

## **Penn State Architectural Engineering Students Capture Top Honors in the 2014 AEI National Competition**

Two student teams from Penn State's Architectural Engineering Department were selected to participate in the finals of the ASCE Charles Pankow Foundation Architectural Engineering National Student Competition in conjunction with the AEI National Student Conference held this year at Drexel University on March 28-29, 2014. The competition is organized annually by the Architectural Engineering Institute (AEI) of the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE).

Penn State AE students received seven awards overall including top honors in four of the five submission categories. AE students won first place awards in the categories of Structural, Mechanical, Electrical (Electrical/Lighting) and Construction Management. Entering the competition for only the second year, Penn State equaled their outstanding performance from last year when they also won four of the five categories. Penn State AE students also received runner up awards in the Integration, Construction and Structural categories.

This year's student competition project challenged students to address the design, integration, and construction issues that must be considered for a new high profile 30-story high rise office building located at 350 Mission in San Francisco, California. Special challenges of the competition this year included making the project a near net zero energy consumer and a near immediate occupancy structure relative to earthquake activity.

Professor M. Kevin Parfitt, one of the lead advisors for the Penn State team said, "There were numerous comments and feedback from the jury attesting to the technical strength and depth of analysis demonstrated by the Penn State AE student teams."

Penn State AE teams rose to the top of the finals competition by nature of being the only school to qualify two teams. The teams that presented and their respective awards were:

Team AVANT was the first place winner in the Electrical, Mechanical and Structural categories. They also captured the runner up award in Construction. This team consisted of AE students Tyler Dietz, Christopher Coakley, Robert Fazio, Katharine Gausseres, Rebecca Slocum, Nicholas Rekstad, Jordan Miller and Eric Ripkin.

Team AEVITAS won first place in the Construction category and was runner up in both Structural and Integration. AE students Drew Canfield, Kieran Carlisle, Alex van Eeden, Lara Kaiserian, Robert Livorio, Jonathan Sharp and Kristin Sliwinski made up this competition team.

Overall coordination and management for the Penn State teams was provided by lead faculty advisors, M. Kevin Parfitt, Charles Cox and Ryan Solnosky. Additional AE faculty serving as technical advisors to the students included: Ryan Solnosky (Structural), John Messner (Construction), Richard Mistrick (Electrical / Lighting), and Moses Ling (Mechanical).

Looking ahead, the finalist presentations for the next student competition will be held at the Architectural Engineering Institute's 6<sup>th</sup> Biennial Professional Conference to be hosted by Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) March 24-27, 2015.

Professor Cox summed up this year's event with the following, "Our AE program and the student teams that participated once again set the bar very high for the national competition, not only for the other AE schools, but for the Penn State AE teams that will follow next year."