

Documentary by Phoenix crew centers on the arts

By ROXANN KLEIN

They planned, filmed and produced it, and now the Phoenix High School students can take pride in seeing their film documentary broadcast on cable television in Brighton.

A group of about seven students from Phoenix (the alternative high school in Brighton) became filmmakers for a project called "State of the Arts," a 30-minute documentary featuring the arts programs at other high schools in the metro area.

The Brighton students traveled to Cass Tech High School in Detroit, Dearborn Fordson High School and the alternative school Community High School in Ann Arbor, interviewing and filming students involved in various art programs.

The Phoenix students spent a full day at each school filming and interviewing students about their art medium of drawing, painting, or playing an instrument and the importance of these art programs in the schools.

The art students interviewed displayed and discussed their work and those involved in the music programs were filmed performing concerts or band practice sessions.

The Phoenix students used a portable studio from Columbia Cable in Brighton for the project, which was funded through a grant written by teacher Paul Fortier with the Washtenaw Council for the Arts and Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

The students devised the project story line, set up the video equipment and did all the filming and assisted Fortier in the editing process.

Fortier said the project goal was

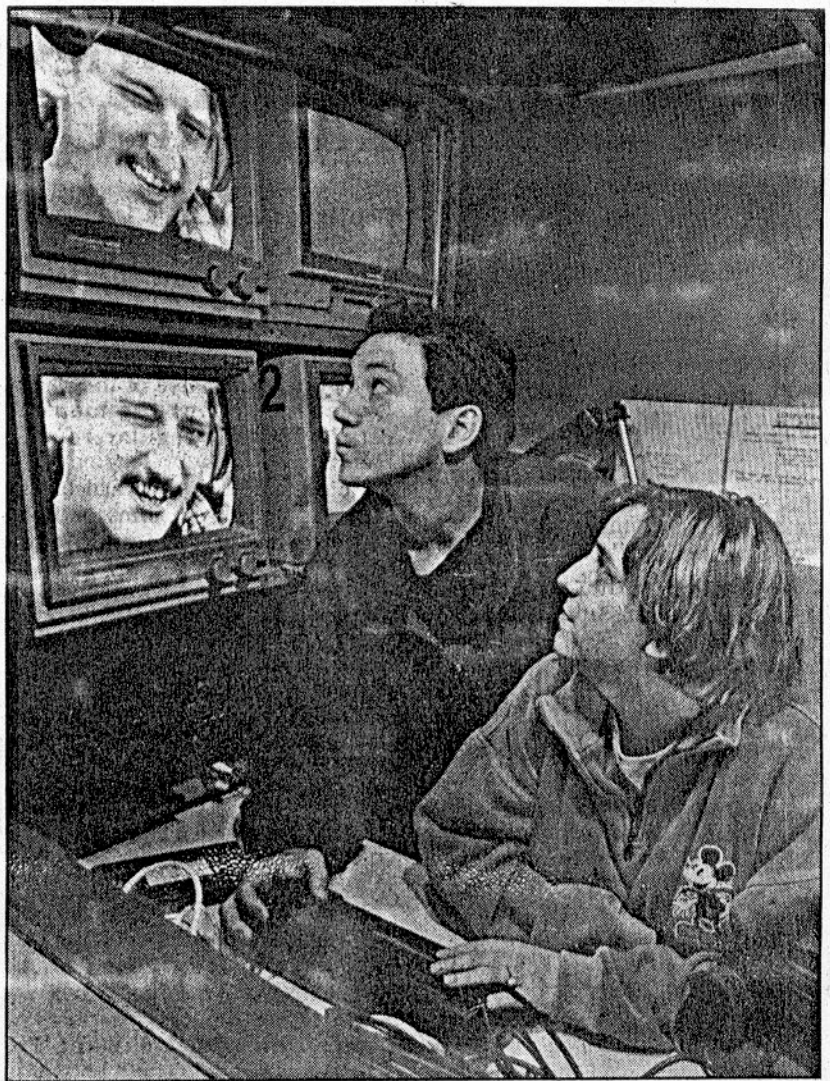


Photo by SCOTT PIPER

Devon Hill and Jennifer Orton take a look at the video they helped produce at Phoenix High School.

for the students to gain videography experience and interact with students of different ethnic backgrounds.

"I think the students gained confidence in their own abilities and an appreciation of diversity," Fortier said.

The film project also allowed the Phoenix students to "showcase their abilities," Fortier said.

The students, who all received class credit for the project, did part of the filming during the end of the past school year and completed the rest this fall.

Phoenix student Chris Lewis said his participation in the project was not only fun, but worthwhile.

Senior Jennifer Orton said she enjoyed seeing the other schools and working with the video equip-

ment.

"I think it was cool and good for the portfolio," Orton said.

Fortier said that Lewis, Orton and Jennifer Anderson were the "anchor people" of the project, overseeing the on-location shooting and production.

The Phoenix students' documentary is currently being broadcast on cable locally and will soon be shown in Detroit, Ann Arbor and Dearborn.

Phoenix High School, an alternative school for students who are at-risk of dropping out of the traditional school setting, is part of the Brighton Area Schools district and housed in the Emrich Conference Center on Teahen Road in Brighton.