Every year for the past 7 years Oak Ridge High School has been involved with the ACE Mentoring Program introduced to the area by the Sacramento Builders Exchange. The program’s purpose is to teach, mentor, and make students aware of all the trades related to the construction and design industry. The program was originated in New York and has spread to many communities throughout the U.S. Our group, consisting of many high schools and trade schools in the greater Sacramento vicinity, compete against one another by designing, figuring out construction linguistics, costs, community needs, and then presenting their project to judges made up of professionals in the industry.

This year, as part of the ACE Mentor project, Oak Ridge students, along with students from Ponderosa, Union Mine and a local charter school all worked together to come up with a facility that contributed to its community’s needs. Because of this topic, the team decided to create a new building for the local CSD that would satisfy the needs of residents of all ages. Located just off of White Rock Road, the proposed facility is placed near to local communities, including Blackstone and the Oak Ridge campus. This proposed building will incorporate accommodations that will lend to preserve our planet’s natural beauty and to use resources sustainably.

The overall design incorporates a unique rounded “L” shape, a Modern-Mediterranean design, and ample space for offices, lounge area, a café, a banquet hall, and storage. The proposed structure will be two stories with many curves. The building will also have reflective glass and a live wall, allowing the facility to blend into the landscape.

The design also incorporated environmental friendliness, showcasing the use of solar panels, passive solar, view glass, and a living wall. Other utilities located on the proposed site include: bicycle racks, tesla charging stations, and high efficiency appliances.

In this program, students not only learn how to work as a team but also how to create a design based on opinions and surveys from local community members. Students have worked with mentors who share their experience in order for the students to create realistic estimations. ACE meetings were held after school every other Monday over a span of 7 months. Through this time, the ACE team learned how to meet deadlines and achieve goals.

With fourteen teams competing this year, Oak Ridge won the Best Presentation Award a $750.00 scholarship and was awarded a Leadership Award on April 8, 2016 at the Holiday Inn in downtown Sacramento. As a group the ACE students were asked to present their design to the CSD board on Tuesday, April 26th.

-Chris Angi, ACE Mentor teacher