

Lights, camera, sports!

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Sports broadcasting may be a sports fan's dream, yet for kids at the Dave Popkin's Sportscasting Camp, the dream was certainly a reality.

"The kids are really into it," says Dave Popkin, one of the creators of the program. "They're starting something new. We have kids that have been up here (Snyder High's media arts floor) before, and kids who are in front of the camera for the first time."

The program, in its first year, offers a select group of high school students from Jersey City the chance to work behind the scenes or host in front of a camera. The shows aren't going to be taped live or shown on television, but the experience it provides for students is rewarding.

"There's a lot of different sides in sports casting, from being a sports writer to working with audio. I'm just happy to give them something to do," says Popkin. "It's been a very positive experience. The kids have been interested, well-behaved and I hope that it sparks an interest in the community."

Through seminar workshops, the kids got to meet professionals in the field of sports casting, such as Kenny Albert from FOX Sports and Doug Doyle from 1010 WINS and WBGO. Along with working in front of the camera, the kids also get to work behind the scenes with both production and audio equipment. The students ran through several shows where everyone got a chance to do a little bit of everything. In the end, every kid walked away with a DVD of their broadcast.

Having been an announcer for Seton Hall University college basketball games, Popkin has worked with 77 WABC and ESPN's regional college telecasts. He's currently in his sixth year announcing North East conference games for the Madison Square Garden network.

Along with crediting the staff working with the program and the Jersey City Board of Education, Popkin also recognizes former NBA player and SHU star Terry Dehere with coming up with the idea of creating the sportscasting program.

Dehere, who was on hand to see how everything was going, seemed very pleased that everyone was bonding to create an unforgettable experience.

"It's an excellent program. Our young kids get to learn how media works and the mechanics of it," says Dehere. "Sports is instrumental to the growth of young people. They're striving and coming together to achieve one goal ... those fundamentals must be carried out."