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NEWS RELEASE

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GEAR UP Iowa Donates Computers to ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa

Computers to run industry design software to assist students in completion of technical projects

Des Moines, IA., February 4, 2013 – GEAR UP Iowa recently presented the ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa with four laptop computers during a ceremony held at East High School in Des Moines, Iowa. The computers will enable the students to use industry design software to complete technical projects. Founded in 1994, the ACE name stands for Architecture, Construction and Engineering. The ACE Mentor Program is open to any high school student who has the curiosity and drive to learn about a career in design and construction – from contracting and engineering to architecture and landscaping.

Administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and funded through a federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs grant, GEAR UP Iowa works to create a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 7,000 high school students and their families across the state. Students on the ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa teams attend 11 metro-area high schools, including East, Hoover, Lincoln, and Roosevelt high schools in Des Moines, which are GEAR UP Iowa partner schools, as well as Ankeny, Dowling Catholic, Johnston, Southeast Polk, Urbandale, Waukee, and West Des Moines Valley high schools.

“We are very happy to be able to assist the ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa,” stated John Gilman, project coordinator for GEAR UP Iowa. “Our goal is to increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Supporting the ACE Mentor Program helps our GEAR UP Iowa students see new possibilities for their future after high school,” explained Gilman. “Research shows that ACE Mentor Program participants graduate high school and attend college at higher rates than their non-ACE counterparts.”

Students participating in the ACE Mentor Program work in team environments led by adult mentors who are practicing industry professionals. Teams are set to emulate actual design teams, with students guided through mock designs by their architect, engineer and construction management mentors. Students have the opportunity to discuss pertinent issues and perform some of the same tasks as if they worked in the industry. At the end of the year all of the teams gather to present their final design projects.

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GEAR UP Iowa's donation ensures that the student participants in the ACE Mentor Program of Central Iowa will have access to the high speed technology needed to run industry software programs.

For more information on the GEAR UP Iowa, please contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456. General information regarding the ACE Mentor Program is accessible online at <http://www.acementor.org/>. In addition, information to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college is available on Iowa College Aid's website, www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

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About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa's students and families as they plan, prepare and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$60.0 million annually; provides I Have A Plan Iowa™, the state-designated career information system, free to all Iowans; partners with financial institutions in the state to offer an online financial literacy platform free to all Iowa high schools; conducts research and distributes higher education data; and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being used to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Iowa College Aid is also responsible for registering postsecondary institutions and other instructional schools under Iowa Code Chapter 261B and sections of Chapter 714. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

About the ACE Mentor Program

Founded in 1994, the ACE name stands for Architecture, Construction and Engineering. The ACE program stands for mentoring high school students and inspiring them to pursue careers in design and construction. It's now the construction industry's fastest-growing high school mentoring program, reaching over 8,000 students annually.

The ACE Mentor Program of America, Inc. not only engages sponsors and volunteer mentors to expose students to real-world opportunities, it financially supports each student's continued success through scholarships and grants. Since 1994, ACE has awarded over \$12 million in scholarships to promising participants.