

In the Spotlight

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CTE: Preparing Students for What's Next

In this edition, we explore some of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways our high school students have the option of choosing. We also shine a light on two alumni who are doing today what their pathways prepared them for.

Bastrop ISD is full of amazing and talented individuals, and we appreciate them sharing their time with us so that we could share their passion for teaching and highlight their programs across the District.

We hope you enjoy!
BISD Communications Team

Josh Workman featuring **Audiovisual Pathway**

When you walk into the Audiovisual Department at Cedar Creek High School, it's almost like walking into Pixar Animation Studios. Students are filming. They are doing their own animation. They are editing. They are writing. They are producing a newscast. They are working on state-of-the-art, top of the line audiovisual equipment that's used in the film and television industry. These students aren't daydreaming about their future; they are making it a reality.



Josh Workman and Benita Ozoude are the two CTE teachers at Cedar Creek High School who teach classes in the Audiovisual Pathway.

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Bastrop
Independent School District

Ozoude teaches Practicum and A/V Production 2. Workman focuses on animation and principles of A/V.

“I have a graphic design background, and I teach students how to use Photoshop and graphic design to make CD covers, book covers and posters. This is the foundation they need to go into practicum,” he said.

The A/V Pathway at CCHS is a popular choice among Cedar Creek Eagles. It currently has up to 200 students. Each school day the students put together a short newscast of the daily announcements. They also conduct interviews with campus newsmakers. This is all done in the school’s state of the art studio, which has a green screen, soundboards, teleprompters, editors, several television cameras, and studio lighting. This is an industry standard TV station that high school students have the benefit of operating.



“All of this gives students that real-world experience but they still have the gloves on. Though we really try to implement deadlines with them because in this industry, deadline is king,” Workman said.

Students also have the opportunity to learn how to use video cameras, still photography cameras, and more recently, learn how to build and develop animation.

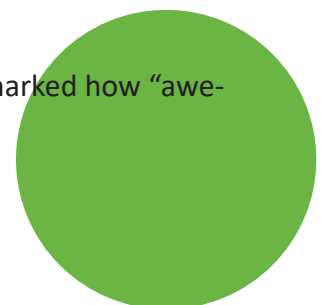
“The animation is relatively new. We just started offering it last year. So a lot of those students are really interested in animation and video game developing. Animation is huge in many industries so it’s a fantastic tool to know. There is an animator who works on a newscast. There’s an animator who helps put together an advertising commercial. Then there’s an animator who builds a video game,” Workman said.

“All of this gives students that realworld experience ...”

Learning how to code, develop, and animate video games are new skills to a lot of students, but Workman says it’s something the students have really enjoyed, and it’s kept their interest. They are trying to foster and harness that energy.

“We help them storyboard ideas and with anime. They’re getting it. I don’t think it’s like any other class they’ve ever taken. It’s been a lot of fun,” Workman said.

Students agree. While Workman was helping a student fix an editing error, the student remarked how “awesome” it looked when the project was complete.



According to Workman, students who graduate from this pathway go on to incredible work. Some students graduate from Cedar Creek High School and go to the Art Institute. Others go directly into the Austin film scene.

“I think it’s so fantastic that Bastrop ISD offers this pathway. It’s such a great opportunity for students to get real-world experience, use industry standard equipment and get a taste of what the real world is like. Here at Cedar Creek High School, we wet their whistle and some go onto the college route and others hit the ground running. I’m proud of our track record,” Workman said.

Some of the A/V students’ work is available to view on their YouTube channel, [CCHS Audio Visual Production](#).

Chris White

Bastrop High School, Class of ’16

Chris White graduated high school less than three years ago. Today, he is the Communications and Media Manager for the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce, a significant role for someone so young. But he worked hard to get to where is and that hard work started in the audiovisual classes at Bastrop High School.

“I loved video production,” he said. “I really love crafting videos and enjoyed the whole process of making videos.”

Volunteering to film a candidates’ forum that the Chamber and the City of Bastrop were hosting is what opened doors for White.

“I volunteered for the City of Bastrop in their Communications Department while going to school at the Art Institute of Austin and working at H-E-B,” White explained. “Then I got hired part-time as an assistant storyteller. In December, the Chamber offered me a full time position, and I couldn’t be happier.”

White credits his A/V classes for helping him get his start. He learned the basics of storyboarding, filming, and editing.

“I already had editing skills from high school since we use the same editing programs and software,” said White. “It was such a seamless transition going into the workforce. My boss didn’t have to take any work hours to train me. I knew what he wanted, and I could make it happen.”



He was surprised when he went to college and had a similar experience.

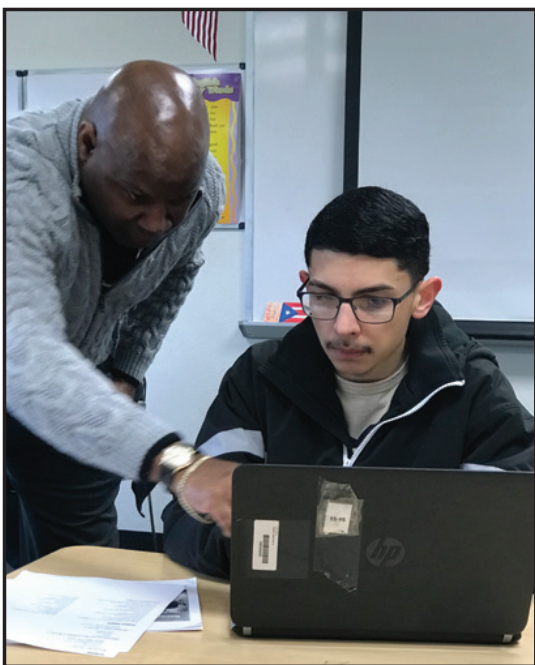
“It was eye-opening--I learned so much in high school that when I went to college, there were students who had never done some of the things I had done,” said White. “To be in that position and have that learning curve is an amazing opportunity.”

White was at Bastrop High School recently to film a visit by the We Believe in BISD team, and he was given an opportunity to tell his teachers how much their preparation had meant to him.

“It was great to see the teachers, and they were surprised to see me because I haven’t even graduated from college yet. They have this image of the old Chris with long hair and a black hoodie,” White laughed. “Now I’m up there looking business professional, doing my work. I can tell they think differently. They got excited. In fact, Becki Womble brought me up and just said, ‘We always talk about how you are the ones who are creating our workforce and now we have living proof of it.’ And it’s true. I am a proud graduate of Bastrop High School.”

Gary Humphrey featuring Law Enforcement Pathway

After 23 years of protecting and serving the public as a Trooper with the Texas Department of Public Safety, Gary Humphrey traded in his trooper badge for a school badge. Instead of solving crimes, he’s impacting the next generation of crime fighters as an instructor in Bastrop ISD’s Criminal Justice Pathway. Currently in its first year, the pathway is offered at both Bastrop High School and Cedar Creek High School.



The core class being offered this school year is Principles of Law. Students learn about the U.S. Supreme Court, the American legal system, jails and prisons, probation and parole, and then law enforcement. Since it’s a new pathway, Humphrey says the classes are a mixture of students.

“I have students who are in the ninth grade and some who are seniors, but for this being the first year of the criminal justice pathway, it’s going well so far,” said Humphrey. “It’s been a good experience.”

Humphrey is currently the only teacher in the Criminal Justice Pathway, but the hope is that the pathway will expand. In addition to direct instruction from Humphrey, students utilize a self-paced online curriculum where they can access up to seven lessons each week comprised of critical thinking questions and lab work. Students also

listen to podcasts and watch videos about the criminal justice system.

“There are so many different careers in the criminal justice field that our students can go into. It’s interesting to see them learn,” Humphrey said.

To bring criminal justice career opportunities to life for his students, Humphrey arranged for a career symposium with guest speakers that included sheriff’s deputies, district attorneys, a Special Agent from the FBI, and recruitment officers from DPS.

“Having guest speakers from all different law enforcement backgrounds really opened their eyes and let them know what their earning potential is with an Associate’s degree, a bachelor’s degree, or a master’s degree,” said Humphrey. “I think that’s very important for students because it gives them the opportunity to know they can earn \$120,000 to \$140,000 a year at a very young age by making smart choices.”

As the pathway expands and more courses are offered, Humphrey believes it will become a popular choice among students. He applauds Bastrop ISD for implementing this pathway and thinks it will make a difference for many students.

“It’s exciting to know that Bastrop ISD is offering a law enforcement pathway to students. In my 32 year career, I have worked with officers who pursued criminal justice coursework while in high school. It was the foundation for their passion for the criminal justice system and gave them valuable insight into a diverse and constantly evolving profession. They later went on to achieve distinguished careers in municipal, county, state, and federal law enforcement. I believe their success can be directly attributed to having received guidance and mentoring in their high school program that provided them with the strong foundation, the proper planning, and preparation for their successful careers,” said James Altgelt, Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police for Bastrop PD.

“This is a great program and a great opportunity for students who are interested in criminal justice,” he said. “It provides students an opportunity to learn, grow and earn a good income for their future.”

Annette Harrison

featuring Health Science Pharmacology Pathway

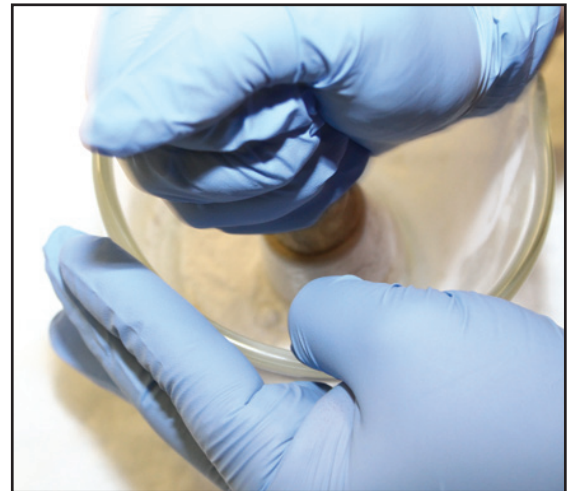
The Pharmacy Pathway prepares students to become medical assistants or pharmacy technicians. It can also serve as the foundation for students to become pharmacists. Annette Harrison is a registered nurse and teaches classes at Bastrop High School in the pharmacy pathway system.

“The trend nationwide is jobs in healthcare,” said Harrison. “I tell my students all the time, no matter what they do in healthcare, they will always have a job. Having this type of experience is so valuable.”

The pharmacy pathway begins with the course, Principles of Health Science, which introduces students to vital signs, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and career exploration into the medical field. After the initial principles course, students in their sophomore year enroll in Medical Terminology wherein they explore the body systems and their related diseases and disorders.

“Medical Terminology is a great class and will help them more than anything because it’s a language in itself,” Harrison said.

The pharmacy pathway becomes more focused on pharmacology in the junior year when students learn to mix and make compounds such as cough syrups and essential oils. Their coursework, related exams, and consultation with their teacher helps students to select the next step, which includes becoming a Medical Assistant or a Pharmacy Technician. Medical assistants work in doctors’ offices, hospitals, and nursing homes. Pharmacy technicians work in pharmacies, and their job is to help the pharmacist by filling prescriptions, ordering inventory, and assisting customers.





Harrison says her students have an advantage if they decide to go to college to pursue a career in medicine.

“I get phone calls from former students, and they’ll say, ‘Ms. Harrison I know so much more than the other students in my class because we learned some of this stuff with you last year or in my junior year.’ They have a real advantage in their classes.”

Senior year in the pathway is when it all comes together. Students have a pharmacology practicum and complete an internship with valued community partners including Walgreens, H-E-B, MD Anderson

Science Park, Texas State University, doctors’ offices, hospitals, and retirement communities. Students gain hands-on experience and learn to network with professionals. The practicum and internship often results in jobs right after graduation for students.

“It makes me feel extremely happy, and I’m so encouraged,” Harrison beamed. “I think we have an incredibly successful program, and a lot of my students go on to pursue fantastic careers in health care. It’s like all this hard work paid off. As their teacher, I couldn’t ask for anything more.”

Brett Wheeler featuring Veterinary Science Pathway

The Veterinary Science Pathway introduces students to careers in animal production and veterinary medicine. Brett Wheeler, who teaches Veterinarian Medicine at Bastrop High School, says the pathway allows students to become Certified Veterinary Assistants and prepare for a career as Veterinarians.

“This is a great program!” said Wheeler. “The way it’s structured and taught, students can graduate high school and become kennel assistants at MD Anderson, with a variety of careers built in all the way up to a veterinarian. We want to treat all our students like they are going to be veterinarians, but there are so many other opportunities.”

This is Wheeler’s first year teaching in Bastrop ISD. He says the size of the lab facilities and classrooms are impressive and accurately prepare students for real careers.

“The opportunities offered by BHS are unique. It’s awesome. This is a great student body, and they are so lucky to have all of this. It really puts them ahead of other schools. I was so impressed when I first came here,” Wheeler said.



In the veterinary science program, students learn about livestock, including goats, chickens, horses, and even dogs. During labs, students learn to clip feathers on chickens and care for the hooves of horses.

“I have quite a few students who love to participate in our labs because they are very hands-on,” said Wheeler. “It makes the learning experience all the more real when they care for live animals. This experience really shows instructors whether students have what it takes to keep moving forward in this pathway.”

Courses in the veterinary pathway involve classroom time, lab work, and a career plan that includes goals and objectives for the future. According to Wheeler, extracurricular activities are just as important to their career plan as the lab exercises and class homework.

“That’s one of the main purposes of ag education, in general, is creating those atypical educational opportunities so students can participate in 4H and FFA where they learn a lot.”

“When you look at public education versus private education, CTE is the difference.”

Students in Wheeler’s class recently created a grooming facility that’s fully operational after school. It’s student-operated, and the money goes toward the Bastrop High School FFA chapter. It’s only been up and running for a few weeks, but students hope it grow so they can raise money to help fund FFA field trips.

Wheeler says educational advantages like this are what makes Bastrop ISD extraordinary.

“When you look at public education versus private education, CTE is the difference,” said Wheeler. “A lot of private schools can’t build these facilities and compete. When our students decide to take steps in the CTE pathways, they are getting a tremendous opportunity that other students don’t necessarily have the benefit of getting. It’s wonderful to see our students take off and become successful.”

Dr. Ryan Reid

Bastrop High School, Class of ‘96

As a member of the class of 1996, Dr. Ryan Reid is a proud Bastrop High School alumnus. In school, Reid had his nose to the grindstone.

“I enjoyed playing football, baseball, running track and being involved in FFA and 4-H programs as they were a great escape from academia,” said Reid. “When not involved in those activities, I was focused on studying.”

Those studies centered around the biotechnology/veterinary medicine program. Reid credits the program for providing direction and opening up opportunities in veterinary medicine. His teachers prepared him for academic life at the college level, and his experience in FFA and 4H in high school gave him excellent opportunities to meet people in the animal science and veterinary medical fields.



“Getting involved in leadership opportunities through the FFA and 4H programs exposed me to networking with people in the profession. These programs also established the importance of extracurricular activities in addition to scholastic achievements,” he said.

To achieve his dream of becoming a doctor, Reid started at Blinn College in Brenham, Texas. From there he transferred to Texas A&M University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in biomedical science and a master’s degree in public health. Following life in Aggieland, he went to the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine in Minneapolis.

Reid and his wife, Dr. Shannon Poole, own a private practice in Fayetteville, North Carolina dedicated to small animal veterinary medicine. He is also a US Army Reserve veterinarian and the Executive Officer

in a deployable veterinary medical detachment stationed at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Though he’s worked hard and made sacrifices, he credits his time at Bastrop High School and the CTE program for getting him started.

“Anything is possible. Remaining disciplined, adaptable, and strong willed are a few of the attributes I held steady,” said Reid.

His advice to current students is to rise to the challenges presented in class, work hard, be disciplined with their studies, and join as many extracurricular activities as possible.

“The most important advice for these high school students is to be adaptable to change and opportunities while in pursuit of their goals,” he said.

This edition highlighted just a few pathways. Students also have the opportunity to choose other pathways including:

- Agricultural Mechanics (BHS) • Floral Design (CCHS) • Construction Technology (CCHS)
- Graphic Design & Illustration • Business • Finance (CCHS) • Marketing • Culinary (BHS)
- Hospitality & Tourism (CCHS) • Automotive (BHS) • Journalism, Yearbook, Newspaper (BHS)
- Health Science Clinical • Health Science Non Clinical • Naval Jr. ROTC (BHS)
- Aerospace (Airplane/Rockets) (BHS) • Aerospace (CCHS) • Civil Engineering
- Mechanical/Electrical (Robotics) • Fine Arts • Foreign Language • Multidisciplinary

“After graduation, many students will go to college, some will go in into the military, but all of our students will go into a career at some point in their lives. It is important that they have the skills they need to be successful in whatever career they choose, and our CTE programs in BISD are a big part of that,” said Les Hudson.

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