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ALL AFFILIATES MEETING JUNE 22 AND 23, 2014

# ACE MENTOR PROGRAM OF CHICAGO: Building Leadership and Commitment



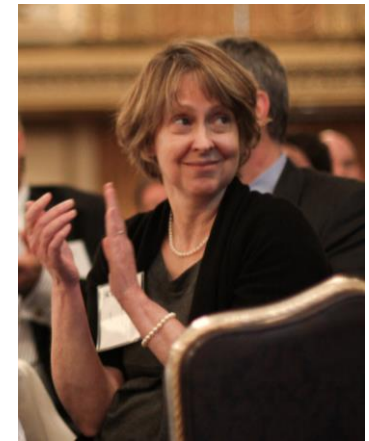
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Joe Cushing, Cushing and Company  
ACE Chicago Board Chair

How have we developed  
and what are the keys to  
our success?



Pat O'Connell, Executive Director  
ACE Chicago



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## History of ACE Chicago

- Began in 2000 with 10 firms: 4 architecture, 3 engineering, 3 construction
- Had 4 teams with 34 mentors
- First year awarded 11 scholarships worth a total of \$11,000





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## ACE Chicago Today

- Our board consists of 30 members from the full spectrum of the industry including owner reps, legal, banking, and finance
- There are 90+ mentors serving 7 teams
- This year we awarded 64 scholarships worth \$110,000 and 16 paid internships.



*“ACE has left me feeling confident and ready to face the challenges of college and beyond.”*

**Since our beginning we have awarded a total of 446 scholarships worth over \$1 Million and 109 internships.**



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# ACE Chicago Milestones



- In 2006, with ACE LA, was awarded ACE National's first Affiliate of the Year Award
- In 2006 created ACE's first ever Associate Board comprised of experienced mentor leaders
- Created the first Junior Mentor Program in 2008
- Created the ACE Summer Design Build Program in 2010
- Our annual fundraising luncheon, begun in 2006 draws over 500 industry leaders. This year's record setting total raised \$204,000





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## Unique ACE Chicago Challenges



Ninety-three percent of our students are minorities. **While nationally, 59% of ACE students attend Title I schools, 95% of our Chicago Public School students attend Title I schools.** As a consequence, our students generally require more than average support and resources to overcome the barriers to success that their socio-economic circumstances create.

For example, a significant number of our students come from non-English speaking households and the majority are the first ones in their family to finish high school and aspire to higher education.





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## Unique ACE Chicago Challenges



We do not group students by schools but create teams that are comprised of students from all over the area. Consequently each team consists of students from all over the Chicago area who have a diverse background of education and skills. The mentors have to create a meaningful experience for all students.

We also conduct all team meetings in downtown Chicago instead of at the students' schools. While this creates logistical challenges and requires students to travel far distances we are enriching the students experiences, especially those that have seldom left their neighborhoods.



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## A Critical Part of ACE Chicago's Success:



Mark Iammarino, Turner Construction,  
Past Board President



Aimee Eckmann, Perkins & Will, Current board member, Past  
President of Associate Board



Earl Manning, Arcadis,  
NAC Representative

An enthusiastic, energetic, and committed  
board of directors.





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## What do we look for in a board member?



Kathy Fanning, Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill, Past Board Treasurer,  
Current Chair of Governance & Nominating Committee

- Passionate about the ACE mission
- Senior level in the firm
- Strong support for mentors
- Well connected within the industry and beyond
- Capable of and willing to commit to fundraising
- Willing to commit to being part of a working board; not just in name only
- Team player with strong people skills



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## Requirements for Board Membership

- Attendance at seven or more board meetings per year (out of 11)
- Officer +/-or Committee involvement
- Personal contribution of at least \$100
- Board firm luncheon contribution of \$2,500 with mentor participation and \$3,500 without
- Host a board meeting
- Attend other ACE events: team meeting, Final Presentations, Design Build final event, Associate Board fundraiser, Mentor Appreciation Party



Chuck Hardy, GSA, Past Chair of Governance & Nominating



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## Associate Board



Deana Haynes, Jones Lang  
LaSalle, Associate Board Member



P.J. Kilcoin, Power Construction,  
Associate Board Member



Amanda Beelman, Thomas Interiors,  
Associate Board Member

Besides developing students, ACE Chicago is also committed to developing its mentors. Mentor leaders are elected to the Associate Board, which serves as a link between the Executive Board and the mentors. The Associate Board assists the Executive Director with program planning and administration and holds its own fundraiser to provide Alumni Scholarships and Design Build internships.



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## Developing Leadership from Within



Jessica Figenholtz (center) with Charlie Thornton, Pat O'Connell, Carol Moy, and Kathy Fanning



Aimee Eckmann, announcing scholarship winners

Currently, there are two Executive Board members, Jessica Figenholtz of Cannon Design and Aimee Eckmann of Perkins & Will, who began as mentors and were elected to the Associate Board. Each served as Associate Board President and then moved up to the Executive Board. Last year, Jessica was elected Vice-Chair of the board and Aimee became chair of the Education Committee.





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## Coming Full Circle



Nicole (Nikki) Dennis, of Turner Construction began with ACE Chicago as a student from a Chicago Public School. After her senior year she was awarded an ACE internship at the Rise Group (now Arcadis). She continued to work for them through her college years at IIT and was hired full time at graduation.

Nikki was a junior mentor for ACE Chicago while in college and while she was at both Arcadis and Turner Construction in Boston she served as a regular ACE mentor. Shortly after returning to Chicago with Turner she was elected to the ACE Chicago Associate Board and is also serving as a mentor. Nikki tells us that ACE was life changing for her and she is happy to be able to pay it forward.