MCAAA Team at the Final Four

Normally, a trip to Hawaii is a venture in sunshine, tropical breezes, and relaxation, but the CSU students participating on the Mechanical Contractors Association of America competition team were more focused on being the best. They had travelled to Maui to participate in the final four of the 2015 student competition at MCAA’s annual convention.

After submitting a proposal for the problem received at the 2014 Student Chapter Summit, the team from CSU was among the top four selected by judges in December from the 24 entries. The other three teams were from the McMaster Student Chapter of MCA Hamilton in Canada, the University of Washington MCA Student Chapter, and Wentworth Chapter of MCA.

The final competition involved an oral presentation of the written proposals the teams submitted for a LEED-certified mechanical retrofit for the Segundo Student Services Center on the University of California-Davis campus.

Competing for CSU were Evan Dreggors, Ben Mayer, Victor Trowbridge, Zack Van Everen, Cody White, and Kennedi White. The team did not place among the top two, but all returned home proud of their hard work.

The students would like to thank Dave Davia, executive vice president and COO of the Colorado Association of Mechanical and Plumbing Contractors; Dennis Pettitt, retired COO of Trautman and Shreve, Inc.; and industry members of MCA of Colorado for their invaluable support and guidance as they prepared for the trip.

CM Alum’s Thesis Among Top Searched

Girija Inguva (’14) published a thesis on the adoption of building information modeling in construction that is one of the most-accessed theses on ProQuest for the month of March. The list is updated each month and Inguva’s work was tenth in a list of the top 25 theses and dissertations accessed on the site across all subjects based on total PDF downloads. More than 1.7 million full-text graduate works from more than 3,000 institutions across the globe are included in this database, making this quite a recognition for Inguva and the CM program.

Her thesis, titled Differences for Employees who use BIM/VDC in the Construction Workplace, outlined the results of a study of the perceptions of BIM employees compared to those of non-BIM employees in the categories of work life balance, career advancement, workplace experience, and skill levels. The general trends observed based on a survey indicate that, on average, BIM personnel are generally more satisfied with their jobs and consider common barriers to career advancement to be less relevant but also that most differences are not statistically different, which suggests that both groups tend to be treated almost equally. Inguva’s work may be found at http://search.proquest.com/docview/1651620976.
Lierheimer Earns AGC Essay Award

Building and Growing with Mobile Technology is the essay that earned CM senior Chris Lierheimer first place in the 2015 James L. Allhands Essay Competition presented by the Associated General Contractors Education and Research Foundation. Lierheimer and his faculty sponsor, Mehmet Ozbek, travelled to the AGC annual convention in Puerto Rico as guests of AGC to accept the award.

“Today’s construction managers have an arsenal of mobile technologies at their disposal, all of which make managing projects vastly more organized and efficient than ever before,” reads the opening line of Lierheimer’s essay abstract. The following pages detail the benefits, potential pitfalls, and Lierheimer’s insight on the future of various mobile technologies and their use on construction job sites. He shares personal experience with and research based on topics including building information modeling, RFID chip tracking, and cloud-based programs.

The essay competition was established by the late James L. Allhands, one of AGC’s founding members and a prolific writer of works related to construction. The winning essay is written on a specific topic that is deemed beneficial to the advancement of technological, educational, or vocational expertise in the construction industry.

Preparing for the Green Energy Challenge

A first place finish at last year’s event means the team assembled for the 2015 Green Energy Challenge has a high bar to meet. Patrick Suzuki, James Dumanovsky, Anthony Olguin, Ellen McCurdy, and Paul and Patrick Kemmesat have been at work for weeks preparing to deliver their proposal for the Challenge by April 20.

This year’s event focuses on development of a back-up power system and resiliency plan for an existing facility with demonstrated critical power needs. Teams must conduct an energy assessment of a building in their community and then generate a technical analysis that includes an energy benchmarking and critical load analysis, an efficiency upgrade that may reduce critical load demand, and the introduction of a back-up power supply/micro grid solution for part or all of the facility. The goal is for students to undertake this project from the perspective of a design-build electrical contractor.

Current National Electrical Contractors Association student chapter president Dan Proud, who participated on last year’s team, is mentoring this year’s group alongside CM faculty member Brent Sigmon. The finalists will be selected and announced on July 30 to make oral presentations at the NECA convention in San Francisco in October.

CMAA Hosts Ginger Evans

As part of the William Duff Architects Speaker Series, the Construction Management Association of America student chapter collaborated with Women in Construction and the American Society of Civil Engineers to host Ginger Evans (B.S., ’77; M.S., ’79) for a keynote address to students. Evans visited CSU on March 30 and met with students and faculty in both the construction management and engineering programs before and after her speech, which covered large scale infrastructure projects.

“This event was a huge success as we had one of our biggest crowds ever,” said Chris Lierheimer, a CMAA officer. “We had 160 students join us for Ms. Evans’ speech and a catered dinner.”

Evans has more than three decades of experience in the engineering and aviation industries. She earned her degrees in civil engineering at CSU and was the associate director of aviation and chief of new airport construction for Denver International Airport. She worked for CH2M HILL, Carter Burgess, and Parsons Corporation, and is currently the vice president for engineering at the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.
CM Grad Students in Showcase

On February 25, two graduate students in the CM program participated in the Graduate Student Showcase, a one-day conference for students across CSU to present scholarship, connect with each other and faculty, gain conference experience, and showcase their talents. Dyugu Akalp and Mohsin Syed each presented a poster at the event and received some valuable insights and perspectives on their work from colleagues outside the CM department.

Syed’s research proposal involved bicycle sharing systems and the development of a life cycle cost analysis tool that incorporates all costs and other factors involved with implementing this initiative in municipalities nationwide. “My concern was how this amazing sustainable public transportation system has no platform or medium for government agencies or cities to conceptualize or visualize it on any scale,” said Syed. “The Showcase was great since it was the first time I got perspective from different people in other fields. One of the judges was from the United Kingdom and gave excellent insights on how London is implementing sustainable transportation systems. He guided me in areas that I didn’t think about before. An Anthropology major gave her opinion about how she faces problems cycling in different cities. Overall it was an amazing and interesting experience.”

Akalp is working with the Wyoming Highway Patrol on creating a benchmarking analysis to compare inefficient divisions of the organization with efficient ones to attain organization-wide performance improvement. The goal of her research is to reveal operational and managerial best practices through surveys conducted of field officers and division lieutenants. “The Graduate Student Showcase not only allowed me to share my research and hard work with other students but also to engage in discussions to learn more about others’ experiences,” she said. “All of this was very beneficial to my future research.”

This was the inaugural Showcase event at CSU. Another is planned for the fall 2015 semester. More information may be found on the Graduate School website.

Nobe Selected for AGC Internship

CM faculty member Mary Nobe, like many of the students enrolled in the CM program, will be on internship this summer. She was one of seven faculty from across the country selected to participate in an Associated General Contractors Faculty Internship, a program of the AGC Education and Research Foundation. Nobe will work with Bill Jack Daniels at Saunders Construction.

“This internship represents a significant commitment to construction education and faculty development of all three entities involved in this collaboration: AGC, Saunders Construction, and the CM department,” said Nobe. “I am very honored and excited about this opportunity.”

The internships foster partnerships between educational institutions, AGC contractors, and the Foundation. Participating faculty members spend several weeks on the job site of a construction project to gain field experience that can then be used in the classroom. Nobe’s objectives for her internship include learning more about the impacts of scheduling on job site management, how schedules vary for different types and scopes of work, how industry uses schedules to track project costs, and how to use Asta scheduling software. She will write a post-internship report describing her experience, learning outcomes, and the value of the internship to her work in the classroom.
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Mortenson Construction
USGBC Hosts Whiting-Turner

On March 2, students in the U.S. Green Building Council chapter hosted industry members from Whiting-Turner Contracting Company for a presentation on LEED implementation strategies. The event could have been considered a small reunion as many of the visitors were alumni of the CM program. Mark Faul, vice president of the company, attended with Jeff Mehl ('08), superintendent; Jeff Splinter ('11), assistant project manager; Alex Aceves ('14), project engineer; Brennan Engel ('07), project manager; and Alex Bettam ('12), field engineer.

Upcoming Events

CM Senior Photo

The 2015 Senior Photo will be taken on Friday, May 1, at 3:00 on the steps of the Administration Building on the south side of the Oval. A rain date for inclement weather is scheduled for Monday, May 4, at 4:00 in the same location. All CM seniors and graduate students graduating in spring, summer, or fall of 2015 are invited to be forever immortalized on the walls of Guggenheim Hall. Information on obtaining your personalized Ram Built hard hat will be distributed at the photo.

Commencement

The Commencement ceremony for the College of Health and Human Sciences will take place on Friday, May 15, at 7:30 p.m. in Moby Arena. The Graduate School’s ceremony will also take place on Friday, May 15, in Moby Arena at 3 p.m. Information on the event, including a Graduation Day F.A.Q., may be found at http://commencement.colostate.edu.