the building and education of a diverse construction industry. We welcome the opportunity to work together. Contact us at construction@alliant.com to start your career and learn how Alliant helps our colleagues and clients build a better future.
Maverick Team Wins National Competition with Emphasis on Location, Functionality

The ACE Mentor Program of Southern Nevada/Las Vegas’ Maverick Design Team took home top honors at the 2021 CIRT National Design & Construction Competition for their Manufacturing Center/Zone project.

Sponsored by Construction Industry Round Table (CIRT), the ACE Mentor Program of America, and the Chicago Architecture Center, the competition is judged by a panel of industry leaders who look closely at design and construction objectives. For the Manufacturing Center Challenge, students were pushed to plan, develop and create a local site/hub that would attract manufacturing or supply chain resources to meet needs in the U.S. With an eye on presentation quality and overall competence, the six-judge panel particularly appreciated the Maverick team’s focus on an advantageous site selection, the use of intra-modal forms of transportation and networks, and flexible storage and office space to meet various client needs and functionality. Realistic detailed cost estimates as well as construction workflow and calendars were also provided to complete the entry. The team won $5000 for its affiliate.

Second place ($3,000 prize) went to ACE Mentor Program of Western Michigan for its Homeless Shelter entry. This entry focused on developing a modern homeless shelter that addresses needs such as health, safety, treatment and nourishment. The third place ($2,000 prize) went to ACE Mentor Program of Greater Milwaukee for its Retrofit School entry, which reimagined a school to meet health, safety and social needs in a post-pandemic community.

Seven other teams were also recognized in the 2021 competition as either 1st Runner-Up ($1,000 prize) or 2nd Runner-Up ($500 prize) in each of the three different design challenges or options.

Cosko notes, “This annual competition has repeatedly revealed the academic and practical prowess of these remarkable young people as they prepare for college and careers in our industry.” Selman agrees and confirms, “I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the work done by all the teams. The technical knowledge, collaboration and presentations were all extremely impressive.”

“I have been associated with the ACE Mentor Program for more than a decade,” Choutka adds, “and strongly believe our mission to connect high school students to amazing opportunities in architecture, construction and engineering is making a real difference. As a competition juror, I was truly amazed by the level of the submissions, the diversity in the teams and the poise these incredible students demonstrated to our panel. Observing these teams and their performance shows our industry is in good hands for many generations.”

CIRT President Mark A. Casso, Esq., concludes, “Given the extraordinary challenges, shutdowns, and overall disruption to the school systems and society due to COVID-19, we were very pleased to receive 27 entries from across the country.”

The panel of judges included David Mahoney (Dewberry), Jenni Mushynski (Chicago Architecture Center), Wassim Selman (Arcadis), Mike Choutka (Hensel Phelps Construction), Greg Cosko (Hathaway Dinwiddie Construction) and Mark Casso (CIRT).
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Clark Construction is committed to providing the tools and support needed to develop tomorrow’s industry leaders. We are proud to support the ACE Mentor Program of America in its mission to engage, excite, and enlighten students to pursue careers in architecture, engineering, and construction.

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Rodgers is proud to support our next generation of industry professionals through the ACE Mentor program.

In Memory: Ed Worthy

An ACE Mentor Program legend, Ed Worthy left us this spring after a life well lived. Worthy’s impact on the growth of ACE is immeasurable and his legacy will continue to ensure the program’s success long into the future.

Here’s a few of his impressive contributions:

- Washington, D.C. Affiliate board member, six years
- ACE Mentor Best Practices Manual (compiled, wrote, edited)
- ACE Outstanding Mentor Award Program (creator)
- ACE student/alumni surveys (creator)
- 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (authored application)
- Institute Honors for Collaborative Achievement bestowed by AIA and AIA’s Diversity Award (authored successful nominations)
- ACE Yearbook, sponsored by ENR (planned and co-edited)

In honor of Worthy’s influence and inspiration to the program and as a way to ensure that his memory lives on, the ACE Mentor Program established the Ed Worthy Memorial Scholarship. The inaugural scholarship was awarded this year to George Stutzman of ACE Washington D.C. Stutzman participated in ACE all four years of high school and was class valedictorian. He will be pursuing a civil engineering degree at Purdue University in the Fall 2021. Just like Worthy, he has achieved high academic honors and loves ACE! To donate to this scholarship, visit https://www.acementor.org/
“Leading by example, delivers increased participation by ACE Mentor students.”
– Kevin Brown, E.I.T., Construction Manager, Urban Engineers

Bentley Systems is driven by its desire to help inspire young people to study science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in order to explore and pursue architectural, construction and engineering related career paths.

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With an eye on a career in architecture, Ernst joined the ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa during her senior year at Lincoln High School in Des Moines.

She says, “I already had an interest in architecture. Working with mentors such as Jill Boetger (landscape architect and project manager with the Ryan Companies) really helped affirm that this was the career for me.”

Ernst went on to study architecture at Iowa State University. During her senior year of college, she worked for architecture firm INVISION as an intern architect, where she learned that her new firm was an ACE sponsor.

“I asked if I could mentor,” adds Ernst. “Even though I was only in ACE for one year, it left big impact on me—and I want others to get the same advantage.”

Today, Ernst works for OPN Architects, an architecture, planning and design firm and sponsor of ACE. She remains steadfastly committed to the Central Iowa affiliate as a mentor and more recently as the chair of the Education Committee, developing the curriculum for the students.

When asked why she volunteers with ACE, Ernst says, “It’s a chance to excite youth about all the career opportunities in our industry. ACE offers them the chance to see firsthand the interaction between architects, engineers and contractors and how they can make a difference in a community. That’s something you don’t get in any college curriculum and an invaluable lesson for everyone, no matter the career they choose. Through ACE, I get to be a part of that process, which is extraordinarily rewarding.”

“ACE left a big impact on me—and I want others to get the same advantage.”
Reaching the century mark isn’t easy – you have to be quality-driven, client-focused, and have a vision for the future. Our planners, architects, engineers and program/construction managers are committed to quality performance. We provide personal attention and timely solutions, with an eye toward sustainability. And with more than 40 offices, we are a local firm with national resources.

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ACE ALUMNI MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Jose Morales
Project Engineer
The PENTA Building Group

With an eye on a career in construction, Morales attended the Northwest Career & Technical Academy in Las Vegas.
He explains, “Much of my family has worked in the construction, mostly as carpenters, so I knew that I wanted something in that industry, though on the more technical side.”

In his junior year, he joined the inaugural ACE Mentor of Southern Nevada affiliate, a group that he says did more than confirm his career choice.
He explains, “ACE gave me insight into the roles of industry professionals such as project engineers, project managers and field superintendents—and I was able to meet and talk to them. More importantly, they helped me outline a path to get there.”
That plan went beyond just picking a major in college, but included job experiences that might provide further insight, such as internships. “The program gave me good sense of my future—and I built professional relationships to further build my confidence and knowledge,” he adds.

While participating in ACE in his senior year, he met Cassy Smith, superintendent at PENTA and through that introduction was able to get an internship with the firm over the summer. In the fall, he began his college career, studying construction management at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)—and signed up to be an ACE mentor.
When asked why, he says, “I owe a lot to the ACE program from the mentoring to the internships and the networking with industry professionals. I wanted to give back to the program and share my experiences with other students.”
Along with his continued part-time work for PENTA, Morales is on track to graduate from UNLV in the fall of 2022 as a construction manager, while continuing to mentor with ACE. “We can make a difference in a lot of lives—and I want to be part of that,” he concludes.

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Turner Proudly Supports the ACE Mentor Program

Quincy, ACE Mentor
ACE ALUMNI MENTOR SPOTLIGHT

Suvir R. Hira & Breanna Sheeler
Designers WRT, LLC

Sheeler came to the ACE Mentor Program in her senior year of high school. While the program was not offered at the school she attended, the ACE Mentor Program of Greater Philadelphia was offered where her mother was a teacher. Upon graduation, Sheeler attended Philadelphia University, recently renamed Thomas Jefferson University (Jefferson), with help from an ACE Mentor scholarship. As a college freshman, she founded the first collegiate chapter within the ACE Mentor Program as a way to provide professional development opportunities—workshops, lectures and career exploration—to those enrolled in design and construction related degree programs. That same year, Sheeler met Suvir Hira, then a senior in the architecture program, as well as the president of the university affiliate of Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia, an organization that she had joined.

For Hira, the collegiate ACE group was an opportunity to give back. He explains, “Growing up in India, I knew I wanted to be an architect and connected with a local architect to learn the difference between an architect, engineer, urban designer, etc. The knowledge that I gained by spending a few hours in his office was incredible. So when I learned about ACE at Jefferson, it was the perfect fit, a way for me to give back to the larger construction industry community while I was still in school.”

Hira joined WRT in 2016 after graduation, and ACE as a team leader and mentor with the Greater Philadelphia affiliate, still working with Sheeler, who is on the ACE Board of Directors as the Alumni Co-Chair. They were both instrumental in the success of the 2021 ACE Park in a Truck, a partnership between Greater Philadelphia Affiliate and Jefferson University to improve Houseman Playground at the Houseman Recreation Center.
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

MEET REQUIREMENTS
OSHA’s Subpart CC requires signal person qualification by a third-party qualifier.

MEET DEMAND
While an OSHA letter of interpretation recognizes apprenticeship programs that train and assess riggers and signal persons as third-party qualified evaluators, many contractors, states and municipalities require a Qualified Rigger and Signal Person Certification.

REDUCE COST
Third party certification comes with a hefty price tag without input on testing from subject matter experts, ironworkers and their contractors. Recertification can cost up to $500.

IMPROVE SAFETY
Ensuring that only trained, skilled and competent ironworkers complete rigging and signaling tasks elevates workplace safety standards and reduces risk.

WHAT IS IT?
Iron Workers International Certification Board’s (I.I.C.B.) Rigging & Signalperson Certification Program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. The I.I.C.B. joins an elite group of more than 130 organizations representing over 315 programs that have obtained NCCA accreditation.

HOW IS IT DONE?
- 6,000 HOURS OF HANDS ON EXPERIENCE
- 3-PART EXAM
- TESTING & RECERTIFICATION EVERY 5 YEARS
- IRON WORKERS RIGGING & CRANE COURSE

IRON WORKERS INTERNATIONAL SETS THE STANDARD HIGH WITH ACCREDITED RIGGER & SIGNAL PERSON CERTIFICATION
ACE Expands Summer Student Opportunities

As part of its ongoing mission to excite young people about the construction industry, ACE is committed to offering summer opportunities for the students to expand their insight into the industry.

On-the-Job Learning

The ACE National Board of Directors wanted the summer opportunities expanded and decided to fund and support a new Summer Mentor Experience for 2021, an initiative that pairs ACE-registered high school students with a host firm.

Diana Eidenshink, president of the ACE Mentor Program, says, “The goal of the ACE program is to bring our students from high school into the industry. The new summer program is designed to provide our students with a real-life learning opportunity. It’s a chance for them to gain practical experience in the architecture, engineering or construction environment and further excite them about careers. The ACE National Board is very proud to be able to fund this new program for our students.”

With an emphasis on juniors going into their senior year or seniors who graduated in 2021, each affiliate found interested firms and identified the high school students that should be matched with those firms.

As part of the program, each extern was provided a stipend to cover approximately 20 hours a week for four weeks.

Monica Worheide, national director of Affiliates at ACE National, oversees the summer experience program. She reports, “Even with the tight time-frame of introducing the program, the program has been well received by the affiliates, students and host firms. It is clear that the program has excited the affiliates. We have learned a lot this summer and are confident that the program will grow and become stronger every year.”

Mortenson, one of the host firms, sees the externships as an integral step in workforce development. President and CEO Dan Johnson, explains, “Externships are one more way to build on the enthusiasm generated by the ACE program and our mentors. Through them, we build a stronger pathway that extends through college internships and ultimately into the profession. The ACE program is awesome for raising awareness and building excitement—externships, internships and scholarships provide further connections to assure success.”

And it’s working. Feedback from ACE students is overwhelmingly positive. One student working at Gilbane said that he has been working on
scheduling, estimating and safety--and loves being on the job site. Coincidentally, he has been working with a former ACE student, now Gilbane employee, for most of his experience. Through this experience, this current ACE student has shifted his career objectives from civil engineering to construction management.

Along with these ACE National-sponsored opportunities, many national partner firms already offer internships for high school and college students. ACE thanks all the firms that have participated in providing a summer opportunity for our students.

For the summer of 2021, several hundred students participated in one of the summer programs offered through ACE.

**Camps and College Connections**

For the past few years, students have been invited to attend a number of summer camps.

For instance, including the ACE Camp at University of Colorado, Denver provides students an opportunity to lead an investigation in design, digital fabrication and sustainability. Students were able to build from their own design and collaborate with other ACE Mentor programs.

For several years, the Fallingwater Institute has hosted a week-long architecture camp exclusively for ACE students, where students learn about Fallingwater and Frank Lloyd Wright’s design philosophy as students are presented with challenges and independent projects with professional feedback to help you build your skills.

As well, Autodesk introduced students to technologies for the future of construction in five distinct webinars. A special workshop hosted by Procore taught students how to read plans and use building information modeling software tools. Two Los Angeles affiliate mentors offered a two-part workshop about using SketchUp and in a special seminar, Syracuse University College of Engineering briefed ACE students about what to expect in engineering school.

While all of these programs were virtual this year, ACE students still received great insight into professional opportunities and expanded their skills.
As a way to help affiliates strengthen the ACE virtual programs in 2020-2021, ACE National tapped into its relationships with sponsor firms and university partners to produce ACE Ventures!, a series of virtual field trips.

Each spotlight combined prerecorded videos with live segments and flythroughs of unusual job sites, or demonstrations of new technologies and even office tours.

The virtual field trips included a tour of the brand-new Allegiant Stadium, home of the Las Vegas Raiders football team in Las Vegas; the Polar Park Minor League Stadium in Worcester, Mass.; and the Phoenix Raceway development in Arizona. As well, ACE students had an opportunity to see educational projects under construction including the Southwest Student Housing Project on the University of California, Los Angeles campus, the North Torrey Pines Living and Learning Neighborhood at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) and the construction of vertical schools in Australia. Another ACE adventure took an in-depth look at virtual design and construction (VDC) and how it improves project communication from logistics planning and BIM execution plans to clash detection, augmented reality and prefabrication.

One of the technology focused sessions, “Robotics: Accelerating Renewable Energy Construction,” took students to a jobsite that is using robots to help construct a wind farm. The video included a demonstration of how excavators are upgraded with AI Guidance Systems to become fully autonomous robots as well as new careers in construction related to technology.

A big thank you to sponsor firms for putting these incredible videos together.

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A big thank you to sponsor firms for putting these incredible videos together.
A Q&A with Diana Eidenshink, President of the ACE Mentor Program

How have the lessons learned from the pandemic affected the program’s future?

We’ve learned that we can be effective in both environments. While our success is built around in-person mentoring, there’s a lot of value that comes from the virtual environment. The push to an all-virtual platform taught us a lot. We now realize that we can be more successful by using both in-person and virtual programming for our students. The virtual environment will assist the program to have greater outreach to those students that would not be able to participate due to geographic or travel restrictions. ACEVentures! virtual construction site visits were particularly popular this last year and, with help from our sponsors, we plan to continue those.

As well, ACE@Home, a supplemental online program that spotlights professional development and industry careers through short, prerecorded webinars and activities, is now part of the regular curriculum. For many of our affiliates, virtual meetings have become integral to their programs, helping extend outreach to a broader community.

What lessons learned from the pandemic affected the program’s future?

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What strategic initiatives are on tap for this coming year at ACE National?

One of the biggest is the continuation of the work by our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee formed this last year. We’ve always been a program that has brought diversity into the industry—it’s an integral part of my father’s vision when he founded the organization in 1995. That said, recent events made us realize that we need to be more deliberate and open.

The other initiative that we are excited to see continue is the summer programming for our students. High school internships, summer camps and other summer experiences has been well received by our students and a strong part of the programs commitment to exciting students about our industry.

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What will the Fall ACE program look like?

We will follow the lead of our schools, mentor firms and national and local government guidelines. Like everyone else in the industry, we have to be flexible and patient. Of course, we hope to be back to in-person if we can do so safely.

◆

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We believe in building exceptional people. Opportunities abound for future generations—and our long-term success depends on them. As a partner to the ACE Mentor Program, we’re ready to take on what’s next.
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