



## CIRT-ACE National Design Competition Finalists Wow Jury and Members of Congress

Two teams from the Constitution State and one from the Centennial State travelled to Washington, DC in late April prepared to dazzle the jury with their design projects. They left Washington with kudos from competition judges, praise from U.S. Senators and Congressmen, and prizes.

In the fourth annual National Design Competition sponsored by the Construction Industry Round Table (CIRT) and ACE, competition was especially intense. A record 19 teams entered the contest. All three finalist teams were first-time competitors. Never before have two teams from the same state been selected as finalists.

A team from the Denver affiliate narrowly walked off with first place for its design of a new Green Mountain High School in Lakewood, Colorado. A green row housing project in East Haven, Connecticut, developed by New Haven Team Number One, earned second place, and the Bridgeport/Stratford, Connecticut team took third place for an arts and cultural center situated in Stratford.

The first-place team won for its affiliate a prize of \$3,000 sponsored by CIRT. The affiliates of the second- and third-place teams received \$2,000 and \$1,000 prizes, respectively. The Lane Construction Corporation and Day & Zimmerman, Inc. underwrote the second-place prize, and Odebrecht Construction donated the third-place prize.



**Left:** The presenters for the three winning teams and their trophies. (l to r) Kathleen Meriano (New Haven), Lane Brugman (Denver), and Ryan DeSilva (Bridgeport/Stratford).

**Above:** Students and mentors from New Haven and Bridgeport/Stratford explained their projects to Senator Christopher Dodd in the halls of Congress.

**Masthead Photo:** Senator Mark Udall (Colorado) discusses the first-place project with the Denver team members.



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## JURORS' PRAISE

The seven-person jury, chaired by Matthew Walsh, CEO, The Walsh Group and 2010 chairman of CIRT, lavished high praise on the students and their projects. Walsh told them, "The depth of experience and the range of resources that you brought to your projects are truly inspiring and amazing."

Other jury members were CEOs of top design and construction firms – Robert Alger, Chairman, President and CEO, The Lane Construction Corp.; Mark Casso, President, CIRT; Linda Figg, President and CEO, Figg Engineering Group; Randy Larson, President, Environment, Energy and Construction Group, PBS&J Corporation; Ross Myers, CEO, American Infrastructure; and, Murray Savage, Chairman, Professional Services Industries.

"I thought the creativity of the projects and the maturity of the presenters was at the level of college juniors and seniors, not high school juniors and seniors," commented Ross Myers.

Randy Larson was equally impressed by the students. "I had heard that the ACE students in the national design competition were good, but I didn't realize how good. I was blown away! They are like sponges. Provide them the juice, and they will suck it up. These kids and their projects demonstrated incredible intuitive thought and abilities."



Three of the seven judges debate the merits of the final projects. (l to r) Randy Larson, Matthew Walsh (jury chair), and Robert Alger.



Above: Team Bridgeport/Stratford meets a local fan, Congressman Jim Himes.

Right: Lane Brugman and Kristin Bayley from Green Mountain High School outside Denver display Congressional mementos.

## CAPITOL HILL VISITS

On the day after the competition, the winning teams, accompanied by their mentors, travelled to the halls of Congress to show their projects to senators and representatives and to extol ACE's value. While the Denver team met Senator Mark Udall and Congressman Ed Perlmutter, the two Connecticut teams first visited Senator Christopher Dodd and then separately saw Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro from New Haven and Congressman Jim Himes from Bridgeport. The teams also spoke with key staff members from the offices of Senators Michael Bennett (Colorado) and Joseph Lieberman (Connecticut).

"I am so proud to see students from Connecticut competing and winning competitions at the national level," said Congresswoman DeLauro. "Their second place finish is an amazing feat. The students and mentors should be very proud of their accomplishments. The hard work and dedication of both the mentors and students resulted in an innovative design for a sustainable housing complex in a part of East Haven in need of revitalization. I commend their innovative vision for our communities."

Congressman Perlmutter inserted a statement in the April 28 *Congressional Record* about the success of the Denver team. "The team from Lakewood has worked hard and enthusiastically to develop a practical construction project that reflects real-world skills and concepts," he said. "This team embraces the love of education, teamwork, and dedication to success that ACE hopes to infuse in all its participants." (The full statement can be read on the ACE website.)



## WINNING PROJECTS

Design competition teams could choose one of four projects: 1) the “ideal” school that stimulates students to achieve their best; 2) a row of three different green houses, each of which will serve as laboratory for building techniques, sizes, and energy efficiency; 3) an arts center/theater offering culture in every form; and 4) a parking garage “outside the box,” challenging current perceptions of urban parking facilities.

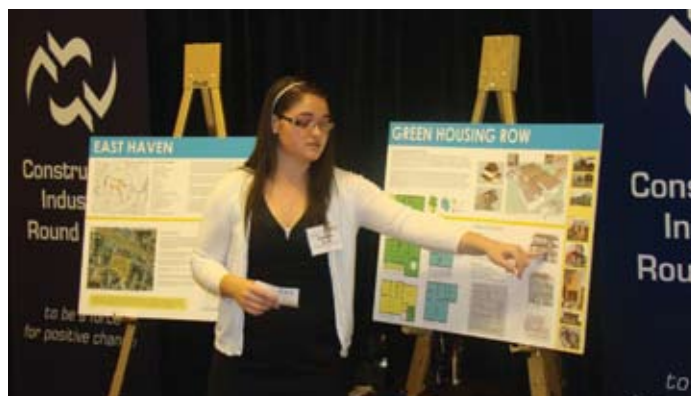


The first-place team was composed of two seniors from Green Mountain High School located in the close-in Denver suburb of Lakewood. Lane Brugman and Kristin Bayley completely reconceived their school so that it maximized the

magnificent views of Denver from the school’s existing hill-side site. Their design’s goals were to increase students’ pride in their school and to motivate them to remain on campus more. The auditorium, gym, locker rooms, and parking were placed underground in order to create more space above ground for attractive amenities such as a commons and cafeteria with an expansive glass curtain wall. A large deck adjoined the commons. With curtain walls, ample windows, and skylights, the need for artificial light was reduced. Other sustainable features of the school included xeriscaped landscaping and geothermal HVAC systems.

Kathleen Meriano, a senior at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden, Connecticut, explained to the jury the second-place East Haven Green Housing Row project designed by New Haven Team Number One. Ten students drawn from several schools designed three prototypes for green row houses on a largely abandoned city block. To meet different community needs, one house was completely handicap-accessible; another was envisioned for a couple working from home; and the third unit, with an in-law suite, was intended for a multigenerational family. Nineteen units would be built on three sides of the site, leaving a large open community green space under which was a geothermal heat pump.

The third-place project, designed by a five-person team from Bridgeport and Stratford, Connecticut, was a multipurpose arts and cultural center named A Creative Experience (ACE) Center for the Arts. Ryan DeSilva, a senior at Stratford High School, explained that the 21,000-square-foot facility was situated in the former Army Engine Plant, a brownfield site along the Housatonic River in Stratford. It included exhibition space, modular classrooms, and an unusual theater arrangement whereby an outdoor amphitheater and an indoor theater shared a common stage.



**Above:** (top to bottom) The boards of the Denver, New Haven, and Bridgeport/Stratford teams.

**Left:** Denver team and Congressman Ed Perlmutter (Colorado)

## HONORABLE MENTIONS

Three teams received recognition as Honorable Mention/First Runner-Ups – Providence, Rhode Island team for its ideal school design; Kansas City, Missouri team which submitted a project in the “Parking Garage Outside the Box” category; and the Wheaton High School team from the Greater Washington, D.C. Affiliate, for its design of an arts center/theater building. Team Four from the Nashville Affiliate was named Honorable Mention/Second Runner-Up for its design in the “Parking Garage Outside the Box” category.

For the first time this year, special awards were given to teams (other than finalists) for the Best Presentation Boards. Team Five of Nashville won first place, and second place was awarded to the Providence, Rhode Island team. The Linganore Team from the Frederick, Maryland Affiliate earned third place.

## VISIT TO THE U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

Part of the agenda for the three teams during their stay in Washington was a meeting at the new headquarters of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) which hosted them for breakfast. ACE and USGBC gave students and mentors an overview of the new Sustainable Design Award program and asked for their feedback. Following this informal focus group, USGBC led everyone on a tour of its office which has received a Platinum LEED rating for commercial interiors.

## CIRT

ACE is grateful to the Construction Industry Round Table for its continuing sponsorship of the National Design Competition. CIRT – an exclusive organization of approximately 100 CEO’s from America’s top architecture, engineering, and construction firms – established the competition in 2007. It underwrites the travel and lodging expenses of one student from each of the three finalist teams as well as the first-prize stipend. CIRT develops the different project options for each competition and draws judges from its membership. The final judging coincides with CIRT’s spring meeting.

## 2011 COMPETITION

Stay tuned for details of the 2011 competition. They will be announced early this fall so that ACE teams wishing to enter the competition can develop their projects throughout the year.

### For more information about the 2010 Competition

The boards for the three finalist teams, press coverage, photos, and a video of the 2010 National Design Competition are posted on the ACE website. Look for the link on the home page.

[www.ACEmentor.org](http://www.ACEmentor.org)



(l to r) Aaron Ho, Anthony Rizzitelli, Michael Lindsey, and Erik Wengeroth of team Bridgeport/Stratford enjoy a relaxed moment.



Winning teams took home trophies and cash prizes to their affiliates.



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