

BRIDGES

New program helps Harrison students step into technology

This story marks another installment of *Today's Lesson*, an occasional series which chronicles classroom activities in Farmington Public Schools.

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The task was pretty clear for students in Harrison High School's BRIDGES technology class: create a splashy, computer-generated "advertisement" to help sell high school offerings to next year's incoming freshmen.

Using the HyperStudio software program, students were given a week by Harrison teachers Ron Shortt and Laura Sparrow to make their sales pitches sparkle. The best ones will be presented to Harrison administrators and then be forwarded to counselors, who will share those with new students.

The first thing was to get started.

Inside the program (HyperStudio), there's a lot of examples of what you can do," said Shortt, instructing the 25 students who comprise this semester's BRIDGES class. "So be sure to launch it from the desktop. It will function much better."

He then added an addendum. "Once you get an idea, it's up to you how to go from there. It's your project."

After going through a HyperStudio tutorial, to learn about the software, students began building their presentations. Each needed to assemble a "stack" of five pages or cards. Add to the mix various hyperlinks, scanned-in digital photos of chosen classes, sound recordings and clip art or graphics.

For Katie Sutton, her choice was easier than what it would take to complete the assignment. She planned on featuring the BRIDGES class for her project.

"It's difficult to figure out what you're doing," Katie said. "But it's fun to learn how to do it."

Shortt, standing nearby, then assisted Katie, about how to use HyperStudio. The software required students to navigate around from task to task, much more than the more-familiar PowerPoint.

"I'm thinking I really liked my freshman geography class," said senior Olga Frankstein, working on the tutorial and thinking out loud about what her project might feature.

Jake Taylor and Matt Turney planned on creating their pro-



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Ron Shortt, teacher
—Harrison High School

jects about the Civil War and Harrison's physical education program, respectively.

Meanwhile, students also "paint" words instead of typing them in a word processing function. That, by itself, caused some grief for Julie Morrison.

"We're all learning it at the same time," said Shortt, explaining that the BRIDGES classroom now is fully equipped with computers, unlike during the first semester.

The teacher described BRIDGES as a first-year pro-

gram in which participants learn the latest technology and "put together presentations, to show what they learned."

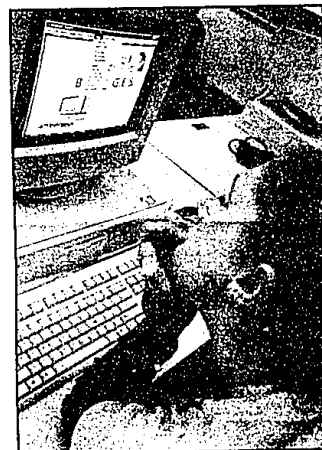
Shortt, Sparrow and Judy Brankel brought the pilot program to Harrison, patterning it after the program at Lansing Waverly High School. (The acronym stands for Building Research: Independently-Generated Education for Students.)

"It's very much a workshop approach," Sparrow said, watching as students huddled over their keyboards. "That's because kids are working independently a good deal of the time."

Part of that is because they are naturally attracted to the kind of technology they work on in BRIDGES. "They're drawn to it quickly and naturally," Sparrow said.

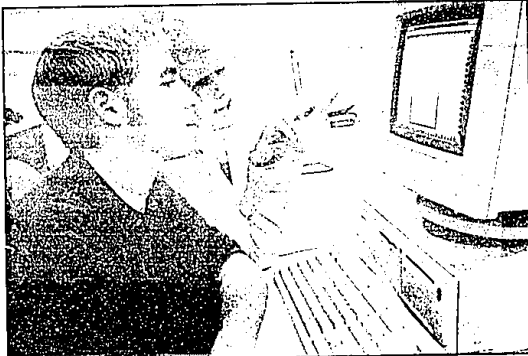
At the front of the classroom, students Mevin Hill, Andy Motry and Rick Olivero needed in familiarity about BRIDGES and the HyperStudio project; all three took the program last semester. On this particular day, they were also in the classroom to work on construction of a potential web site for Harrison.

"The things they learn in here are worthwhile," said Andy. "And that should help down the line, in college or maybe (in) your career."



Good start:
Harrison High School student Julie Morrison checks the "BRIDGES" menu, before getting involved in creating her HyperStudio project. Julie and other students had the task of creating "advertisements" about school courses.

Tutorial:
Above, Harrison teacher Ron Shortt looks over Jay Mentzel's shoulder while Colleen Eilola (background) works on her BRIDGES project. At right, Jay and Colleen check out his progress.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DEWELER

Commission wants you to serve

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Commission on Children, Youth and Families is seeking nominations of companies and individuals whose time, effort and support has contributed significantly to the well-being of community and its citizens.

To nominate a business or individual who deserves recognition for community service, simply complete the coupon. Deadline is April 9.

Those nominated will be honored at Volunteer Recognition Night 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 21, at the William Costick Activities.

Kyle Caldwell, Michigan Community Service Commission, will be the guest speaker. Caldwell was appointed by Gov. John Engler in May.

The MCSC is a state agency charged with promoting and coordinating service and volunteerism in Michigan. Since its creation in 1991 by Gov. Engler, the MCSC has distributed millions of state, federal and private funds to communities throughout Michigan in support of our volunteer.

Caldwell began his public service career as a Governor's Management Intern in 1993. As one of the first interns in the program, he served the MCSC as a program director and was key in the development of a number of community-based and statewide volunteer activities.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Farmington/Farmington Hills Commission on Children, Youth and Families is seeking nominations of companies and individuals whose time, effort and support has contributed significantly to the well-being of the community and its citizens.

You may submit nomination. Please complete the following form. Only one entry per category. Those nominated will be honored at:

Volunteer Recognition Night
6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 21
Wm. Costick Activities Center
28600 11 Mile Road
Farmington Hills

■ COMPANY you are nominating:

Address _____
Telephone number _____
Contact person _____
Reason _____
Submitted by _____
Telephone number _____

■ INDIVIDUAL you are nominating:

Address _____
Telephone number _____
Organization represented _____
Reason _____
Submitted by _____
Telephone number _____

■ MAIL form by April 9 to:

Volunteer Center, David Justus
20600 11 Mile Road, No. 102
Farmington Hills, MI 48335

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