

Esteemed Members of the school board.

Encore's Technical Arts department has been very busy this first semester of school with a wide variety of projects and events. The renewed focus on CTE standards has served to ground the curriculum in the real world of industry and art, connecting the dots between what we do in the classroom and how it can translate to a career in a way that students previously had a difficult time understanding.

The professional film and acting classes have been focused on filming a full-length feature horror film called "Sprout" Filming on Sprout began on location over summer break at the ESG team-building camp in Big Bear California.

Once the school year officially started work began on transforming C6 into a sound stage housing the largest film set ever constructed on campus. The set was created to serve as the interior of the cabin we used at camp. Once constructed the task of furnishing the set with props and set decorations began. Transforming an empty classroom into a cabin in the woods was no easy feat but the creativity of our students knows no bounds.

This set-building and design process was followed by the filming of over 400 video clips (as of today) that once edited together should result in an 80–90-minute film. In order to bring this story to life, film and acting students have constructed a multitude of props, puppets, visual effects, makeup effects, and prosthetics.

Filming on this set officially wrapped on January 18th of this year and the set was recently disassembled to make room for the program's next big project.

In the intro-advanced film classes, students have created a variety of short films many of which were shown on a large inflatable movie screen at this year's Carnival. A lot of focus has been placed on crafting engaging scripts capable of being filmed in short bursts over the course of multiple school weeks while maintaining continuity. A difficult task but a skill that will serve them well.

Encore's Photography and Yearbook classes have taken thousands of photos of every major Encore event both on and off-campus. This year's yearbook theme is The Renaissance. Mr. Quigg's students have been working diligently at crafting each and every page of the yearbook teaching the students about the principles of design and composition along the way.

Mr. Quigg's photo and yearbook classes set up a photo booth as well as a photo gallery at Carnival showing off the student's most prominent work. The photo class set up a photoshoot with Encore's Street band to teach the students how to adapt and overcome the challenges of photographing live musicians on a dark stage with ever-changing and moving sources of light. The class also participated in historical and alternative history photo projects and held several fundraisers including an ugly sweater photo booth before winter break.

As the semester comes to a close the professional film and acting classes hope to schedule a couple of “field trips” to local filming locations for a few final scenes needed to finish Sprout. We are also looking into the possibility of scheduling a tour of Warner Bros studios next semester to give the students a firsthand look at how a major Hollywood studio operates and how what we do in the classroom correlates to how professionals in the industry work. The professional film/acting program also has 2 competing scripts in the works for our next major film project.

In the intro-advanced film classes, students are in pre-production of a short stop-motion animated film as well as writing and preparing their submissions for Directing Change a statewide film competition/festival in which students compete by creating short suicide prevention commercials.

The winner’s ad is shown on national television. Additionally, the students involved in the creation of the winning ad and the school they belong to win cash prizes and an invitation to attend the Directing Change award ceremony in Los Angeles.

So far, we have 5 submissions currently in development with a much higher level of excitement and engagement than I have seen in previous years for this competition. The film program has also requested funds for building film set segments called “flats” that the film department can use exclusively and will better fit within the C6 soundstage without touching the ceiling.

The photography/yearbook classes are hoping to take a field trip to a local spot where they can shoot sunrise/sunset photos before and after school. Additionally, Mr. Quigg will be turning his entire classroom into a camera using the camera obscura technique. A project that involves his entire class and teaches them the foundations as well as the history of photography.

With the continued support of our school board and the administrative staff, the technical arts team has been able to create some truly unique and wonderful pieces of art and I look forward to seeing what new amazing things our students come up with.

-Joshua Barkdull

Technical Arts Department Chair
Film and Media Teacher.