



Student Chapter News

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Reserve Your Rooms NOW for MCAA 2002

If your chapter is planning to send a delegation to **MCAA 2002** in Boca Raton, Florida (February 3 – 7), make your hotel reservations now! The Boca Raton Resort & Club is completely sold out and rooms at the Marriott and Renaissance hotels are selling quickly.

The program for the 2002 convention is particularly extraordinary. The opening session features a patriotic tribute to the American spirit, remarks from Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, and a Super Bowl party. Other featured speakers include business guru Tom Peters, former Burger King CEO Barry Gibbons, renowned political columnist George Will, and Olympic wrestling champion Rulon Gardner. Educational sessions cover a wide range of topics that will be interesting and informative.

Student activities include the orientation meeting, the Student Chapter annual meeting and luncheon, the competition presentations, and the Annual Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit (where each chapter displays its banner, newsletters, resumes and other relevant information). Students will also be welcome to attend the Young Executives luncheon.

Registration fees for all attending students and their faculty advisor are waived. Students and their faculty advisor are welcome to attend all events and sessions except the final gala.

For more information about the program and a registration form, access the MCAA website (www.mcaa.org/boca2002). Please direct questions to Lisa Fortin at lfortin@mcaa.org.

Students Test Knowledge, Skill in MCAA's Chapter Competition

On November 15, it was all over but the judging for six MCAA student chapters that submitted entries to the 2001 Student Chapter Competition. The competition, the first ever sponsored by MCAA for its student chapter program, challenges the chapters to prepare a plan for retrofitting a parking structure into a data center for EarthLink Network, the Internet service company.

Three judges, all from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, will choose four finalists who will make presentations at MCAA 2002 in Boca Raton, Florida. The winning team will receive a cash prize of \$5,000; the second place team will receive \$2,500.

Teams that entered the competition were from the following schools: **University of Washington; University of Nebraska; Purdue University; Southern Polytechnic State University; Texas A&M University; and Ferris State University.** Each entry was to include a written proposal and a video-taped oral presentation to a group of contractors.

The judges will meet at MCAA's offices in Rockville, MD on December 5 to choose the finalists. Teams will be notified of the results on December 10.

Summit Goes On Despite September 11 Tragedies

Saddened by the tragic events of September 11, 55 stalwart students, faculty advisors, MCA local executives, and members of MCAA's Career Development Committee defied travel concerns to attend the first-ever MCAA Student Chapter Summit in Kansas City, Missouri September 20 – 21.



Students take a moment to chat during the Bartle Hall tour. From left are, Kate Edmund (Univ. of Kansas), Heather Helgen (Univ. of Washington), Tom Van Oss II (Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison), Holly Cook (Milwaukee School of Engineering).

The conference for students and faculty participants in the MCAA student chapter program involved representatives from nine existing chapters – **MCA Student Chapter of Texas A&M University, Mechanical Specialty Contracting Student Chapter at Iowa State University, Greater Michigan MSCA Student Chapter at Ferris State University, Student Chapter of Mechanical/Electrical Specialty Contracting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, MCA of Indiana Student Chapter at Purdue University, Student Chapter of Mechanical/Electrical Specialty Contracting at the University of Nebraska, University of Washington Mechanical Contractors Student Chapter, Student Chapter of Specialty Contracting at Southern Polytechnic State University, and the University of Florida Student Chapter of the Mechanical Contactors Association** – four prospective student chapters – **Georgia Institute of Technology, Illinois State University, Kansas State University, and the Milwaukee School of Engineering** – and the **University of Maryland – Baltimore County**, which is reactivating its MCAA chapter program.

The Summit program gave attendees a chance to show off their chapters' accomplishments, exchange ideas about fundraising and chapter activities that attract new members and keep their programs interesting and vibrant, and learn about MCAA's new chapter competition.

Featured speakers included **MCAA President Smitty Belcher** who opened the conference, and **Career Development**

Committee Chairman Jack Wilhelmi who offered a solemn tribute to those lost to the September 11 attacks. University of Nebraska Associate Professor and faculty advisor **Tim Wentz** led a roundtable of chapter presentations. Excellent presentations from **Megan Ruehmeier**, president of the Ferris State University chapter, and **Troy Aichele**, faculty advisor from the University of Washington, gave students some food for thought about what makes a successful chapter and what to expect after college, respectively.



Participants at MCAA's first Student Chapter Summit in Kansas City, Missouri,

The conference wasn't all talk, however. Participants saw the mechanical systems of Bartle Hall, Kansas City's convention center, and auditorium; competed for a cash prize by coming up with creative ideas for converting a hypothetical historic church into a restaurant/bar; and relaxed and enjoyed each other's company during an evening reception.

Because the response to this summit was so enthusiastic, we'll do it again next year. Stay tuned for the time and place.

MCAA Adds Three New Chapters, Reactivates Another

MCAA's Student Chapter program is growing! As we go to press, new chapters are forming at the **Georgia Institute of Technology, Central Washington University**, and at the **University of Maryland – Eastern Shore**. Students at the **University of Maryland – Baltimore County** are also reactivating an existing chapter.

With the addition of the new chapters and reactivation of the UM-BC chapter, the number of MCAA chapters will be 16.

Each of the new chapters are a second student chapter program for their MCA local affiliate sponsors. **MCA of Georgia** is the sponsor for chapters at Georgia Tech and Southern Polytechnic State University. **MCA of Western Washington** is sponsoring the chapters at Central Washington University and the University of Washington. **MCA of Maryland** is sponsoring chapters at the University of Maryland – Eastern Shore and the University of Maryland – Baltimore County.

The new chapters will be officially chartered when MCAA President Smitty Belcher presents a plaque to representatives of the chapter and/or the sponsoring MCA local affiliate at the Annual Awards Breakfast during MCAA 2002 in Boca Raton, Florida.

December 31 is the Deadline for Matching Funds Requests

If your chapter has raised funds for the convention, field trips, or other chapter activities this year, send in the request for matching funds (with accompanying documents) to MCAA by December 31. Each chapter is eligible to receive up to \$1,000 in matching funds each calendar year.

If your chapter has already received matching funds in 2001, it will not be eligible for additional funds until 2002. If you're unsure of your chapter's status, contact Ann Mattheis at (800) 556-3653 or e-mail amattheis@mcaa.org.

Thinking About an Internship? Check out MCAA's Website

It's not too soon to start thinking about internships for next summer. And when you begin your search, be sure to start checking MCAA's Careers page on our website (www.mcaa.org).

Soon after the new year, we'll start inviting MCAA members to advertise the availability of internship opportunities in that section of our website. The more YOU use the service, the more THEY will.

Another source for internship and summer job leads is your MCA local affiliate sponsor. Stay in touch with your contact about

your career interest and the kind of temporary opportunity you would like to arrange for the summer. You may be surprised at how many leads they could send your way.

MCAA's Student Chapters are Among the Top 20 Largest Schools of Construction

Schools that host MCAA student chapters are among the top 20 universities and colleges with the largest student enrollments in construction programs, according to *ENR* (Engineering News-Record). The article, which was published in the magazine's October 29 issue, reported that "C-schools" are growing in numbers, credibility and acceptance within the academic community. Construction education courses are now offered at as many as 170 universities and officially recognized at more than 60.

The top three schools on *ENR's* list host MCAA chapters: Colorado State University, Texas A&M University, and Purdue University/Construction Management. Other top 20 schools with MCAA chapters are: Iowa State University, University of Florida, and the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

The nine-page article covered some of the challenges that C-schools have faced over the years as the discipline has matured: funding, faculty shortages, curriculum development, and balancing field experience with traditional academic course work.

But the positives are worth noting: for graduates of C-schools, higher starting salaries. *ENR* reported that C-school graduates are in demand by top companies and are demanding top starting salaries. For example, graduates of California State University, Sacramento are commanding starting salaries that are \$10,000 more than the going rate for civil engineering graduates.

Bottom line: hang tough students, the benefits are worth it.

Student Chapter Roundup

What's been happening this fall with MCAA student chapters? Here's a quick run-down on all the latest activities and events.

University of Nebraska: On Nov. 14, 2001, the student chapter at the University of

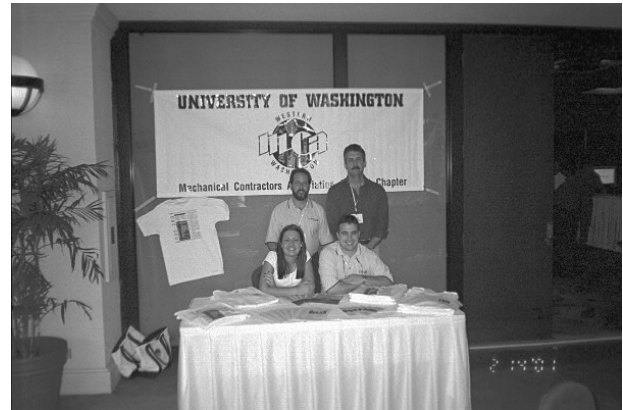
Nebraska was invited by the Mechanical Contractor's Association of Omaha to tour the new Desert Dome at the Henry Dorley Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska. The Desert Dome will be the largest indoor desert environment in the United States and is housed within the largest geodesic dome in the United States. It is scheduled to open in March of 2002.



Students who toured Omaha's new geodesic dome

University of Washington: The two-year-old University of Washington student chapter works closely with MCA of Western Washington on a variety of activities, which are planned with the collaboration of chapter president, currently incoming senior Heather Helgen.

A formal scholarship program made possible two \$1,000 awards in 2000 and three \$1,500 awards in 2001; these were used by students to attend the annual MCAA conventions. In addition, applications have already gone out for the two scholarships to be awarded in 2002.



MCAWW has also sponsored many other activities, including donating the food for the annual alumni barbeque, hosting groups of students on jobsite and operations tours, inviting individual students to membership luncheon meetings, and having student chapter members sell mulligans at the golf tournament, proceeds from which go toward the student fund. MCA also acts as a clearinghouse for internships, promoting them to students and forwarding resumes to interested companies.

Southern Polytechnic State University:

Southern Polytechnic State University is offering classes regarding mechanical construction as both distance and in-class program. In the coming semester, a class named "Techniques and Methods of Specialty (Mechanical) Construction" will be offered. Southern Poly will offer two classes in the fall as distance education courses as well.