

## **Kansas City ACE Team Makes National Finalist Round Second Year in a Row**

April 8, 2008 - High school students mentored by the Kansas City ACE team are once again finalists in the national ACE Construction Industry Roundtable Design Competition Awards.

Under the leadership of KC Senior Engineer Mike Valentine, executive director of the Kansas City ACE affiliate, and mentors from the KC office, senior engineers Mara Braselton and Snehal Kadam, a team of 12 students from the North Kansas City Schools will travel to Washington D.C. on April 21 to defend their team project – the design of an athletic community center – against two other competitors from San Francisco and from Frederick, Maryland. Last year the Kansas City students took third place in the national competition.

“No one else from last year’s teams was invited back,” Mike Valentine said. “We must be doing something right!”

The winning Kansas City team was selected in a local competition March 3, which judged submissions on a number of variables including quality of the structural solution, cost, and consideration of sustainability issues. The KC students beat dozens of student teams from cities across the country in a semi-final on March 14.

Last year was the first time ACE held a national competition, in which the Kansas City team placed third winning \$1,000 for the scholarship fund of the ACE Mentor Program of Greater Kansas City. Teams from Hawaii and New York took first and second place, respectively. This year’s first place winning affiliate will receive a \$3,000 award.

“The kids are excited,” Valentine said. “One parent said one student was actually jumping up and down in living room when he heard we are going to Washington, D.C.”

Judges of the national competition include ACE founder and Thornton Tomasetti Founding Principal Charlie Thornton and Norbert Young, Jr., president of McGraw-Hill Construction.

For additional info, contact Pam Mullender at the ACE Mentor Program of America at 203.323.8550.

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