

ACE year-end celebration awards \$2,250 in scholarships

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By Joseph Hopper , Daily Reporter Staff



ACE students concluded their first year with the program during the northwest Iowa chapter's first annual year end celebration in Milford Tuesday night. (Left to right) ACE mentor Mackenzie Barton; and students Carter Axford, Spencer Quail, Jackie Wingad, Carson Axford, Andy Ashland and Chase Kooker.

Photos by Joseph Hopper

MILFORD — The Northwest Iowa chapter of the national Architecture Construction and Engineering Mentor Program officially ended the program's first year during their "first annual year end celebration" in Milford. The event was attended by local and regional ACE leadership and six of the seven students who participated in the first year of the program,

with three Spirit Lake High School students — Jackie Wingad, Carson Axford and Andy Ashland — receiving \$750 scholarships.

The students participated at a regional ACE event in Ankeny earlier in March, where they spoke in front of a crowd of 500 about their project, a redesign of an area at Spirit Lake High School.

“I was really impressed with this chapter,” said Monica Worheide, director of the ACE central region. “They really made it their own. I’m really proud of everybody.”



Spirit Lake High School student Jackie Wingad is presented with the \$750 CMBA Architects scholarship Tuesday evening during the northwest Iowa ACE chapter's first annual year end celebration.

“This really was our first year doing this and when we started this we really didn’t know what this was going to be,” said Andrew Colbert, northwest Iowa ACE chapter secretary. “To see the amazing project that these students were able to put together was amazing.”

For the program’s second year, which will begin accepting applications on July 1, plans are underway to continue the program’s expansion.

“We consider it a tremendous success,” said Anna Harmon, president of the board for the ACE Mentor Program of Northwest Iowa and an architect for CMBA Architects in Spencer.

“Next year we’re working really hard to integrate with the schools more closely. We want to get to the kids that are very interested in the profession. Because, right now we still get a lot of calls professionally, looking for internships or to come talk to us.

She continued, “It’s a free program for the kids, it’s what they’re asking for, they just need to make time for it. If the schools can carve out time with the No Boundaries program, if they can help us do that and bridge it with credit, it’s a multiple win for the kids. They can get the experience they want, the credit they need and now they have the time to do it. That’s kind of the three-pronged approach we’re going for next year.”

Many of the students said they enjoyed the program with some expressing an interest in exploring a career related to the program in the future.

“It wasn’t what I expected,” Wingad said. “I thought it would just be we would design a place and present it to the board, but there’s an actual competition, there were a lot more people and there was a lot more than just building and designing. We had to have different ideas, know what we were doing, listen to every point of view and meet new people like civil engineers. ... It taught me a lot more about architecture than I already knew.”

“I’ve always been a little interested in engineering,” Kooker said. “It was pretty interesting.”