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ACE Mentor students develop plan to revitalize high-profile area of Chattanooga



A model of the ACE Mentor team's plan to revitalize an underused area of Chattanooga

Each year, EMJ team members partner with area high school students in Chattanooga, Tenn., to design hypothetical projects as part of ACE Mentor Program's annual scholarship competition.

From September through February, the high school students spend one afternoon per week at the EMJ office or visiting a construction site, learning about careers in the architecture, engineering and construction industry. The students are also given a design and construction project and work with their mentors to complete it. At the end of the six-month period, the teams present their designs to a panel of industry experts who judge and select the best construction solution.

Students tour The Village at Waterside, a retail development, in Chattanooga with their mentors.



This year, the students were charged with developing a plan to revitalize and update a plot of underused land that promotes a vibrant, mixed-use economy and encompasses sustainable technology, a rich public realm for healthy living, and elements that make Chattanooga more welcoming to visitors.

With the guidance of their mentors, students Ryan Mattox of Heritage High School, Carter Smith of Ooltewah High School, Given Daum of East Hamilton School, Nia Houston of East Hamilton School, Kevin O'Boyle of McCallie School, and Jonathan Roach of East Hamilton School, developed plans for a modern, four-story retail, office and residential facility. The structure was accompanied by ample parking space, including a 380,000-square-foot parking garage, and outdoor recreation and entertainment space.

Check out the video at the top of the page developed by the students using 3D modeling software, a skill they were taught by their mentors, and click here to download a PDF of the team's presentation.

The team presents their development plans at the ACE awards banquet on February 1.

The competition came to a close with an awards banquet on February 1, 2018. EMJ Project Engineer Katie Haberberger led the EMJ team with support from mentors David McCallen, EMJ Preconstruction Manager; Steve Totzke, EMJ Project Manager; Ben Fryar, Engineer, March Adams; Blake Garrison, Garrison Investments; Emanuel Huber-Freely, Architectural Intern, Chattanooga Design Studio; and Justin Rehagen, Construction Planning Specialist, Volkswagen of America.

In addition to ACE's mentoring efforts, the organization also financially supports students



through scholarships and grants and has awarded over \$14 million in scholarships to students across the U.S.

Three of the outstanding students on the 2017-2018 EMJ team, Ryan Mattox, Carter Smith and Given Daum, received scholarships.



EMJ Project Manager Steve Totzke presents student Carter Smith with his ACE scholarship.

From all of us at EMJ, congrats to this year's participants on a job well done!