

## The business side of arts



Photo by Matt Winick

Jessica Baker works the front desk at Glemp's downtown for the B Side of Art program

### Local teens to showcase talents, skills

*By Nkosi Mason, Matt Winick, Katherine Peterson and Lamar Hudson  
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Later this month, more than 60 area teenagers will be celebrating the artistic and professional skills they learned from local businesses during the summer.

Participants in Eastern Michigan University's entrepreneurial summer training program, The B Side of Art: The Business Side of Art, have been working with several local businesses during the summer.

After learning skills in the creative side of business, the teens will be in Depot Town on Aug. 27 to showcase what they have learned and the projects they've created during the summer.

The program, launched in Sept. 2007, is open to all youth in Washtenaw County between the ages of 13-20. These individuals are paid to learn the basics of business and gain experience with internships.

The Business Side Program is a year-round program that continually helps students further their ventures into the business world.

Funding comes through Michigan Works and The Washtenaw County Employment Training and Community Services. Other funding partners include Ann Arbor Community Foundation, R & R Foundation, James A and Faith Foundation, and Community Foundations for Southeast Michigan.

Local businesses that have partnered in with the B-Side program include Glemp's, What is That? Art Gallery, Shankweiler 123, Habitat Store and the Ypsilanti Citizen.

The program is made up of three components that include B-Side Basics, Young Moguls and the Business Side of Youth.

B-Side Basics begins in October and runs to April. In B-Side Basics, students learn the basics of business. The key elements of discipline, respect and punctuality are explored. Resources and tools are provided to sharpening the countenance of each individual.

Young Moguls is the next tier of the program, where students are able to take leadership roles.

"The B-Side program is designed to introduce the possibility of being their own boss." Jack Bidlack, director of B-Side of Arts Program., "We want to help create ways to get the youth to move up in the field of business at a young age."

Jack Bidlack, a one-time entrepreneur, teaches business, soft skills and the 4 P's, which are price, promotion, product and placement.

The youth are put into a classroom setting, where the increase of developmental capabilities is displayed. Through the use of games and activities, the youth are exposed to the realities of business.

Bidlack continually expressed the amount of passion needed to produce a successful business.

"The key factor I stress to the students is to utilize the skills and dreams in the business field." Zdenka Potacokonov, the B-Side receptionist said.

The youth are also involved in a skills training course which teaches business readiness.

"The curriculum gives business knowledge and background information as well as providing educational support," said Angelina Broderick, assistant program director for the program.

In the B. Side program there are six workshops which include web design, graphic design, textile fashion, writing expression, music production, and B Side Green. Each of these programs is geared to building the youth up in an unfamiliar field.

Within the program, the youth are encouraged to produce and sell a finished product, which will be displayed among cultural leaders, CEO's and local businesses. Displaying a finished product gives everyone an opportunity to portray business etiquette, as well as basic business knowledge used to generate and run a successful business.

Web design is a workshop where students are able to produce websites. After five weeks of learning the basics of web design and navigation, students are collaborating with other workshops such as Music Production.

The Textile Fashion is a workshop where students are assigned to creating a clothing line. Many of the students are employed with Glemp's and the What is That? Art Gallery.

The Graphic Design is focused on create images and web skills. Graphic Design works closely with Music Production as well as the textile fashion.

Written Expression and Publication centers its focus on improving the writing skills of the youth and prepare them to create a novel.

Music Production focuses producing an album and building musical knowledge and skills to utilize for positive purposes. These students work collaboratively with Community Records.

All of these workshops will sell their products at the Showcase on from 4-6 p.m. The showcase will be held at Celebrations, formerly known as Cady's Grill, located at 36 E Cross St.

*Nkosi Mason, Matt Winick, Katherine Peterson and Lamar Hudson are interns working with the The Business Side of Art and the Ypsilanti Citizen through the end of August.*