



MCAA 2009 – 2010 STUDENT CHAPTER COMPETITION

Rules and Guidelines

Introduction

The Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Inc. (MCAA), through its Career Development Committee, is sponsoring a competition for its student chapters. The purpose of the competition is to provide chapter members with an experience that will enrich their education by challenging their problem-solving and management skills, technical acumen, creativity, resourcefulness, and knowledge of mechanical systems. Students will gain valuable experience in working with a team of peers against a schedule, preparing a written proposal, and planning and delivering an oral presentation of the proposal.

The project is based upon an actual project for which competitive proposals were solicited. MCAA has adapted the original plans for its 2009-2010 ***Student Chapter Competition***.

MCAA extends its sincere appreciation to Tom Stone of Braconier Plumbing & Heating Company, Inc. for arranging for the use of this project and providing the information and accompanying technical drawings. Thanks also go to John Powell of Marelich Mechanical Company, Inc. and Patrick O'Riley of QuoteExpress for assisting with the distribution of the project's technical information and drawings.

Student Chapter Competition RULES

The following are the rules governing participation in this competition. Submissions that do not comply with these rules will be considered for disqualification.

Eligibility

Participants in this competition are the student chapters that have been officially chartered, or designated for charter, by the Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Inc. and/or the Mechanical Service Contractors of America (MSCA).

Students participating in the competition must be registered full-time with the department of the sponsoring college or university. Those **not eligible** to participate in this competition include:

- Graduate students

- Chapter faculty advisors
- Contractors

Teams

Chapters may form teams to prepare their entries. Teams may consist of as many chapter members as needed and wanted for the preparation of the written proposal. However, if a team is selected for the final oral presentation, the team will consist of up to six (6), and not less than two (2), members. The team will also include an additional member who will be solely responsible for advancing the team's graphics displayed during the final oral presentation. Entries shall list the names of all team members and a brief description of their role and/or the nature of their contribution to the preparation of the entries.

No substitution of team members will be permitted, unless a team member(s) is placed on academic probation or becomes ill to the extent that he/she can no longer fulfill his/her obligations to the team. In such situations, the chapter team will advise MCAA of the change as soon as possible.

It is expected that teams will thoroughly research and investigate the issues raised by this project to prepare their entries accurately and completely. **The preparation of the entry components (text, drawings, etc.) shall be solely the work of the team members. Assistance from faculty, non-team chapter members, other students, or others in the preparation of a chapter's entry is strictly prohibited.**

Requests for Information

Team members are welcome to seek clarification about the competition project, the rules and guidelines, or the judging process. Please contact Ann Mattheis at MCAA at amattheis@mcaa.org or by phone (800) 556-3653. Should other individuals serve as resources to answer questions about the competition, their names and contact information will be provided to all participating teams. **Responses to all such inquiries will be provided to all teams.**

Team members may also contact entities for information needed to prepare the proposal, such as the manufacturers and suppliers of equipment and supplies required of the project.

Advisors

Each chapter's faculty advisor may offer only encouragement and support to the competition team. Faculty advisors and contractor members of chapters' sponsoring associations are strictly prohibited from preparing, or assisting with the preparation of, a competition team's entry.

Entries

Each chapter may submit one entry only at the national level. At the local level, if the chapter and local association agree, a local competition may be conducted to choose the best entry to represent the chapter.

Each entry will consist of a written proposal, which will consist of the following:

- A cover, which must include:
 - The project name
 - The chapter's name
 - The name of the sponsoring college or university, department, address and telephone/fax numbers
 - Date of the entry's submission
- A list of the chapter team members, including their permanent addresses, phone numbers and school status (i.e., junior or senior)
- Executive Summary
- Table of Contents
- Scope of Work
- Proposed Project Plan including a list of major equipment, suppliers, subcontractors, and other essentials need to complete the project
- Project schedule
- Proposed Project Team
- Proposed Project Cost
- Any other data requested by the Request for Proposal.

Within the above contents, the proposal shall include the following:

- A statement of the objectives that the team tried to achieve with its project plan
- A description of how the plan satisfied those objectives
- An explanation of how and why the final project plan was selected
- Any supporting calculations or drawings, if appropriate

The written proposal shall be type-written and prepared in the following format:

- Single-space (for text)
- 11-point font (for text)
- 1-inch margins (all sides)
- 8 ½" x 11" white paper
- Design drawings and/or schematics shall have maximum dimensions of 11" x 17"
- **No more than 25 pages, excluding schedules, drawings, and the Table of Contents**

The chapter team will provide MCAA with the original proposal PLUS six (6) additional copies of the written submission. The original shall be designated as such on the cover.

Shipping and Mailing

Entries consisting of the original and copies of the written presentation will be packed in an appropriate shipping container to prevent shifting and damage to the contents and sent either by regular mail or express mail to:

Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Inc.
1385 Piccard Drive.
Rockville, MD 20850 – 4340
Attn: Ann Mattheis

Entries are due in to MCAA at the above address no later than close of business on the date noted in the current project request for proposals (RFP).

Evaluation of Submissions

Submissions will be evaluated by a panel of contractors representing the mechanical, electrical, HVAC, and plumbing industries according to the following criteria:

- Overall quality of written proposal (20%)
- Project Management and Organization (25%)
- Feasibility of Construction and Program Schedules (20%)
- Quality of Conceptual Design (15%)
- Accuracy/Feasibility of Conceptual Costs (20%)

The four (4) teams that submitted the entries with the highest total scores will be the finalists in this competition.

The chapters that submitted the “Final Four” entries will prepare a **20-minute oral presentation—15 minutes for a formal presentation and 5 minutes of questions—of their proposals during a General Session at MCAA’s next annual convention.** The presentations shall be based upon the chapters’ original entries; no modifications will be permitted unless necessary to accommodate an addendum. Teams shall use Microsoft’s 2003 version of its software in preparing the graphics for their presentations. A panel of three (3) judges drawn from the members of MCAA’s Career Development Committee will choose the first and second place entries based on the following criteria:

- Overall quality of the oral presentation (30%)
- Feasibility of project management, organization, and schedule (30%)
- Accuracy and completeness of project costs (30%)
- Answers to the questions (10%)

Awards/Prizes

The first place entry will receive a cash prize of **\$5,000** that is to be shared by the chapter and the sponsoring department in accordance with existing university/college rules. The second place entry will receive a cash prize of **\$2,500** that is to be shared by the chapter and the sponsoring department in accordance

with existing university/college rules. The other two finalist teams will each receive **\$1,000**.

The results of the “Final Four” judging and the presentation of awards and prizes will take place at the *Awards of Excellence* program during the upcoming MCAA convention.

Student Chapter Competition GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines to assist MCAA chapter members with the planning and preparation of their submissions to the 2009-2010 Student Chapter Competition.

Teams

The **Competition Rules** do not require student chapters to form teams to prepare and present their entries. However, chapters are strongly encouraged to do so. Planning for and preparing a proposal is technically complex and time-consuming. A well-organized and managed team will likely reduce the individual work-load, enhance the learning experience, improve the quality of the final product and increase the enjoyment of the experience for all participants.

It is also recommended that teams organize themselves to maximize each team member’s efficiency, effectiveness, and contribution to the bid proposal. Please remember . . . each team member’s role must be described in the submission.

Written Proposal

Be sure to prepare the chapter’s written proposal in accordance with the **Competition Rules**. Use correct English grammar in preparing the text. **Hand-written proposals or sections will not be accepted.** The descriptions of design concepts, project management, and other sections of the proposal requiring written text should be well-organized and easy to follow. The written text should also respond to the project specifications, not just restate them. Excessive use of technical terminology will not enhance the proposal and may result in a lower score. The use of published technical references is allowed, provided appropriate citations and attributions are included.

Teams are strongly advised to check their entries before submitting them for typographical, spelling, grammatical and mathematical errors. Although such faults may not, in and of themselves, count against the team’s total score, the judges may take them into consideration of the score on the proposal’s overall quality.

“Final Four” Oral Presentation

The “Final Four” oral presentation offers the chapter team the opportunity to explain the most compelling features of its proposal to the “client” (in this situation, a panel of judges). This presentation should be well-organized, informative, and persuasive. Because the “Final Four” competition will be a General Session at **MCAA 2010**, teams are strongly encouraged to prepare a *PowerPoint* presentation using

Microsoft's 2003 version of its software. Teams shall provide MCAA with a copy of their PowerPoint presentation on a CD-Rom disk by March 8, 2010.

It is suggested, but not required, that each team member have a role in the oral presentation. **When planning the presentation, keep in mind that the total time allowed each team is 20 minutes (15 minutes for the formal presentation, and 5 minutes for questions/answers). A timekeeper or timekeeping system will alert the presenting team when its allotted time is nearing expiration.** Teams are advised to practice their presentations in advance, using their *PowerPoint*, for time adjustments.

Appearances are important in oral presentations, not only for the components of the proposal, but also for those presenting them. Each team member should plan to wear business attire (suit/sport jacket and tie for the gentlemen; a conservative suit or skirt and blouse for the ladies) to convey a serious business image.

Notifications

All chapters that submit entries will be notified by telephone of the outcome of the initial judging by January 22, 2010 and in writing by February 5, 2010. The results of the "Final Four" competition will be announced at the *MCAA Annual Awards Ceremony* at **MCAA 2010**

Please direct questions to Ann Mattheis at MCAA (800-556-3653 or 301-990-2203), fax (301-990-9690) or by e-mail at amattheis@mcaa.org.