Letter from the President

With the launch of our first quarterly newsletter, I thought it appropriate to use this new and exciting vehicle as an outlet to introduce a year filled with new beginnings at ACE. While all of you were enjoying your summer vacations, the National Office was busy planning how to make the 2010/2011 school year a watershed of success for ACE. Much was debated over the past twelve weeks, however with the help of our growing staff and the leadership of some of our affiliates; we couldn’t be more excited about the road and year ahead.

One of the first noticeable changes will be the launch of our ACE Alumni Network. The AAN will be aimed at creating structure and connections with our ACE students once they have completed the program. It will serve as a valuable tool to keep students connected with ACE and the opportunities we offer long after graduation. Identified by an AAN number, each ACE alum can use that number to gain access to the site, network with fellow alumni, and most importantly, continue to interact with ACE. All of our alumni from this past year will receive their AAN cards this fall, along with directions on how to register; the site will officially launch in December. We encourage all of the ACE students who complete the program to join the AAN once the site has gone live.

ACE also spent the summer brainstorming on other ways that we can make ACE better for our students, mentors, and sponsors. One of those brainstorming sessions proposed a new website design and layout. The end result was a summer filled with exciting discussions on new concept designs and exploring ways in which ACE can use our website to increase our visibility and provide a more user friendly and interactive experience for all of you. We anticipate the launch to occur sometime during the summer of 2011 and are eager to share this advance news with all of you.

In addition to all the technological growth planned for this year, ACE continues to organically grow at a rapid pace. The past summer marked a significant increase in the number of locations wanting to participate as an Affiliate in the program. With over 20 new cities actively reaching out to the National Office, we are delighted to realize that a mixture of passion and people continues to propel ACE into year after year of exciting and steady growth.

Growth has not just been limited to Affiliates either. This summer the National Office brought on two new and seasoned individuals to give us depth and experience as we streamline our operations and ramp up our marketing initiatives. John Strock joined ACE in June as Vice President of Operations and Betsy Pitti also joined in June as Manager of Meetings and Events. We couldn’t be happier to have both on the ACE team. In addition to our personnel growth, we have also successfully signed three new national sponsors. It is our pleasure to introduce PCL, Stantec, and Baker Concrete to the fold of our rapidly growing national sponsor base!

It is indeed an exciting time to be a part of ACE. As always, we want to thank the students, the mentors, the Affiliates, and all of the sponsors. Without all of your hard work and support, none of this would be possible. So welcome back everyone! Let’s make 2010/2011 another great year!

Pamela Mullender
When we think of Maine, we envision scenic coastlines, lobster boats setting out to sea as they gently and rhythmically interrupt the morning’s sunrise. These iconic images of Maine blur the reality of the great distances between familiar places like Kittery to Bar Harbor, Portland to Caribou. However, if you ask ACE’s Affiliate in Maine, they will speak with both optimism and conviction. They’re not just thinking about bridging the communities and cities together, they’re doing it.

Two years ago with the help of the National Office, Gary Scott Frankel and WBRC Architects along with Tom Figura of the Cianbro Corporation launched the first program in the State of Maine at Hampden Academy in Hampden. With the help of five mentors, Maine graduated four students that year and awarded $2,000 in scholarships. For a first-year Affiliate in as rural a location as Maine, an outsider could be pleased and encouraged with the initial results. But Gary and the other mentors wanted more. Maine wanted more. Through the help of grassroots efforts like a monthly newsletter and the unwavering support the Maine Affiliate received in Hampden from both its sponsors and parents alike, the visibility of the ACE Mentor Program in Maine grew.

By the second year, Maine had launched additional programs at both Bangor High School in Bangor and Deering High School in Portland. What had started off with Gary, five mentors, and four students had now expanded over 100%. With 16 mentors, 3 cities, and 9 students on the cusp of graduation, ACE in Maine is flourishing thanks to the perseverance of the team and the growing awareness and generosity within the communities which welcomed ACE. But this just didn’t happen without hard work, and other Affiliates alike all know this.

In this inaugural issue of ACE’s quarterly newsletter, we chose to highlight Maine in what will be known moving forward as the “Affiliate Focus” section of the newsletter. The Affiliate Focus will do exactly that: spotlight on one of our regional Affiliates that is making things happen, an Affiliate that is growing, and impacting students’ lives regardless of the obstacles, financial, geographic, or otherwise.

Maine’s case in point. It demonstrates that an Affiliate can grow and grow rapidly, but in order to achieve growth, sometimes we need to think outside of the box. Maine chose to create a monthly newsletter. Why? We asked Gary Scott Frankel. “Because it serves to engage parents, students, and mentors alike in the program. It recognizes their hard work and can keep ACE top in the mind of the community. It offers an outlet to thank our sponsors and elevates their name within the community as well. Every issue is hard work, but it is well worth it.”

What’s next for Gary and Maine? “I am looking forward to our first newsletter this year where Ruey Yehle the Principal of Hampden Academy will contribute an article detailing the school’s view on ACE. It should give us (and the community) great insight into all our hard work. And word of the program is spreading. We are getting calls as far away as Caribou asking how students can participate. We couldn’t be more excited.”

So Maine, the National Office wants to thank you and recognize all of you for your continued hard work and success. Not only has your newsletter served to ignite and accelerate your own individual growth, but it also has served in inspiring us, and we thank you.

Please visit www.acementor.org/Maine or www.acementor.org/affiliate news to learn more about Maine’s past and future local newsletters.
In the fall of 2009 when Team 20 of ACE’s Greater New York City Affiliate began its work, little did any of the 6 mentors and 14 students realize that a year later representatives from the team would end up presenting their project to a government agency in Miami, Florida.

Sponsored by RCDolner Construction LLC in New York City, Team 20 early on decided to design and plan a performing arts facility situated in downtown Miami. In reference to Manhattan’s famous concert hall, the students named their Miami project the Lincoln Center Performing Arts Academy. They identified an actual location for the cultural center using Google Earth.

As Team 20’s work on the project progressed, mentor James Barry of RCDolner approached Mayor Carlos Alvarez of Miami-Dade County, informing him about the ACE Mentor Program and Team 20’s project. The mayor notified Marlen Brant, Assistant to the Director, and Silvia Lopez, Architect, both with Miami’s Office of Capital Improvements. The team sent Ms. Silvia its preliminary design concepts, and she made important recommendations to the team. Meanwhile, Ms. Brant contacted the Recreation, Culture and Tourism Committee (RCTC) of the Miami County Commission, suggesting that it put the team’s project on an agenda for a future meeting.

The RCTC invited Team 20 to present its project at a hearing on September 13. Five members of the team – three current high school students and two recent graduates – travelled to Miami for two full days of special tours and meetings. Representing Team 20 were: Kyra Cuevas, currently at The Cooper Union; Antonia Giles, The Berkeley Carroll School; Noeliz Lee, The City University of New York, Grove School of Engineering; and Kevin Rojas and Elvin Valette, both from the High School for Construction Trades, Engineering, and Architecture.

Accompanying the students were mentors James Barry and Wendy Koshner from RCDolner LLC; Nancy Rankin from John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC; Annika Smith with the Greater New York City Affiliate office; and John Strock and Betsy Pitti from the ACE national office.

Upon arriving in Miami on September 12, the students and mentors first visited the actual site of their project. During their two-day stay, they toured many of Miami’s famous architectural sites, including the Art Deco District and the national historic landmark home of agricultural industrialist James Deering (now the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens). They also visited offices of the acclaimed architectural firm Arquitectonica.

On the evening prior to the RCTC hearing, the team gave a dry-run of its presentation to mentors from the South Florida Affiliate. They offered helpful feedback to the New York students.

The RCTC meeting occurred on the afternoon of September 13. Mayor Carlos Alvarez, of Miami-Dade County, introduced the ACE Mentor Program and welcomed the students with encouraging remarks. The students then spoke for about 20 minutes, explaining their project with a PowerPoint presentation. They were poised professionals. RCTC members and the audience members were thoroughly impressed.

Credit for Team 20’s successful project presentation in Miami goes to all participating students and mentors. In addition to students and mentors mentioned above, other team members include:

Mentors - Joshua Kuskin of RCDolner LLC; Robert Pallmann of Arup; and Larry Gutterman of Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners.

Students - Joshuell Alberto, All Hallows High School; Jonathan Galindo, Angelo Guerrero, Emilio Heredia, Phillips Moronta, and Jonathan Polanco of High School For Construction Trade Engineering and Architecture; Anis Pimentel, Bronx High School for the Visual Arts; Aaron Smith-Williams, Bronx Engineering and Technology Academy; and Lucille Watkins, Dartmouth College.

Congratulations to the students and mentors of Team 20!

Student Focus: Greater New York’s Team 20 Takes Miami!
It's a fact. Going green is no longer a fashion statement. Over the last several years, green design and construction has moved beyond being the cool thing to do, to being the right thing to do. In today's environmentally conscious climate, private developers and governments increasingly respond to the demand by their buildings' occupants for healthy, economical, and pleasant places to work and live. Realizing this, ACE too has decided that we needed to step our efforts up to ensure that ACE students continue to be exposed meaningfully to the most significant trend within our industry.

ACE has partnered with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for several years. However 18 months ago both organizations agreed that they needed to deepen their relationship to provide greater value to both the kids and the community. With all eyes focused on bettering the next generation’s ability to build green, the ACE-USGBC Sustainable Design Award was born. Completing the regular ACE program, the Sustainable Design Award program is an optional add-on that will be open only to active ACE juniors and seniors.

The Award’s goal is to introduce each student who chooses to participate in the web-based curriculum, a basic grounding in green building strategies. Working online with a mentor from anywhere in the country, each student must take and pass an E-course developed by USGBC and then analyze one of several case studies of green projects.

This summer, with the help of 30 mentors from 20 different Affiliates, ACE launched a pilot test of the Award program, and student participation was outstanding! Almost 100 students signed up, and many will soon complete program requirements.

When asked if the turnout was what she expected, ACE’s President Pamela Mullender stated, “We’ve always agreed with what the USGBC represents and jumped at the chance to become more involved with them. The success of this pilot program and the excitement from the kids speaks volumes. It really demonstrates that this program is not just exciting, but extremely relevant. I don’t just think we’re ready to roll it out to everyone, I know we are.”

Starting late this fall, ACE will roll out the ACE-USGBC Sustainable Design Award program to all Affiliates. Students who successfully fulfill the Award’s four requirements will receive the ACE-USGBC Sustainable Design Award at the end of the year. The Award will give students a special distinction when they apply to college. In addition, the knowledge gained from the Award program will benefit students far beyond the completion of their experience with ACE.

If interested in participating in the ACE-USGBC Sustainable Design Award program, please contact your local Affiliate.

In November 2009 five recent ACE graduates received scholarships from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to attend its Greenbuild International Conference and Expo in Phoenix, Arizona.

Front row (from L) Pedro Gonzalez; Leean Orama, Tai Van. Backrow (from L): two unidentified scholarship recipients from other organizations, Kim Dai, and Darpan Patel.
January of this past year, after three months of anticipation, the ACE Mentor Program of Eastern Pennsylvania was notified that it had been awarded an Industry Pipeline Model Grant, part of the In School Youth Year-Round Program. The grant, awarded by both the Philadelphia Council of College and Career Success and the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, was quickly set in motion this summer as 22 low-income and high-risk high school students from the Philadelphia area were welcomed by ACE in Eastern PA. The summer saw a number of achievements for each student. Some of the activities included attending a college prep seminar, performing mock interview sessions with members of the ACE team, starting the ACE- USGBC Sustainable Design Award program, completing training and obtaining an OSHA 10 certificate; also drafting their first resumes while beginning work on their college applications. In addition, each student was placed in a summer internship with some of the participating ACE firms, including O’Donnell & Naccarato, LF Driscoll, Gilbane Building Company, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services, Pennoni Associates, H2L2, KSS Architects, JKR Partners, Hill International, Thornton Tomasetti, and The Barnes Museum.

In alignment with the In School Youth Year-Round Program, summer’s end will not mark the end to these students involvement with ACE. As they progress into their second year with the program, all 22 students will participate with the Community College of Philadelphia where they will each earn three college credits towards their college education.

When asked about the impact of the grant and their work with the Philadelphia Youth Network, Anthony Naccarato, Chairman of ACE’s Eastern PA Affiliate remarked, “Our partnership with the Philadelphia Youth Network has enabled us to foster an even greater connection between local design and construction firms and Philadelphia high school students interested in careers within the A-C-E industry.”

Across the state from the Eastern PA Affiliate, ACE’s Western PA Affiliate was awarded a 2010 Summer Youth Employment Program Grant. Funded by the City of Pittsburgh, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this grant provides stipends for 20 city high school students, enabling them to intern at construction related firms and to participate in summer sessions of the ACE Mentor Program. This ultimately helps each student to gain first-hand knowledge of the construction industry through hands-on work experience with companies that live and breathe construction on a daily basis.

This summer saw no shortage of volunteers to help with the two grant programs. With the assistance of some existing ACE sponsors, students quickly found themselves paired with some of the largest and influential construction and law firms in the country. ACE was honored to have Turner Construction, Lane Construction, PSL, A & A Consulting, Limbach Facility Services, AECOM, and Joseph B. Fay all volunteer their time, energy, and knowledge to make a big and lasting impact on each student throughout the course of the summer.

“ACE Pittsburgh is honored to have been selected by the City of Pittsburgh as a recipient of a 2010 Summer Youth Employment Grant,” said Michael Barnard. “This program has given deserving local youth an opportunity to work with some of the best local firms our industry has to offer. Students can learn not only about potential careers in ACE related fields, but also learn basic work skills at an early age.”

John Strock, VP of Operations, ACE National, commented: “We are really excited with the individual efforts and outcomes for both of our Affiliates in Pennsylvania. Regional and national grants are extremely valuable and help to offset the cost associated with running a successful program. Obviously these grants were put to great use this summer, and it’s evident both Affiliates and students alike had a lot of fun which is key to keeping everyone inspired and excited.”

So congratulations to both our Western and Eastern PA Affiliates. Both demonstrated that what makes ACE successful doesn’t have to be held to the confines of the classroom or the school year. ACE continues to grow and is capable of making an impact every day of the year.

Interested in finding a grant in your area? It can happen; you just need to get involved. Start by researching your state and local workforce investment boards. Subscribe to all the appropriate newsletters. Seek out the information that is available to you, and know that the National Office is always available to help you.
Welcome New National Sponsors

ACE would like to welcome PCL Construction, Baker Concrete Construction, and Stantec as our newest national sponsors. Beyond supporting ACE on a national level, these three 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 to find one in your area.

Get to Know the National Office

Pamela Mullender, President and CEO, ACE National

If you ask Pam what her three favorite things are in life, chances are ACE will be close to the top of that list. The National Office’s longest standing employee, Pam has served ACE as consultant, President, and head light bulb changer for over eight years. Always having had a knack for leadership, Pam ran her own public relations company prior to joining ACE. Through this job she came to know Charlie Thornton. An interesting fact about Pam is that she has met more than one U.S. President in her life. The photos throughout her office serve as proof of a long and passionate relationship with American politics. Pam has always been invested in her success, the success of others, and let’s not forget, the success of the Boston Red Sox. An Ohio transplant who found both Commonwealth Avenue and the Green Monster, Pam attended Gordon College where she majored in History with a Minor in Political Science. She then attended Salem State College with a focus on Geography and Urban Politics. Pam then finished her post graduate work back on the same Commonwealth Avenue where she started, receiving her MBA from Boston University.

When you ask her what her favorite thing about working at ACE is, she’ll tell you everything.

John Strock, Vice President of Operations

One of ACE’s newest employees, John comes to ACE with ten years of experience in the construction industry. His previous position as Director of Careers in Construction for Associated Builders and Contractors was natural segue to ACE. John’s main responsibility at ABC was community outreach, something that will serve him well at ACE. Focusing on middle school, high school, and college students, John tirelessly campaigned to educate and empower those students to seek out college programs and careers in the construction industry. A graduate of VMI (Virginia Military Institute), John majored in Economics and Business. A die-hard Redskins fan, one of the biggest challenges John faces after his move to Connecticut is finding a place to watch the game.

When asked what his most memorable ACE experience has been so far, John smiled and talked about watching the finalist’s presentations from this year’s past National Competition. These kids are unbelievable.

Catalina Warrick, Director of Affiliate Relations

Catalina’s Dad was an architect. Not many people know that. She fondly remembers her childhood in Colombia when she gladly carried all of her father’s blueprints as they crisscrossed the streets of Medellin together. Following her move to the United States, Catalina chose to study education, with a specific focus on teaching English as a Second Language. For her, it signified a gift returned that had once been given to her. Putting herself through college, Catalina graduated from the University of Connecticut with a B.A. in General Studies. Shortly after college, Catalina began working at ACE. Not only was she drawn to the idea of working with high school students, but she was also able to find a piece of her Dad in the practice of getting kids excited about architecture, construction, and engineering. Now as Director of Affiliate Relations, Catalina plays an important part in ensuring ACE continues to grow. Managing over 150 different ACE locations nationally, there is an extremely strong possibility you have either met her in person or will soon.

When you ask her what her favorite thing about working at ACE is, she’ll talk about ACE’s ability to give back and provide opportunities to kids who otherwise would have had none.
Diana Eidenshink, Director Regional Programs, DE, NJ, NY, OH, PA.

Diana has been a part of the ACE family for a long time. Perhaps long enough that it even runs in her blood. An ACE volunteer for 10 years, Diana has spent the last two years working for the National Office promoting the success of ACE’s Affiliates in the Northeast. A graduate of Gettysburg College where she earned a B.A. in Business, Diana was drawn to ACE through the passion and enthusiasm of her father, none other than ACE founder Charlie Thornton. When he asked her to help him start the ACE Philadelphia Affiliate, she jumped at the chance to get involved.

When asked what her most memorable experience working with ACE has been, she grins and begins to recount the last twelve years of her life. Diana then talks about the bond one student in particular had with one of her mentors. Not having the support system at home that she craved, she found the support, encouragement, and friendship she needed in her mentor, a relationship that will absolutely continue a lifetime.

Jack Tipton, Director Regional Programs, Southeast

Make no mistake about it, Jack is a seasoned ACE veteran. Having served ACE over the last seven years in various capacities from Mentor to NAC Member to Board Member, Jack is well aware of what it takes to make a successful affiliate. Similar to his experience at ACE, Jack spent over 38 years in the construction industry learning the tools of his trade as he climbed the construction ranks as laborer, iron worker, and then as a successful Project Manager. Having graduated from East Tennessee State University with a degree in Industrial Technology and a focus on Building Construction Science, Jack brings to the students, the mentors, the parents, and the program itself a keen and personal understanding of the construction industry. He doesn’t just preach the life, he has lived it. A loveable and self-proclaimed half-retired southerner, not to mention a great cyclist, Jack is also known for his ability to spin a good yarn. Spend some time in a car with him, and he’ll easily bend both of your ears.

When you ask him what he loves about working at ACE, he’ll tell you the privilege of participating in ACE and watching it grow as fast as the students’ interest. Something tells us full time retirement is not in the cards for Jack, and we couldn’t be happier.

Stephanie Davi Ercolini, Director Regional Programs, West

Like her colleague Jack, Stephanie also got her start with ACE as a volunteer. Working as Membership Director for the Sacramento Building Exchange, Stephanie began to volunteer by helping the newly opened ACE Sacramento Affiliate. A California native, Stephanie was excited that ACE not only was committed to bettering her community through outreach, but was also focused on an industry she loved. Knowing that she too could give back, Stephanie like many others, jumped at the chance to volunteer. A graduate of the University of California-Davis, Stephanie has never really ventured too far away from her California roots, which makes her an ideal spokeswoman and representative for ACE’s West Coast growth. Now, with over four years as part of the program, including almost two of those years with the National Office, Stephanie loves her job as much today as she did when she first started.

When asked what her most memorable experience has been over the last four years, Stephanie can’t give you a definitive answer. Like her colleagues, the answer is a simple, one word answer: everything.

(continued)
Ed Worthy, Education Director

Ed is all about education. Just looking at his decorated collegiate career one can easily assume that to Ed, education means something far more than the process of learning; it’s a passion. With his undergrad years spent at Yale, Ed then went on to Princeton to get his PhD in Chinese history. Following graduate school, Ed served a myriad of not-for-profit organizations and educational institutions including Middlebury College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, American Historical Association, Library of Congress, National Council of the Aging, and the Smithsonian Institution. Prior to joining the National Office in 2007, Ed spent nine years at the National Building Museum where he retired as Vice President of Education in 2006. Before his role as Education Director, Ed was already a member of the ACE family having served on the Washington D.C. Affiliate’s Board of Directors, a position he held up until last year.

When asked what he loves about working at ACE, he talks about the compelling commitment of the mentors and other volunteers, the infectious excitement of the students, and the daily realization that the organization truly makes a difference in the lives of young people. When we think about Ed, we couldn’t find better words to describe him than his own.

Betsy Pitti, Manager of Meetings and Events

Betsy is also one of the National Office’s newest employees. Having joined ACE in June of 2010, Betsy spearheads ACE’s marketing efforts for to national events and meetings, both of which we are counting on Betsy to increase in frequency. No stranger to either marketing events or the construction industry, Betsy spent the five years before joining ACE at Associated Builders and Contractors managing their annual conventions, conferences, and weekly meetings and webinars. She has a skill set that will suit her well as ACE begins to ramp up our own national and regional efforts. A spirited competitor, Betsy played varsity soccer for each of her four years at the University of Mary Washington. Now coming to Stamford, one of Betsy’s main goals outside of work is to find a pick up soccer game as quickly as possible. Did we mention she is competitive?

When asked what she loves about working at ACE, Betsy focuses on the important role that ACE serves in the construction industry. The marriage of mentoring and working with students and dedicated volunteers is a dream come true.

Jenifer Torrice, Administrative Assistant

The role of Administrative Assistant in a growing organization quickly transcends being the person who just answers the phone. Typically, administrative assistants wear numerous hats and juggle the various balls of success or failure with both grace and drive. Jen is no different. Elegantly coordinating that balancing act, Jen is the first person you talk to when you call, she also manages the day-to-day processing of ACE’s bills, and she ensures that website update requests are quickly executed. Now having been with ACE for two years, Jen is a seasoned pro at walking the many tight ropes of a rapidly growing organization.

When asked what her most memorable experience at ACE has been thus far, Jen recalls on the responses she received from the ACE Alumni survey. If you ever need any inspiration or a subtle reminder about what ACE is all about, look to the kids. They know.

Monica McCabe, Office Administrator

Chances are if you have called the National Office recently, you may have talked to Monica. You would remember. Chatty, outgoing, and unbelievably friendly, Monica joined ACE within the last year as our Office Administrator. Having spent several years prior to ACE working in the financial industry, juggling everything from executive’s calendars to company events, Monica saw the opportunity to get involved with ACE and jumped at the chance. Doing a little bit of everything, Monica has worked on several important projects over the last year. From being on the front lines of vetting and approving ACE’s growing Mentor base, to working with various law firms on ACE’s not-for-profit compliance needs, Monica is an extremely valuable utility player for the ACE team. With an Associate’s Degree from Norwalk Community College, Monica always had a knack as a people person. Her roles and responsibilities with ACE certainly give her access to explore and develop that. So much about ACE depends on relationships and connections, and Monica is certainly great at forging them.

When asked what she loves about working at ACE, Monica talks about being fulfilled. ACE fills my cup professionally and emotionally.
National Calendar

2010 Fall National Board Meeting
October 28th, 2010
Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC

2010 Northeast Regional Affiliates Conference
November 11-12, 2010
New York, New York

2011 CIRT/ACE Student Competition
May 3, 2011
Fairmont DC Hotel, Washington, DC

Timeline:
Friday, December 17, 2010 – Notify ACE National of intention to compete
Tuesday, March 15, 2011 – All entries must be received by the CIRT national office
Tuesday, March 29, 2011 – Finalists are notified, and plans are made to bring a representative(s) from each group to Washington, DC
Tuesday, May 3, 2011 – Finalists present to the CIRT Panel of Judges and the winning team is determined

For more national event information please visit www.acementor.org/events

Resources/Information
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