



CTE *Currents*

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Volume 2 | Issue 2

Featured School: Southwest High School

Program of Study:
Arts, Media and Entertainment

Courses:

- ROP Musical Theater Performance

Program of Study:
Health, Science and Medical Technology

Courses:

- ROP Principles of Biomedical Sciences
- ROP Medical Interventions
- ROP Human Body Systems

Program of Study:
Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation

Courses:

- ROP Culinary Arts

Program of Study:
Transportation

Courses:

- ROP Auto Technology
- ROP Auto Engine Performance
- ROP Auto Suspension, Steering and Brakes

**LEE
ROMERO**



**SOUTHWEST
HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL**

Career Technical Education courses give our students the unique opportunity to take a variety of career-oriented classes outside the core content areas. Auto Technology, Culinary Arts, Bio-Medical, Eco-Engineering and

Musical Theatre/Dance give our students additional opportunities to explore career paths that are not available at other comprehensive high schools.

The fact that we have state-of-the-art equipment in both the Automotive Technology and Culinary Arts programs afford an experience for our students to not only pick up lifelong skills, but to explore possible career paths. The quality of instruction in these courses, in addition to the latest and best equipment available rival any high school—not only in our district, but in the entire county.

Career Technical Education courses definitely do have a place at all comprehensive high schools. The five pathways specific to SOH are a perfect complement to the needs of our students. I am wholeheartedly a supporter of these programs and would love to see them grow. Specifically our

Bio-Medical and Eco-Engineering courses are perfect examples of two pathways that prepare students for higher education in medical and engineering majors.

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TEACHER PROFILE: HERIBERTO SANCHEZ



TEACHES:

- ROP AUTO TECHNOLOGY
- ROP AUTO ENGINE PERFORMANCE
- ROP AUTO SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

My courses are very important to the curriculum of Southwest High School because automotive technology isn't just about fixing cars. It involves physics, chemistry, and math.

When we cover the topic of electricity, I am only reinforcing what my students have already heard from their Science teachers. I have observed how the course has benefited my students by seeing how they learn to diagnose and service their own vehicles, obtain a job, and decide upon their career or college major once they graduate.

This course serves my students' future prospects for employment and higher education on several levels. I have multiple guest speakers from different institutions come and speak to the students about their career and college options. I'm proud to be able to say I have students at Universal Technical Institute that are becoming the next great Automotive Technicians, as well as a student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo who is designing a hybrid F1 race car in his engineering class. I have an extensive lesson plan for job readiness, and I use it for each student.

Every new day I go to class is another opportunity to continue motivating my students and to help them to become successful in whatever career or educational path they may choose.

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"Automotive technology isn't just about fixing cars. It involves physics, chemistry, and math."

TEACHER PROFILE: CHRISTINA BIRCHFIELD



TEACHES:

- ROP CULINARY ARTS

I spent more than 10 years in the culinary industry after graduating from the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. I have worked in fine dining restaurants and owned my own catering company—but my favorite career, up until now, is being a culinary arts teacher.

I feel that the culinary arts class is an intricate part of SOH because the skills learned extend to other areas. If students are learning economics, they correlate how a restaurant can succeed or fail based on business management. If they are in science class and learning about the different minerals, vitamins, *(cont'd)*

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(Christina Birchfield, cont'd)

nutrients and molecules found in food, we get to actually see the food develop from yeast, flour, salt and water into a delicious pizza. This class is a perfect meld for students to see general education classes in action. Food is a common language with everyone. The students are excited to try new foods and create new dishes. Other students leave my class eager to begin a career in the culinary arts industry. I believe that cooking brings people together; it teaches students to have pride in their work. My satisfaction comes from seeing that my students are inspired to do something exceptional and that they know they have someone that believes in them.

Culinary arts is an ever-growing industry. Career Technical Education teachers help students realize that there are so many opportunities available, including scholarships, grants, loans, etc. In my class, saying "I can't" is only a short-lived opinion, but never a fact.

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TEACHER PROFILE: SPENCER SMITH



TEACHES: ROP MUSICAL THEATER PERFORMANCE

Theater Arts form an invaluable part of students' education. It not only enhances their performance in school, but also allows students to expose their creativity in a secure environment. Theater Arts helps students to develop skills that will serve them when they progress to college and the job market.

Students that complete this program of study have many advantages. These include an increased confidence in speaking before a group (public speaking), improvement in group dynamics (team work), and refined abilities in problem solving and critical thinking. With many arts programs being stripped away from schools, this program has fortunately been

given a lot support. With that continued backing, I see these classes expanding so that students will be able to explore other areas of theater more in depth, including choreography, dance, voice, and production. In addition to this, I foresee more professional organizations partnering with us to provide students with career, internship and educational opportunities.

One of the many practical skills students acquire in theater arts is the capacity to walk into a room for a job interview, stand in front of a group or a single interviewer, and speak extemporaneously with confidence. We all know how nerve-racking it is to be in the spotlight of a job interview, or perhaps, after being hired, having to present a lecture to an audience. Theater classes have generally been overlooked and underrated. However, these are the classes that drastically facilitate a student's future in college and the job market.

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TEACHER PROFILE: ZOLTAN ILLES



TEACHES:

- ROP PRINCIPLES OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
- ROP MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS
- ROP HUMAN BODY SYSTEMS

These courses are important because they not only teach students valuable skills from hands-on learning, but they also integrate other core subjects into their curriculum, such as English, History and even Math. But for any student interested in the medical field, these classes offer real world techniques, forward-thinking activities and the chance to do things that they would normally have access to only after entering college. These are truly spectacular classes and I honestly wish that they would have been available when I was in high school.

I have noticed an increase in students who express a deep

interest in the medical and biotech fields. That is an exciting trend, because those happen to be the largest growing industries and the demand to fill jobs in those sectors will continue to grow. I feel that developing a passion for something in high school carries over to college and a career. I've also noticed that students get better grades in their science classes while they're taking my class. Learning the same concepts and methods in two different ways is having excellent results.

I see these courses continuing to grow and, as good as they currently are, improving exponentially over time. The great overarching factor is that they introduce the biomedical field to students that would never have even heard of the subject without Career Technical Education bringing the course to Southwest High. This is only the third year it has been offered at this school and it is already very popular. We're looking forward to opening up more sections and involving as many students into the pathway as possible, ideally to complete all four sections (Principles of Biomedical Sciences, Human Body Systems, Medical Interventions and Biomedical Innovations).

These courses definitely prepare students for college. I think of

them as pre-pre med classes. We do a lot of the same things that biology majors do in universities, but getting the advantage of an earlier learning start by offering them in high school. I feel that because of this, my students will be much better prepared and better equipped, both mentally and structurally for a higher education.

These students are performing activities that professionals in the biotech and medical fields participate in daily, so being able to find employment in these fields after they graduate from high school is a real possibility.

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A Program of Study is a student plan that involves a multi-year sequence of Career Technical Education courses that supports core academic knowledge, skills, concepts and content with technical and occupational skills.

These concepts, knowledge and skills will better prepare students for both college and career upon graduation.