

Michael Paciero, junior in Architectural Engineering at Lawrence Technological University wins 2011 Joseph B. Olivieri Scholarship



Southfield, MI - In his essay entitled “Creating a Sustainable Built Environment”, Mike Paciero exposes his aspirations and ambitions as he wins this year’s Joseph B. Olivieri Scholarship from the Detroit Chapter of ASHRAE.

“Every day, I strive to incorporate sustainable and healthy living into my life,” Mike begins. He describes his daily routine of physical running and constant mental exertion as key elements in his quest to focus on a sustainable world. From going out of his way to turn off lights during the day, to unplugging phone chargers to reduce ‘plug loads’, Mike takes an active part in Lawrence Tech’s recycling campaign, and sets an example of constant, conscious and sustained efforts to practice sustainability.

“My exposures to the sustainable built environment have been numerous, and continue to grow since coming to Lawrence Tech,” continues Mike. In discovering the then new Architectural Engineering program in 2009, Mike found a perfect combination of architecture and mechanical engineering – his two areas of interest. Mike serves as president of the Architectural Engineering Institute and is diligently working on a business plan to present to the university administration to allow Lawrence Tech to enter the Solar Decathlon competition as was done in 2007.

“I am very involved on campus,” says Mike, “and am always looking for new ways to challenge myself.” In his spare time he researches new and cutting edge information in the world, industry and energy. His involvement in the Detroit Chapter of ASHRAE has allowed Mike to network with professionals, gain technical knowledge and to observe how the chapter operates as a professional organization.

Professor Filza H. Walters, director of the Architectural Engineering program at Lawrence Tech recognizes Mike’s ambitious spirit and entrepreneurial mindset. “Though the education students receive in this one-of-a-kind program, and by taking advantage of opportunities afforded to them, I am confident that Mike and his colleagues will indeed make remarkable professionals.” She goes on to say, “Mike was fortunate to attend the 90.1 training this year thanks to our local ASHRAE chapter, which is a rare opportunity for someone so young.”

Paciero hopes to start his own company to be an ambassador for energy conservation. “While there are steps being taken to implement alternative energy solutions in new buildings under construction, we also need to take into account the already built environment,” remarks Paciero. “It is these buildings and homes which need the most attention.”

“Over the years, the introduction of electricity and air conditioning caused architects and engineers to become blind to the elements of the environment, as those two things made it

possible to build almost anywhere due to the fact that the inside climate can constantly be controlled,” he suggests. “It is these existing buildings which we must go back to and find ways to incorporate and integrate sustainable practices existing buildings”.

In the meantime, Mike plans to acquire knowledgeable in all facets of a building through his studies in Architectural Engineering and intends to work for a company that shares his values to “strive together to achieve the ultimate built environment”. Mike plans to pursue a business degree to achieve his goals.

Paciero intends to continue to work with organizations such as ASHRAE, IESNA and AEI, to support his notion that “building a sustainable environment is not simply placing an array of photovoltaic’s on a roof, or digging into the ground to place a geothermal system.” Instead, he believes, “while those things are important, it is ideas such as recycled materials, water harvesting and filtration, passive solar design, natural ventilation, and studying the land, as our ancestors did, to decide where the best place and orientation might be to place a building, that really and truly make up the components of the sustainable built environment.”

Congratulations Mike on your much deserved award of the Joseph B. Olivieri Scholarship and to the Detroit Chapter of ASHRAE for recognizing and cultivating young talent!

Historical Note:

Chance or Destiny? You decide.

Many may not realize the significance of having an Architectural Engineering student from Lawrence Technological University receiving the Joseph B. Olivieri Scholarship. However, it is important to note that it was the late Dean Olivieri who worked with immediate past president of ASHRAE, Mr. Gordon Holness to encourage Lawrence Tech to start an Architectural Engineering program some 15 years ago. Due to his failing health, Dr. Olivieri would not live to see his dream come to fruition. On a positive note, Mr. Holness has enjoyed being an honorary member of the Architectural Engineering Industry Advisory Board since the inception of the program in 2009 and continues to influence and support Lawrence Tech’s program.

So it is no wonder that Mike Paciero would accept this award on the very night that Mr. Gordon Holness is visiting the Detroit Chapter. Did I mention that Mike’s mother worked for Albert Kahn many years back and knew Gordon? Some may say its chance; others may say its destiny.