

Audio Engineering at WHS

By Marianne Farr

WOODSVILLE- There are five students at Woodsville High School (WHS) who are taking advantage of an opportunity to participate in a course that they would normally have to wait until college to take. Adam Klebes, Sean Conley, Trevor Bullard, Scott Leonard and Nick Pantovich are all taking an Audio Engineering course offered by the River Valley Technical Center (RVTC) in Springfield, VT. But they are not learning using the traditional classroom model. The class is taught in a virtual classroom.

It all began when Jeff Renard, the Audio Engineering instructor and the Distance Education Coordinator at RVTC visited WHS last spring to recruit students. With his dynamic personality, Renard outlined the course for the prospective students explaining that they would learn how "to use state-of-the-art equipment to create audio productions for radio, television, and film."

These five students were enticed by the thought of learning the ins and outs of

recording studio equipment and the knowledge that they would be recording their own CDs by the end of the year.

The course runs for two school years. "The second year is more focused on the digital side," Renard said adding that at the end of two years students completing the course will have their fiber optics certification.

Each student chose to enroll in the course for differing reasons. They have all made the commitment to be at school early each day because the course starts at 7:55 AM, a 1/2 hour before regular classes begin at WHS.

As part of a family with strengths in medicine and engineering, WHS Junior Adam Klebes was drawn to the course knowing that it would be good preparation for college. He is interested in a career as a biomedical engineer.

"I'm intrigued by the artificial heart and knees and how they work and integrate with the body," he explained. "It's a pretty hard course.

For us to excel at it is great."

Having a brother who is working with cameras at Lyndon State College influenced Junior Sean Conley to try out the course. "If I go to college for audio engineering, I will be two years ahead," Conley said.

Trevor Bullard agreed that the course will put the students ahead of the game. "I'm looking into television broadcasting and radio broadcasting. Either way I go, this would come in handy," he said.

Junior Scott Leonard was interested in music matching and knew that if he took the course he would obtain his Fiber Optics certification.

As a guitar player, sophomore Nick Pantovich enrolled in the course so that he could learn how to record music. It will also benefit him to learn about audio engineering in case he decides to open his own recording studio some day.

Although the students were anticipating starting in

right away with the actual music, they each understand the need to first learn about the different components involved in the electronics equipment. They are currently learning about basic circuitry. "If we know something is wrong, then we will know what to look for," Conley said, explaining the importance of understanding how circuits work.

The bulk of their learning is online with Renard leading the class from Springfield, VT. The course is also taught to students at Rivendell Academy in Orford, NH, Profile School in Bethlehem, NH and Lebanon High School. Using discussion boards and a virtual classroom, Renard is able to offer his class to all of these students in their own classrooms. Renard is physically in the classroom at WHS one day a week.

The technological capabilities encourage high interactivity. The students communicate their

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questions and answers using instant messaging. Renard can also draw diagrams using a "white board" on the computer screen.

Through a learning portal, students log in to look at assignments and they take their tests and quizzes

online. All of their lessons are recorded, enabling Renard and his students to refer back to a previous lesson if necessary.

Jenna Stone is the Online Academic Site Coordinator at WHS and runs 4 different distance learning programs. She ensures that the programs are running properly and that the kids stay on task. In the event of a technical glitch, she is there to solve the problem.

equipment and producing different CDs, Stone said.

In April they will compete in Burlington, VT as part of the Future Business

Leaders of America (FBLA). "They have a good chance for placing," Stone said. "By far it is a very exciting program."



**Audio Engineering at Woodsville High School (WHS) - Instructor Jeff Renard demonstrates basic circuitry surrounded by students Sean Conley, Trevor Bullard, Online Academic Site Coordinator Jenna Stone, Scott Leonard, Adam Klebes and Nick Pantovich.
TBWS Photo by Marianne Farr**