

## Industry Professionals Paying It Forward Through ACE Mentor Program

By: Staff Report ○ April 4, 2019



Carpenter, Brannan, Rabun and Schwenker toured the nearly-completed Charlotte Regional Realtors Association (CRRA) Headquarters in Midtown Charlotte. The four-story, 58,697 square foot project, designed by Little and built by Myers & Chapman, will replace the old CRRA headquarters located directly in front of the new building. Photo by Nancy Pierce

Marcus Rabun knew he wanted to pursue a career in construction when he was just 14 years old thanks to a mentor and family friend who ignited a passion for building in him. Today, at age 39, he's the Chief Executive Officer of Charlotte-based Myers & Chapman, a 66-year-old, full-service construction company. Rabun, an 18-year industry professional and Georgia Southern graduate, feels strongly about paying it forward by educating the next generation about careers in construction. That's why he and his company got involved in the ACE Mentor Program of Charlotte.

Founded in 2007, ACE is a free after-school program for high school students interested in exploring career opportunities in **A**rchitecture, **C**onstruction and **E**ngineering. It is currently serving over 175 students from area high schools including: West Charlotte, Vance, Independence, East Mecklenburg, Hopewell, Hough, CEEC, Myers Park, Providence, Ardrey Kell, Butler, South Mecklenburg, Garinger, Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences, Phillip O. Berry and Providence Day School. Through office tours, hands-on activities, design competitions and field trips, the program introduces students to the industry's various disciplines.

Rabun, along with Vice President of Operations, Derek Carpenter and Assistant Project Manager, Parker Schwenker, recently took a group of ACE students and mentors on a site visit of the nearly-completed Charlotte Regional Realtors Association (CRRA) Headquarters in Midtown Charlotte. The four-story, 58,697 square foot project, designed by Little and built by Myers & Chapman, will replace the old CRRA headquarters located directly in front of the new building.

"It was fun showing this project to ACE students and mentors," said Derek Carpenter, the Myers & Chapman Project Executive. "It reminds us why we love what we do and allows them to see construction techniques and understand design decisions first hand."

Luke Volkmar, Board Chair of ACE Charlotte, one of the 70 local industry professionals who serve as a program mentor, attended the Myers & Chapman field trip, too. An architect at Neighboring Concepts, he says these experiential learning opportunities outside of the classroom are an essential part of the program and can be transformational for students as they choose a career path.

Nick Brannan, an aspiring architect and Junior at Providence Day School, enjoyed the networking aspect of the tour. "Interacting with industry professionals who graduated from colleges I am interested in and have the job I want some day was so helpful to me," he said. "One coached me on portfolio pieces and the other shared his story about



making the switch from a career in architecture to construction.”

ACE students and mentors are currently working hard on annual design competition entries. This year’s assignment is a playground and commercial building at Seventh and Tryon. The ACE Cup will be awarded to the winning team at ACE’s May 9 Spring Banquet. If you are an practicing professional in architecture, construction or engineering and want to become an ACE Mentor, please email [luke@neighboringconcepts.com](mailto:luke@neighboringconcepts.com)

Like this:



Be the first to like this.

Tagged with: CRRA

Copyright © 2019 The Mecklenburg Times 130 North McDowell St., Suite B, Charlotte, NC 28204

