ACE Mentor News

October 2014

ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida, Inc.

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ACE MENTOR PROGRAM

ARCHITECTURE - CONSTRUCTION - ENGINEERING

Career Directions for Students in Architecture, Construction and Engineering

ACE EXPANDS TO REACH MORE STUDENTS

Since our establishment in 2006, the ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida, a 501(c)(3) organization, has realized tremendous success in our local communities. The program's mission is to engage, excite and enlighten high school students to pursue careers in the integrated construction industry through mentoring; and to support their continued advancement in the industry through scholarships and grants. This year, the program expanded to encompass five local high schools – A. Philip Randolph Academies of Technology, Englewood High School, Lee High School, Middleburg High School, and Orange Park High School in both Duval and Clay Counties.

The multifaceted program includes college advice, field trips, and hands-on projects. With oversight from mentors, teams of students design a hypothetical project in response to a Request for Proposal and present the project to a "Selection Committee" – teachers, students, mentors, parents, and industry professionals – at a year-end event. In addition to our traditional program, this was our second year having a National Competition team from Orange Park High School. The diligence and dedication our students have for the program gives us great hope for the future of the Architecture, Construction and Engineering industries.

We had an extremely successful year with approximately 75 students and 50 mentors working together to create the exciting projects that were presented at our End-of-Year Presentations and Scholarship Awards luncheon on May 16, 2014. We were able to award \$19,400 in scholarships and summer camp sponsorships for our students this year thanks to the generosity of our local professional and private donors. Since our establishment in 2006, we have awarded over \$115,000 in scholarships to deserving seniors choosing to pursue careers in the industry.

We thank all of our students, parents, teachers, mentors, and Board Members for an extremely successful year and look forward to expanding our program and reaching more students in the local community in the years to come.

ACE Alumnus Explains Benefits

By Jonathan Miller

Going through the ACE Mentor Program as a high school student showed me the basics of what I could expect in an engineering career. It taught me how to better work with other people. Now that I am in college, I see how helpful that skill is. Knowing how to efficiently lead or work within a group is paramount.

Coming back to do the ACE Mentor Program, I was able to see my previous mentors and some of my old team members. It is a great way to network with local professionals in the engineering field and is extremely helpful when it comes to finding a job.

All in all, the ACE mentor program has taught me many things that I continually use today in college that I would not have learned anywhere else. It has helped me continue my college education with scholarships that I have been so grateful for. Any student or parent that is even remotely interested in the ACE Mentor Program should, without a doubt, participate. You will have absolutely no regrets when you get to the end of the program.





To track our events, find out about volunteer opportunities and our overall successes, please visit our website at http://acementor.org/599. You can also find us on Facebook and Linkedin groups under ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida.

ACE MENTOR PROGRAM OF NE FLORIDA

National Competition for OPHS ACE Students

OPHS students competed last year for the first time on the National level and won first runner up, so they were excited to return and compete again in the Construction Industry Round Table / ACE Mentor Program of America competition. The team developed a rigorous set of standards to make sure each team member was committed and willing to hold each other accountable.

This year's team, Sunshine
Architecture, chose to compete in the
Library Relevance Challenge. The local
public library is supposed to be an inviting
community center that all groups are
welcome to use for their various needs and
activities. This challenge resonated with
the team as they grew up spending time
at the Orange Park Public Library and felt
it currently did not meet these communitydriven requirements.

The team's mission was to transform their Orange Park Public Library into a nexus where the community can use the library to gather, socialize, read, study, learn valuable skills, and attract new community groups. This project competition has given the ACE National Team a great opportunity to do real-life redesign projects in their community and engage other student volunteers from other school academies. They took multiple field trips to the Orange Park Community Library; Jacksonville Main Library; Orange Park Elementary Library and Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind in St. Augustine. They interviewed patrons and staff, and explored new technology to save time, reduce costs and keep the library open longer. In the end, they developed a solution applicable to the real world and that is relevant to libraries everywhere.



The team designed a tree-themed elevated reading loft with 'cubbies'

for children to have a comfortable and quiet place to read, while still being visible from the staff desk. They also invited their stuffed monkey mascot 'Baker' to 'hang around' from the tree, along with the children. They sought to create a

comfortable and safe environment for teens that will transform the teenage viewpoint of a library from a place to stop in to complete a task, to a place where a teen will want to meet for reading, studying, socializing, and entertainment.

The team's efforts were published in *Clay Today*, a local newspaper, and their design is posted inside the library and being used as a fundraising tool for a new teen space. Jason Black, Librarian at the Orange Park Library said, "I have been so

impressed with all the students involved in Sunshine Architecture. Their ability to communicate



the needs of the community has been of instant benefit to the library. By helping design the new teen space of our library, we have already been able to dedicate a space within our building for our future teen area. This has allowed us to start fundraising and begin growing community support from patrons and local businesses. I know for a fact, we would not have been this far along without their input, support, and creative solutions. Finally, I would like to mention that the work ethic and dedication of the entire team and their mentors has been an inspiration to our staff and has created a boost in morale throughout our library."

Participating Students were Aaron Graczyk, Troy Taylor, Kenny Windham, Daniel Hoffman, Chase Scott, Hunter Vatelle, Austin Davidson, Violette Otero, Brian Reed and Tristen Nichols. Mentors included Joseph A. De Marco, Michael L. Compton, Ken Loefgren, Mary Ellen De Marco, Fred Heyne, Fredrick Ross, and Thomas A. Grogan, Jr., and junior mentors included Jessica Meredith and Charlene Xia, as well as their teachers who put in much extra time and effort - Patrick M. Crawford, Theodore B. Jahn, Richard D. Barrows, and Richard A. Eason. Also pictured is the ACE Southeast Regional Representative, Jack Tipton.



Teacher Recognition

We truly appreciate the dedication of the teachers who donate their personal time to the ACE Mentor Program. The following teachers were essential to the 2013-14 program success:

- Ms. Monique Bell Lee High School
- Mr. John Ingram Englewood High School
- Mr. Rodolfo Martin A. Philip Randolph Academies of Technology
- Mr. Aaron Kaplan Middleburg High School
- Mr. Doug Barrows and Mr. Ted Jahn - Orange Park High School







Mr. Martin

Mr. Ingram

Ms. Bell







Mr. Barrows

Mr. Kaplan

Mr. Jahn

"As a teacher. I try and take a student's dream and make it workable and attainable. A true jewel in my bag of tools is the ACE mentorship program and its match of student to practitioner. Engineering has a tremendous pull, and buildings, bridges and edifices loom huge in the imagination of the young and provide inspiration to stay and excel in a class that is not particularly easy. A large portion are drawn to architecture and construction and listen closely when the ACE program is laid out with all the advantages of learning from the masters of the horizon. Ultimately, each student entering the program is provided with an area of responsibility both professional and social. ACE is a dream molder and every student comes out redefined by the experience. All learn about leadership, the requirements for coordination and collaboration, and rewards of hard work. Most return to the program the next year, but all are successful to some palatable degree. ACE mentors are teachers too." - Doug Barrows

IMPACTS STUDENTS, MENTORS AND FAMILIES!

Mentor Spotlight - Joe De Marco



Joe De Marco has provided the leadership to help propel our ACE Mentor Program onto the national scene and into our local community. Joe has been the Lead Mentor for the National team both years that our affiliate has competed. Joe's enthusiasm for mentoring is contagious as we watch him passionately engage and encourage the students to dig deeper and reach further. In reference to this year's national competition, Library Relevance Challenge, Joe stated

"lots of great things to say about this project and its impact on the community aspect like creating a dedicated space for veterans and civil servants and learning center ...all in all, we've connected our students to the library and the nearby schools as they became more interested in the library as a destination for teens ...so the most fun part of this process was watching the students indirectly designing a dedicated space for teens to hang out while they went there to redesign the library and came up with so many great ideas on how to promote library events and even for the after-school programs; to volunteer there, to teach summer classes or hold robotics demonstrations; to the theater students and nursing HOSA students; to volunteer there, to teach/entertain/

volunteer; everyone from all ages in the community...."

OPHS Academy teacher Ted Jahn, describes Joe as, "INVOLVED, COMMITTED and RELIABLE. Joe demonstrates outstanding commitment to the education of our youth by 'being there' when things need to happen, he is 'Mr. Reliable.' For several years now, Joe De Marco has mentored students who are enrolled in our Academy, not only the ACE program, but also lends his mechanical engineering expertise to our Robotics Team. Our students know that he is the 'go to' guy when crunch-time approaches. Reliability is key to their development as young leaders and Joe De Marco is the perfect role model!"

Fourth year ACE student, Aaron Graczyk said, "From the past two years in the ACE national competition I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. De Marco, a mentor who has always given 100%. Mr. De Marco has done a fantastic job leading the ACE National team as he always applies the right amount of push to the project. He will just watch over the shoulder and help out when needed or asked. If the students get off task he will step in and put us back on the right path. Mr. De Marco's will to work never shows any sign of hesitation. On nights where we have had to stay late waiting for final renditions and putting together the final touches, he has always been there. Not only has he been a great teacher and resource to our project, but on a personal level, he has also offered his assistance to help me get into college and find an internship as well. In that regard I'd like to thank Mr. De Marco for all he has done for ACE and me."

UF Summer Camp

By Jack Tipton, Director of Regional Programs (Southeast), ACE Mentor Program

Just when you thought it could not get any better it did. The second annual ACE summer camp at the University of Florida was a huge success. Thanks to the hard work of Dr. Richard (Rick) Smailes and his staff, the camp reached new levels! The rigor of the camp relative to a sampling of career paths, combined with more leisure activities resulted in a great experience. I want to thank everyone involved for making this event a huge success!

UF Summer Camp Scholarship Awards:

Scholarship Donor	Student Scholarship Recipient	Amount
Associated Builders & Contractors	Michael Nee Orange Park High School	\$500
Associated Builders & Contractors	Joshua Domingo Orange Park High School	\$500
Associated Builders & Contractors	Chris Hayward A Philip Randolph Academies of Technology	\$500
Associated Builders & Contractors Women's Council	Mikayla Rodriguez Orange Park High School	\$500
Associated Builders & Contractors Women's Council	Destiny Childress Orange Park High School	\$500

City of Jacksonville Mayor Congratulates ACE Mentor Program

Mayor Alvin Brown sent a letter of congratulations to the 2014 scholarship recipients of the ACE Mentor Program.

In the letter, he wrote, ""It is my privilege to extend congratulations to the 2014 scholarship recipients of the ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida, as well as the dedicated ACE mentors and board members who have made the past 8 years of mentorship and training possible for students in our region.

Whether providing students with advice, scholarships, handson experience or summer camp opportunities, ACE continues to impact students and their futures. I would like to commend the mentoring companies and affiliated sponsors who have helped encourage these young people in the pursuit of a career in architecture, construction and engineering.

For those students receiving honors, please accept my very best as this school year comes to a conclusion. May you be blessed with continued strength of mind and character, serving our community as you have been so generously served."

To view this letter in its entirety, please visit our website, www. acementor.org.

ACE MENTOR PROGRAM OF NE FLORIDA

Student Perspectives

I really enjoyed the ACE Program! The project was interesting and the mentors were very helpful. When I came to ACE, I was interested in engineering and architecture. After working with mentors in both fields, I realized my passion is in architecture.

- Zachary Ebbers

The many experiences I have had this past year from being a part of the ACE Mentor Program have all been amazing. The small but very competitive competitions we held in the beginning gave



us the teamwork, time-management, and communication skills that were necessary to complete the project. I learned everything that goes into a building, from the structure to the budget. Every mentor was so helpful and willing to give their time and effort to help us all grow. There are two main things that I will always be thankful for, while in this program I created friendships that will last forever, and I learned that I want to be a civil engineer, something that I was questioning before, but now I know that is what I love.

- Destiny Childress

I love the ACE program. It allows me an opportunity to develop skills in leadership, collaboration, and creativity. Also, it shows me what my future life will be like as an architect. - Ryan Merrill

Mentor Perspectives

0.2%. It's a very small number, but according to the March 2007 issue of Architect Magazine, it's the "percentage of licensed architects in the United States that are black women." At the time, that accounted for approximately 196 women. Today, it's just over 300. The number has nearly doubled in the last 7 years, but in my opinion, it's still not enough. So, what can I do to help expose more minority women to the profession of architecture? My answer...ACE.

As an African-American female architect, I believe programs like ACE are absolutely essential to the future of our industry specifically architecture. Minority women are particularly underrepresented in our profession, and I sincerely hope that my involvement in ACE will encourage more minority, female students to select architecture as their career choice. I feel ACE is certainly a great place to start! - Tracey Friley, Haskell

The ACE Mentor Program provides high school students early insight into the construction field, whether it's with construction management companies, architectural firms, trade contracting companies, etc. These students get to work with professionals from these different fields, and start to build a passion for this industry early. As a mentor, it has been a privilege to share the knowledge that I have learned through my own experiences, and ultimately as a mentor we are helping to encourage the next generation of people whom we might work with one day. I wish I had this program when I was in high school.

- Ryan Snow, Gilbane

My first year as an ACE mentor was quite more enjoyable than I expected it to be. When a colleague of mine convinced me to attend the orientation meeting, I felt it would be more of a chore than the enjoyable experience that resulted. The first few months were a bit chaotic, as I started to comprehend the process of the ACE mentor program and came to understand the

difference between the national team and the regional teams. As I started working with my team and discussing the various fields of engineering and the distinction between architecture and interior design, I was amused by the students' perspective on our collective professions. It reminded me of my own naiveté when I was their age and helped me to realize there was benefit to providing them a bit more insight into the ways of business and industry. As the deadline approached, I saw some budding talent emerge and most of the students gain a better understanding of what it means to work as a team and trust your teammate to fulfill his or her assigned duties and accept their contribution without endless modification. As the final crunch of the presentations came, the team really pulled off a surprising presentation. I plan to return next year and continue to watch the ACE students grow. - Doug Mercer, NAVFAC Southeast, US Navy

I am a mentor because I want young students to be aware of all career options they have in life, and to have an understanding of how the building industry works. It's rewarding to watch the students who really become interested in the program. I was fortunate to have been exposed to great people as a young person, and I hope that I can fill a similar role for the next generation. ACE has also reminded me of the importance of being able to explain my profession and what I do in such a way that people outside our industry can understand it. - Brian Warfield, Haskell

I was invited to volunteer as a mentor in 2008 by Kimberly Hansen. Kimberly knew I would have a soft spot by suggesting Orange Park High School because I graduated from there in 1972. I was a little reluctant not knowing how big or small the task was going to be, but I accepted anyway. With Tom Grogan leading the group of volunteers and the support of Pat Michael, I went from reluctant to enthusiastic.

Kimberly called again and said Middleburg High School wanted their own program in lieu of students driving to Orange Park. With three Mentors, Scott Fraser, Chuck Kohler and myself, plus the awesome support of Aaron Kaplan, we presented two teams for the first time this year. Their enthusiasm is driving a desire to put together their own National Team.

For me personally, the time spent volunteering in this program is one of the most satisfying/gratifying activities of my work week. - Tom Hanley, Elkins Constructors

When I was in my youth, I never had a mentor and was not around many adults aside from my teachers and parents. I specifically mentor through ACE so the students have an extra opportunity to be around another adult with a specialized interest. I am impressed the students come to the



weekly sessions with a curiosity and a willingness to learn. It is unique and very special to witness and facilitate the development of the students' talent over the course of the semester.

- Jennifer Suharmadji, AIA, LEED AP, Architect, Stellar

IMPACTS STUDENTS, MENTORS AND FAMILIES!

Year-End Event

The University of North Florida again hosted the annual end-of-year presentations for the ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida on May 16, 2014. The program had the returning schools of Englewood High School and A. Philip Randolph Academies of Technology, each fielding one team, and Orange Park High School with five teams. New this year was one team from Lee High School and two teams from Middleburg High School. The student teams had worked diligently since January preparing their response to an RFP for a new student union on Florida State College of Jacksonville's Downtown Campus.



Floor plans and elevations were required, as well as a schedule and a budget. The teams had some flexibility after that, being able to select one engineering system to study, and developing interior finishes and sustainability strategies. They were carefully evaluated by this year's judges – Robert Fernandez from Danis Construction, Pete Hallock from the Florida Engineering Society and David Engdahl, AIA, formerly Haskell's Chief Architect, who generously donated their time to review.

During lunch the students, parents, mentors and guests heard from the City of Jacksonville's Education Commissioner, Dr. Annmarie Kent-Willette, who provided an inspiring message about continuing their education and the importance of the ACE fields (architecture, construction and engineering) to Jacksonville's future. After Dr. Willette's message, scholarships were presented to the students on the following page. We couldn't do this without our sponsor's support.



















Ways You Can Support ACE

Do you know you may be able to support ACE without digging deeper into your pocket? Simply Shop on Amazon Smile or designate ACE to receive your United Way donation.

United Way of Northeast Florida



If you already donate to the United Way of Northeast Florida, would you please consider designating "ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida" to benefit from your donation? We would like to recognize and thank Daniel Brown of Miller Electric for leading the way in this effort. Miller Electric has donated more than \$10,000 to ACE.

Amazon Smile

Amazon.com has a new program for non-profits that will contribute 0.5% of your total purchase to our local NE Florida Affiliate of ACE Mentor. This is a fantastic opportunity to make small contributions to ACE throughout the year with your everyday purchases!

Please follow the link below and use your current Amazon. com log-in/password information. http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-5462738

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\$550 Raised for ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida From Raffle

ACE Board member, Arnie Tritt's 9th annual Groundhog's Day party raised \$550 for ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida, thanks in large part to Robert Fernandez of Danis Construction, also an ACE Board Member, who donated his winnings from the 50/50 raffle. The Haskell Company's lobby and riverfront cafeteria provided an appropriate venue for the more than 350 attendees in the architecture, construction and engineering industry in Jacksonville. http://residentnews.net/2014/03/06/tritt-associates-holds-annual-seasonal-celebration/

2014 Scholarship Awards

Student	<u>Amount</u>	School	Intended Major	Scholarship Sponsor
Marvin Baines	\$500	APR	Architecture	ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL
Eric Cap	\$1,500	Stanton / APR	Mechanical Engineering	Miller Electric
Austin Davidson	\$1,200	OPHS	Engineering	Haskell
Kyle Dermody	\$500	Middleburg	Architecture	ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL
Jordan Englund	\$1,000	Middleburg	Architecture	AIA Jacksonville
Zachary Goble	\$1,000	OPHS	Aviation Law	Rogers Towers
Aaron Graczyk	\$1,500	OPHS	Architecture	ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL Founder's Scholarship
Paul Grant, Jr.	\$800	APR	Civil Engineering	Integrated Construction
Austin King	\$1,000	ACE Graduate & UNF Student Mentor - Returning OPHS Student		Florida Healthcare Engineers Association
Christian Lebron	\$1,200	Lee	Architecture	Tritt & Associates
Jon Miller	\$500	ACE Graduate & UNF Student Mentor - Returning OPHS Student		Miller Electric
Chase Scott	\$800	OPHS	Engineering	ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL
Richard Sottile	\$1,000	Middleburg	Aerospace Engineering	Auld & White
Trevor Starling	\$1,200	Stanton / APR	Engineering	Haskell
Troy Taylor	\$1,200	OPHS	Mechanical Engineering	W.W. Gay
Charlene Xia	\$1,000	Founders Year 2		ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL Founder's Scholarship
Shanna Xia	\$1,000	Founders Year 3		ACE Mentor Program of Northeast FL Founder's Scholarship

THANK YOU to Associated Builders & Contractors, Florida First Coast Chapter & ABC Women's Council

For continuing to sponsor ACE scholarships and provide mentors. On May 30th they hosted an exciting evening of Vegas-style gaming, lively networking, big prizes, food, libations and fun... all set to the soothing tempo of Caribbean steel drums at the Marriott Southpoint.

ABC and the Women's Council have proudly supported the ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida since its inception. This year, they provided scholarships for students to attend UF Summer Camp.





ACE Mentor 2014 Field Trip

As part of exposing the ACE students to the fields of architecture, construction and engineering, an annual field trip is planned to make the concepts real. On March 7th three buses circled the city providing these experiences.

Orange Park and Middleburg High students visited Gate Precast, UF Health Jax North Campus jobsite, Miller Electric and Stellar.

Englewood students visited McVeigh and Mangum, Gate Precast, the Old Federal Courthouse jobsite, and Miller Electric.

A. Philip Randolph and Lee High School students visited Gate Precast, the Old Federal Courthouse jobsite, Miller Electric, and TLC Engineering for Architecture.

Each field trip stop provided something unique – how concrete double tees are made, how electricians learn to do their jobs, what offices of architects and engineers look like and the importance of safety at a jobsite under construction. ACE thanks each company that allowed the students to visit to help make it real to each student!



Your Sponsorship Dollars Matter!

CALL FOR MENTORS

If this newsletter has piqued your interest and you would consider donating your time, please contact us!

The program always needs more mentors and we would love to plug you in and allow you to share our enthusiasm for our profession.

Please contact **Brooke Robbins** at NortheastFL@acementor.org or (904) 361-5120.

In 2014, the ACE Mentor Program of Northeast Florida awarded 17 college scholarships totaling \$16,900 and another \$2,500 for five sponsorships for sophomores and juniors to experience a week at the University of Florida / ACE summer camp. Included were two \$1,000 scholarships for college students who had participated during ACE in their high school years and returned to mentor alongside professionals from our industry. All scholarship recipients are pursuing a field of study within our industry.

Our local affiliate is 100% volunteer; our professional mentors selflessly donate their time.

Financial support and mentors stream from local architecture, construction, and engineering firms, as well as professional societies and construction industry organizations. All financial support goes straight to affect the lives of students. We proudly acknowledge and sincerely thank our benefactors and want to let you know how your dollars are hard at work. With more mentors and financial support, the Northeast Florida Affiliate wants to reach more students and more schools in the future.

Please join us at next year's event on May 15, 2015 at the UNF University Center. You will enjoy witnessing the creative spirit of these talented students our industry should recruit. For a donation of \$1,000 or more, you can present a named scholarship on behalf of your organization. The sponsorship levels are:

\$1000+	Named scholarship, logo in all printed materials and website	
\$500-\$999	Logo in printed materials and website	
Up to \$499	Name only in printed materials and website	

Sincere Thanks to Sponsoring Companies and Contributors!

Your generosity makes the ACE Mentor Program possible, and positively impacts the lives of tomorrow's industry professionals and tradespeople.



































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AND THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PRIVATE SPONSORS!

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Jeff Auld, McVeigh & Mangum
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Ashantae Green, FSCJ Student
Mark Morley, The Ohmega Group
Laney Stoddard, Atlantic Engineering Services
Kevin Valent, Haskell

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Jessica Meredith

Jonathan Miller, Former ACE Student
Phillip Norman, Gilbane Building Company
Cindi Petito, Chas Group

