

Visual Communications
Advisory Meeting Notes from 11/11/09

Time: 12 noon to 2pm

Location: DVGear 2813 Rockefeller Ave Everett WA

Attendance: Jonathan Holbrook, Mike Dunn, Rachel Valdez, Justin Best, Ralph Portillo, Scott Shafer, Richard, Wigre, Yvonne Lynnabary, Bill Trueit

Note: I need to add Justin Best to the list serv for this group; best@hearldnet.com

The meeting started out with a tour of DVGear's facility and then an overview of its services. Jonathan (Owner of DVGear) then gave a short demonstration and presentation of his career path and business strategy. Jonathan stresses that you must be passionate about your choices to be successful in this market today. A solid educational background was very helpful for him to make enough money then start his business. He also stressed that it takes a long time to establish yourself and the earlier you can start the better. Many of his first jobs were for little to no pay just so he could develop and refine his skills and get his name out there. Jonathan also stressed that good business and marketing skills were the major parts of his education that were lacking. He wished that the schools he went to incorporated these aspects to a great degree. Jonathan also talked about the need to innovate and how important it is for him to stay and grow his business.

After the presentation we talked about the state of the economy in regards to the media field. Everyone agreed that it is tough right now and that NO ONE is hiring new talent. There was also talk about the skills needed versus the skills demonstrated by students and young employees. Then the theme for the day seemed to revolve around the idea of what are Deadlines. All the advisory members were surprised to hear how loose that term is in the educational world. It was noted that in the business world you must honor your deadlines or risk going out of business. The teachers in the group agreed and expressed the frustration we experience with this concept. One of the advisory members (Justin?) brought up the concept of adding an Employer grade to our system. The grade would not count toward graduation or GPA but would give the students, parents and administrators a different look at the readiness of the students to enter the work force. We all thought this to be a good idea and wondered how it might be done.

We also talked about the importance of communication and visual literacy and the role it plays in today's market. It was noted that students do not have a good sense of visual literacy as evident by the amount of "crap" that is being produced. The communication piece touched back on the employability skills that our advisory committee saw as a deficit for most young people.

We then talked more about the economy and the importance of good business skills and a passion for the profession. Advisory members note that it is the students who are skipping lunch or staying after school who are the people that will be going into this field. They expressed that our students must have an outlet for their work and that they

are always producing and showing their work. One advisory member mentioned that at the high school level we should be trying to capture their interest as much as possible to bring them onboard with our programs. One example was sighted; When Spike Jones was a young man he was shooting skateboarding photos and that is what got him into the field of media production- today he is a famous producer of Hollywood movies.

We then talked about the transition into the work world and Ethics were brought up to be very important. This is because our advisory group has been seeing a greater number of people coming to them asking them to perform jobs that violate copyright.

Justin mentioned a web site that demonstrated ethical issues in photography- need to email him for the URL

Ralph from Glazers brought up the fact that getting into good media schools is getting harder. He mentioned that schools like the Art Institutes of Seattle will take anyone if they can pay but schools like Seattle Central community college were increasing their requirements for admission. He believed that the Seattle Central program was a better quality program than AIS because students were held to a high degree of responsibility. He mentioned that students must purchase their own gear versus loaner gear at AIS and that attendance played a very big part of your success at Seattle Central, if you miss class you get kicked out of the program. He went on to say that this is what is needed for these young people to be successful. He said anyone not holding students accountable is doing them a disservice.

Portfolios- many of the committee members mentioned that they look very nice and flashy but the content was poor quality.

Opportunities for students to show and practice their work were discussed.

- Community blogs – call them and ask if they need any kind of media work done
- Local businesses and volunteer organizations often need photo/video work done
- Churches are always looking for technical people to help with their productions
- Hospitals and clinics need media help
- Comcast has local access channels that need material- call and ask
- Call the local TV stations and see what they might need (footage from the big game)
- Everett Symphony
- Historic Theater

Ralph volunteered to come in and do light workshops with our students
Justin volunteered to come in and do basic photography workshop

Need to find ways to generate income to grow programs

- do commercials for local business people
- seek out churches and other non-profit who need media

Next Meeting- Jan 14th Thursday at 3:30
Location –Glazers in Seattle 517 Dexter Ave

Agenda-

- Tour
- Latest Technology in lighting
- Putting tighter a cheap lightning package for high school
- Production Assignments will be discusses with advisory member bringing their favorite assignment form their education.