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BUILDING

Iroquois students learn about construction industry through ACE Mentor Program

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With plans to attend Jefferson Community and Technical College after graduation, Iroquois High School senior Scott Husband, 18, already has been exposed to the ins and outs of the construction industry outside a classroom's confines.

Husband and 36 other Iroquois High School students have been participants in the first-ever class of the ACE Mentor Program's Louisville affiliate, working with professional mentors in the architecture, construction and engineering fields to learn what it takes to do the job and gaining valuable insights and experience along the way.

Husband is not sure what facet of the construction industry he'll pursue, but he said he's impressed with the way computers help design buildings today, even allowing for virtual tours of unfinished projects.

"I enjoy getting to go on field trips," Husband said. "We got to learn about all the new stuff in construction, the computers. They can show us what things are going to look like, down to the trees."

Expectations are high

Dwayne Rice, vice president of the board of the local ACE Mentor Program affiliate and a project manager for Turner Construction in Louisville, said the program's overriding goal is to spark that kind of interest in students such as Husband.

Rice, who also works as a program mentor, helped initiate the local affiliate along with Jeff Hofmann, a project manager with Hussong Mechanical Contractors Inc. in Louisville.

"The purpose of the program is to help the students who are in-