



Student Chapter News

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U of WA, UN-L Win Top Student Chapter Awards at MCAA 2002

The University of Washington Mechanical Contractors Student Chapter and the Student Chapter for Mechanical/Electrical Specialty Contracting at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln received MCAA's top student chapter honors at **MCAA 2002**.

The University of Washington team won first prize for its submission to the *2001 Student Chapter Competition*; the



University of Washington team takes first prize in MCAA's 2001 *Student Competition*

University of Nebraska team took the prize for second place. The University of Nebraska chapter was chosen MCAA's *2001 Student Chapter of the Year*.

The awards highlighted a week of exciting events for 10 student chapters that were represented at MCAA's annual convention in Boca Raton, FL. Events began with a spectacular opening session on Sunday evening featuring General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who was commander of U.S. troops in Operation

Desert Storm in 1991; Officer Daniel Rodriguez, the famous singing New York City police officer, who sang the National Anthem and "God Bless America;" and a beautiful and moving laser light show that left the audience breathless.

After the program, students joined MCAA members in sampling the fare at a Super Bowl tail gate party before sitting down to watch the big game on large-screen televisions.

On Monday, students took time out from a full day of educational sessions to meet at the annual Student Chapter Luncheon and meeting. Ideas and suggestions for improving the student competition and other student activities at the convention were presented, discussed, and dissected while everyone enjoyed a hearty lunch.

Students spent Tuesday morning meeting, greeting, and talking with a flood of contractors about career hopes and plans. Resumes and business cards were exchanged, formal interviews were arranged, and employment opportunities were offered and weighed.



University of Nebraska – Lincoln is 2001 *MCAA Student Chapter of the Year*

The Student Chapter Competition took place Tuesday afternoon, with four chapter teams presenting their proposals to retrofit a parking garage into a data center for EarthLink, the Internet Service provider. The teams were: Texas A&M University; University of Washington, University of Nebraska – Lincoln; and Purdue University. A panel of three judges evaluated the presentations and asked questions.

All the teams were very impressive, but the judges chose the University of Washington and the University of Nebraska – Lincoln for commendation.

The results of the competition and the selection of the 2001 *Chapter of the Year* were kept secret until the *Awards of Excellence Ceremony* on Wednesday morning. The competition winners each received a trophy and a cash prize (the first place winner received \$5,000 and the second place winner received \$2500). The University of Nebraska – Lincoln received a handsome trophy and the recognition of being the best MCAA student chapter of 2001.

MCAA 2003 takes place in Palm Springs, CA, March 2 - 6, so start making your plans now to attend.

Three New MCAA Student Chapters Receive Charters at MCAA 2002

MCAA's student chapters not only celebrated excellent performances at the association's annual convention; they also welcomed three new student chapters.

MCAA President Smitty Belcher and Career Development Committee Chairman Jack Wilhelmi presented charters to the new chapters at the **Annual Awards of Excellence Ceremony and Breakfast** on Wednesday, February 6. Receiving the charters were: Wa-Ki Bennett, president of the *University of Maryland Eastern Shore Student Specialty Construction Association*, and Bernie Vondersmith, executive vice president of the MCA of Maryland; Michael Thibeau, president of the *Central Washington*

University MCA Student Chapter, and MCA of Georgia President Brian Willis and Executive Vice President Gary Fowler, who accepted the charter for *MCAA's Student Chapter at Georgia Tech*.

Each of the new chapters also received colorful banners to display at university and association events.

Once again, congratulations and welcome to all of our new student chapters!

Look for Summer Internship Opportunities on MCAA's Website

If you're starting to look for a summer internship position, check out MCAA's website. We've cleared out all the old listings and will advertise the service in our weekly newsletter over the next few weeks.

To access the site, just click on <http://www.mcaa.org/careers>, click again on internship opportunities, and then follow the search instructions. Start checking the site as soon as you receive this newsletter and keep checking over the next few weeks as contractors add job opportunities to the list.

If you have questions, contact Ann Mattheis at amattheis@mcaa.org.

MCAA's Career Development Committee Meets in May to Plan Summit, Competition

MCAA's Career Development Committee will hold its first full meeting of 2002 in mid-May in the Chicago area. Members will discuss plans for the Student Chapter Summit, this year's Student Chapter Competition and other matters.

The ideas, comments, and criticisms raised during the Student Chapter Annual Meeting and Luncheon will be considered in the discussion. Suggestions for improving those two events are still welcome and encouraged; please send them to amattheis@mcaa.org.

Plans for the Summit are already underway. Carrier Corporation has graciously offered to host the event at its offices in Charlotte, North Carolina. The committee will choose a date and develop the program at its May meeting.

Like the 2001 Summit, the details of the 2002 competition will be announced at that event.

Chapter News Round-Up

Spring Break is in full swing, but MCAA chapters are still making news.

University of Washington, MCAWW Student Chapter News

Submitted by Troy Aichele

Chapter President Heather Helgen will be graduating, so next month, the students will say good-bye and elect a new president to take her place.

Field Trips, Fundraisers, and Volunteer Work

In December, the students helped a local construction family whose father had been injured on the job. Through the Adopt-A-Family program, the students bought presents for the two small children, which made their Christmas wishes come true and helped the family celebrate a much merrier holiday.

The juniors in the CM program have had the chance to go on a few field trips this quarter. They toured four local mechanical contractors' main offices and their fabrication shops, and learned a little about the mechanical industry.

They also toured the Seattle Justice Center jobsite in downtown Seattle, and saw the mechanical systems as they were being installed.

The CM students completed two playhouses; one was auctioned off for \$5000, which went to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. The proceeds from the second auction were donated to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. The

students spent many weekends getting the playhouses built and ready for auction (see photo below)



University of Washington MCAWW Chapter members and helpers inspect their handiwork

Gators Go to Boca

Members of the University of Florida Student Chapter of the Mechanical Contractors Association experienced their first MCAA convention during **MCAA 2002**. Six students and their faculty advisor, Dr. H. "Skip" A. Ingley, attended.

Students greeted MCAA members at the Manufacturers/Suppliers Exhibit (see below) and answered questions about their school, chapter program, and their plans for the future. They attended the special student chapter activities, general sessions and the educational seminars, and enjoyed the social events.

What a great way to get acquainted with an industry!



Members of the University of Florida Student Chapter of the Mechanical Construction Association talk with a contractor about their plans for the future.

Purdue Makes its Mark on MCAA 2002

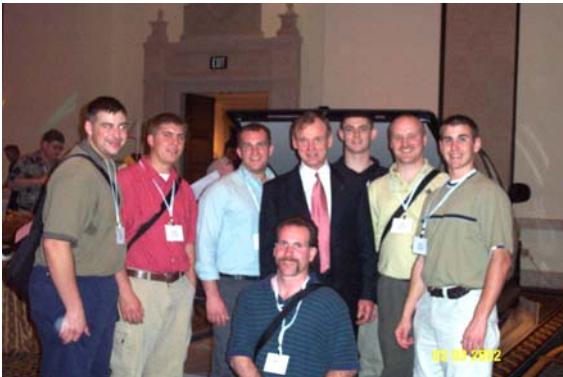
Submitted by Daryl Orth

The Purdue MCA Student Chapter of Indiana (MCASCI) has had a busy spring semester.

The semester started with the MCASCI going to Chicago to attend an MCA of Chicago meeting. At the meeting, MCASCI President Paul Laskia received a \$2,500 scholarship from MCA of Chicago.

In February, the MCASCI Competition Team traveled to Boca Raton, FL to participate in the first-ever MCAA *Student Competition*. Even though the competition team did not win, they had a great time meeting students from other chapters and contractors across the nation. They even met Smitty Belcher, the outgoing MCAA National President.

Also in February, the Building Construction Management (BCM)



Members from Purdue's MCA Student Chapter with MCAA Past President Smitty Belcher.

Department at Purdue University held its bi-annual roundtable. This is where contractors across the nation come to interview potential interns or full-time employees. The MCASCI helped setup and breakdown tables and displays for contractors that attended the roundtable. At the MCASCI February monthly meeting, three mechanical contractors, who were attending the roundtable, presented information about their companies. The

contractors were Industrial Contractors from Evansville, IN; BMW Constructors from Indianapolis, IN; and American Plumbing and Heating from Houston, TX. Southland Industries from Las Vegas, NV also attended the roundtable, but they were unable to make the MCASCI meeting.

In March, the MCASCI took a field trip to the site of a new hospital being built in Lebanon, IN. Centex-Rodgers, the construction manager for the hospital, hosted the field trip and provided lunch for MCASCI. The chapter had a three-hour tour of the construction project including all of its mechanical components. Currently, the MCASCI is preparing to help the BCM Department host 150 Girl Scouts from Central Indiana in April. The MCASCI will have a display that shows the Girl Scouts how to install and unclog a water closet. This is one of ten displays the Girl Scouts will go through to earn their "Ms. Fixit Badge" by the end of the day.

Great Beginnings for New Chapters

It may have been their first MCAA convention, but you can be sure it will be their most memorable.

Michael Thibeau, representing the *Central Washington University MCA Student Chapter*, and Wa-Ki Bennett and James Ballentine of the *University of Maryland Eastern Shore Student Specialty Construction Association*, first impressed contractors who came by their displays at the Manufacturer/ Supplier Exhibit.

The following morning, hundreds of members saw them accept their charters from President Smitty Belcher and Career Development Committee Chairman Jack Wilhelmi at the ***Awards of Excellence Ceremony***.

In between, they attended educational sessions, networked with their



Wa-Ki Bennett (left) and James Ballentine of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore talk with a contractor at the Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit

colleagues at the Student Chapter Luncheon and Meeting, and enjoyed the good times at convention social events.



Michael Thibeau of Central Washington University pauses after greeting MCAA members during the student chapter display

For Ferris State, Iowa State Student Reps, One is Not the Loneliest Number

They may have been the sole student representatives for their schools, but that didn't detract from their convention experience.

Megan Ruehmeier, president of the Ferris State University *Greater Michigan MSCA Student Chapter*, arrived at **MCAA 2002** with faculty advisor Mike Feutz. They held down the chapter's display at the Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit, attended the Student Chapter Luncheon Meeting and the Competition, and covered as many of the educational sessions as their schedules allowed. Not to be missed, of

course, were the social events that included the Dessert Party and the Wednesday evening dinner for the students.

Mike Wolf, up and coming member of the *Mechanical Specialty Contracting Student Chapter* at Iowa State University, experienced his first (but hopefully, not his last) MCAA convention. He attended all the student events, managed his chapter's display at the Exhibit, and enjoyed the educational sessions and social events too.

Hopefully, we'll see Megan and Mike at the Student Chapter Summit this Fall.



Megan Ruehmeier of Ferris State University (right) talks with contractors during the Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit, and Mike Wolf of Iowa State University (rear) discusses his career plans with an interested contractor.

Texas A&M Competes in Final Four Competition at MCAA 2002

A team of four students from the *MCA Student Chapter of Texas A&M University* came to MCAA 2002 with an idea for converting a parking garage into a data center for EarthLink, the Internet service provider. The team's project proposal, one of four chosen for presentation at the convention, was very well received, but was not selected for an award.

Despite their disappointment, the students and their faculty advisor John Bryant enjoyed their experience at MCAA 2002. They attended the general sessions and several of the educational seminars,

met and networked with other students at the Student Chapter Luncheon meeting, and talked with contractors at the Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit.



Texas A&M's team presents their proposal at the MCAA 2001 final four Student Chapter Competition. From left are: Pat Ferguson, Craig Campbell, Marisa Canales, and Jeff Langlitz.

University of Wisconsin – Madison Students See their Future at *MCAA 2002*

For Tom Von Oss, president of the Student Chapter of Mechanical/Electrical Specialty Contracting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and his three colleagues who attended *MCAA 2002*, the convention was a chance to get to know the industry they would (hopefully) soon enter as full-time employees.

The students met with prospective employers at the Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit, networked with other students at the student events, and enjoyed the entertainment and social events as well. Who said launching a professional career was tough!



University of Wisconsin-Madison students talk about career goals with a contractor at chapter exhibit