

# NEW BRITAIN HERALD

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# **BUSINESS SCENE: The power of ITBD continues to grow**

Monday, April 21, 2014 11:11 PM EDT

By SCOTT WHIPPLE

STAFF WRITER

Last Wednesday night, after Rick Mullins left the podium at the ACE Mentor Program Ceremony, Tom Menditto, director of Central Connecticut State University's TRIO educational talent search program, told an audience of 200 that Mullins should run for office.

Not a bad choice. Not only did Menditto and Mullins, executive assistant to CCSU President Jack Miller and director of the Institute of Technology and Business Development, put together a brilliant evening for 14 program graduates, but the two showcased the growing power of ITBD.

Menditto joked that people in New Britain call it "Ittybidy," yet after listening to Menditto and Mullins, you can forget that jest.

Mullins said ITBD is now home to more than 80 start-up businesses, three are student-based incubators, and one will soon receive a \$30,000 grant.



“ITBD is self-supporting,” Mullins said. “We’re not a state university building.”

ACE stands for Architecture Construction and Engineering. Founded in 1994, the ACE Mentor Program of America has involved thousands of students across the U.S. in real-world projects under the direction of top professionals. TRIO, the free, federally-funded early intervention and support program for students, has been strengthened with the collaboration of the New Britain Boys & Girls Club. But it was Mullins, who recruited the name-company mentors and procured support for the program. Apparently, he knows how to recruit. The mentors include Kaestle Boos Associates, Manafort Brothers, Tomasso Brothers, van Zelm Engineers and Downes Construction Co.--all potential employers for the graduating ACE students.

“I hope the kids will work here in New Britain,” said Mullins. “A major workforce shift is coming; more people will be staying in Connecticut where they can build great careers.”

Student teams, engaged in learning about design, engineering and construction methods in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields designed simulated architectural and engineering projects. One exercise involved the relocation and renovation of the New Britain Industrial Museum, the other, an exercise relating to the relocation and building of a new refreshment concession stand in Walnut Hill Park.

Students received graduation certificates signed by U.S. Rep. Elizabeth Esty, Dem.5th Dist., and ACE student participant Alek Glogowski garnered a \$1,500 College Scholarship from the Connecticut ACE Mentor Program

Students got to hear Maria Loitz, Connecticut’s ACE president, tell them since the program began in 1998 there have been 2,000 ACE students in the state. Pasquale “Buddy” Salemi, a Malloy appointee, and deputy commissioner, state Department of Construction Services, reminded students that they have to “love this work. You get a chance to make something that has a beginning and an end. But remember: in construction, if you’re not working, you’re not getting paid.”

Bud Reading from the ACT Group in Cromwell, described the marvels of 3D printing, Sometimes

called “additive manufacturing,” 3D printing is a process of making a three-dimensional solid object of virtually any shape from a digital model.

Successive layers of material are laid down in different shapes; traditional machining techniques rely on the removal of material by cutting or drilling.

Menditto, a proud CCSU grad, sent ACE graduates into the night with a request and a challenge.

“Come back here after graduation,” he told them. “New Britain has always been great. But, you can make it even greater.”

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## Comments

art in az wrote on Apr 22, 2014 6:02 PM:

" Congrats to all those who had a hand in creating, and further developing this program. It sounds wildly successful, and congrats to Alek. Well done, all. "

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AlfredMayo wrote on Apr 22, 2014 8:38 PM:

" I am a proud parent to have my son in this programs because he has been building his careers and future with Trio, this programs not only enhance a better students but demand excellent leadership. Thank you Tom Menditto and his teams for opening up doors for my child and many more can benefits from this program. "

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AlfredMayo wrote on Apr 22, 2014 8:48 PM:

" P.S. Also I want to thank all Companies who support this programs, giving all our children the opportunities for them to pursue in a career for them to work for their Companies. "

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Khimera wrote on Apr 23, 2014 12:07 AM:

" I can't say enough wonderful things about the ACE program, and everyone who helps run and put it together. My son has had a very productive learning experience as a participant. Every child eligible should take advantage of this gem of a resource in our city. "

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