



Photo by Tom Underhill

*PV on the NET multimedia intern Jack Cody sets up his camera while Richie Hakim (left) and Michael Klopfer make teleprompter adjustments. "This is a great program," said Klopfer. "I highly recommend it."*

## Not Child's Play

■ **The internship at Palos Verdes on the NET is not about filing or answering phones. It's about producing a TV show.**

By Carrie Yamato  
News Staff Writer

In the Palos Verdes on the NET studio, Jack Cody and Michael Klopfer are behind the cameras wearing headphones and listening to directions from the booth. Brian Wallace sits behind the console making sure the audio levels are up and the focus is sharp. Other crewmembers are scrambling

in the control room.

Hired production pros at work? No — they're Peninsula teenagers working on an episode of "City Talk," Rancho Palos Verdes' half-hour monthly talk show.

For the past six months, local teens from PVNET's internship program have been logging in 10 to 15 hours a week at the NET's studio learning different aspects of TV production. They're now at the point where they can put a show together from beginning to end.

PVNET's Director Ted Vegvari is proud of their accomplishments but not surprised.

"The kids learn a tremen-

dous amount of information here," he says with a matter-of-fact attitude. "There is no other place for kids to do this. Everything [in the studio] has an intended purpose for real production. They become very qualified in a wide area of related processes."

Learning the process is not about taking notes or tests. According to Vegvari, it's about self-motivation and information-sharing with peers.

"If someone is shown how to do something, he is responsible for showing someone else how to do it," says Vegvari. "So by the time he shows it to two to three people, he becomes really good at that one thing.

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And in the meantime, he's also learning other things. As time moves on, he gets good at a lot of things.

"It all comes down to teaching them to learn on their own, making them self-reliant and giving them confidence," continues Vegvari. "This is very real. The kids achieve and receive a lot of recognition."

They also love it.

"This is more fun than I thought it would be," says Hakim, who at 13 is the youngest in the program. "I'm surprised that I'm actually getting to do stuff, like edit on AVID (a non-linear professional editing system)."

"I've been working on AVID, but I had no clue before so I read the manual and kind of learned on my own," says Wallace, 15, who attends Peninsula High School. "Mike helped me with the video camera. Without the help of people, I wouldn't know as much as I do."

"Ted is a good mentor," says 18-year-old Klopfer, who attends Chadwick. "His background in all aspects — recording, business, working with kids — gives him the background to understand the whole production process. I'm very happy to be a part of the program."

"The great thing about the program is that information is available from a lot of sources,"

continues Klopfer. "We have books. We have people who are absolutely willing to show us how to use equipment. Learning is open."

Ed Shea, who is a technical representative with Nikon and volunteers for the program, is impressed with the kids' aptitude.

"The kids are great," says Shea. "They pick it up so fast it's mind-boggling. Even when they first start, they already know so much. And when they learn something, they become so adept at it. Some of them are really good. It makes me jealous."

## Forging Career Paths

With the experience and knowledge they've gained through the internship, many students say they are planning to pursue production careers.

"At first I wasn't really interested in video, but after I started interning here and learning more and more about it, I think I'd like to have a future in video," says Wallace.

"I'm hoping to do some film work in college," says Daniel Dorr, a junior at Peninsula High. "But I like being the executive guy, the one who tells everyone what to do."

"I hope that this will help me get into college," says Hakim.

While the interns have different interests and reasons for enrolling in the program, the one thing they agree on is recommending it to their friends. They also tell them to prepare for hard work.

"If you're ambitious and have a desire to learn, you can get a lot out of the program," says Klopfer. "If anyone has an interest in video and wants to expand their knowledge, this is a great program."

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— *Michael Klopfer*  
*Chadwick student*

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"I'd recommend it if you're the type of person who wants to learn independently," says Wallace.

"You learn a lot," adds Dorr. "But you work a lot. If you're a lazy person, don't come."

Vegvari is one of the first to admit that the program isn't there to baby-sit. "It's a big commitment," he says. "We recommend the kids put in eight to 16 hours a week. The kids take it seriously. Their parents have to drag them out."

## A Growing Program

With a background in com-

puters, Vegvari founded PVNET 10 years ago as a way to introduce the Internet to the Peninsula. With the support of RPV, it now services close to 3,000 nonprofit organizations free of charge, as well as providing internships and computer camps.

PVNET's 8-year-old computer and animation internship program has proven to be a success. Now its multimedia program is a hit as well. "We've had a multimedia program for six years, but now we have a dedicated studio," says Vegvari. "We officially kicked it off in the last month or two. We're now inviting kids in. I just started making calls to colleges letting them know we have a

facility for kids to have hands-on time and production credits."

With more interns in the program, Vegvari hopes to produce additional shows. He would like to air public-service announcements highlighting people who have contributed to the community. But in order to do this, he needs more funding.

"It's expensive to put this together," says Vegvari. "PV on the Net generates some revenue, but I would like to get a little more community support financially. That would be helpful. I would also love to get help from people to write grants and help run the program."

Vegvari believes in the kids

and the programs so much that when the center doesn't meet its monthly expenses, he makes a personal donation to keep it running.

"It's philanthropic," he says. "I had so many people help me as a youth when I had so many problems that I promised myself that I would return the favor to as many people as I could."

"This is now my full-time job," continues the former owner of PC Lab. "I plan to do this for a very long time. I want to do this until I'm too old to do it."

*For more information on PVNET's internship program, log onto [pvonthenet.com](http://pvonthenet.com) or call 541-7992.*