

Interviewees (In Order of speaking)

1. John Gibbons- Technical Producer
2. Sam Davis Boyd- Dean of Communications
3. Keegan Choffat- Videographer, Motion Graphics Editor,
4. James Blanchard- Graphic Designer, Mixed Media Artist
5. Wendy Mays- Vermont Broadcasters Organization Director

**Audio file:** [Audio Recording of Advisory Meetings](#)

## Transcript:

Gonna test to make sure this is working. John, would you just mind saying 1 or 2 things to see if it picks it up? Hello. My name is John Gibbons. I'm here professionally to talk about what I do further.

That's perfect. That's what I'm gonna use that. I'm gonna use this. I'm gonna I'm gonna post you on social media. Leave me alone, dude.

Yeah. Okay. Well, that that part I'm just gonna have to cut out. Okay. Alright.

Thank you for talking today, John. We don't have an official agenda because I'm waiting on the minutes, but I I appreciate you being able to make this happen before Thursday. So really kinda what we're looking for here is as part of our grant application, for the school district. Each program is looking to form an advisory board of 5 members. You have to kind of advise, give guidance, and suggestions on how to educate students to better seek careers in the field that we are teaching.

So if you wouldn't mind, would you mind opening up by just introducing yourself and kind of what your current role is and your past experience? Sure. So, my my current role is, yeah, it's gonna take a while because I have to do I do so many, so many things at the moment. But my visual, title is a technical producer, so I get to be part in this, kind of a audio visual tech space where, we'll have we'll come up with, solutions for clients to present their message in the best way possible. So whether it's, like, your standard presentation in a hotel ballroom, just, you know, like a projector screen with a laptop, or if it's something unique where it's digital signage and there's, like, a touch screen going on, we're getting interactions through that.

So I'm I'm kind of there as this as this role in this role where, we get to pitch solutions and also execute on them and make sure they work well. Cool. That's it. I guess the most succinct explanation of what you done you do that I I've got, and it's nice to have it legit in the person, in the person in the phone. I got it in, like, one sentences.

Yeah. This this first meetings are being recorded after a long day. Well, it's it's great because, I I've been trying to at least, teach the kids that there are generally 3 pathways one can take, with skills learned in digital media arts. 1 being the creative sector of either, you know, film

documentary or experimental art production. The last being social media and the middle one being kind of business promotion, live events, and kind of, I I don't know how you would describe it, but, essentially, what you're saying of working with companies to help convey their messaging whether through streaming broadcasts or paid advertisements.

So if, how would you say like, what were the skills that you've gathered up to this point either, you know, literally from some of my kids high school age to now that kinda made sense in preparing you for work in this field, if that makes sense? I'm reading the the captions now. Let me see this sentence. I can repeat it too. Yeah.

You can. Can you repeat that? Yeah. So, one of the things we're looking at so, specifically, since you are kind of, you know, working in the field of using communications tools to help convey messages for businesses, I was wondering through past experience, either educational or professional, what were skills that you learned specifically that have been advantageous to your current career? Mhmm.

Okay. I just need a moment to think about it. No. You know, go as long as you want. I that's that's literally what these are here for.

So you're doing us a favor. Doing us a favor. Take your time. Yeah. No worries.

Alright. Skills that have helped me or experiences that have. I guess one of the things that's that's helped me, like, throughout through education and through my experiences in the professional world is just staying curious. There's always gonna be something new coming out, so it's always good to keep an open mind and just tinker around, see how something works. Not everything is gonna be, like, very regimented and guided and pull through, like, in the classroom setting.

So outside the classroom setting, now I'm kind of having take ownership and say, okay. I need to kinda create my own lesson plan. Like, I need to learn about this topic and come up with a solution related to that, through there. So just staying curious and seeing seeing just keeping an eye open eye on what's out there is has always been helpful. And, yeah, I'd say my technical skills and, honestly, the willing the willingness and speediness to learn technical things has always been hugely benefit beneficial in my, my experience in my field.

It seems once you're once you're in the technical realm, people tend to trust you on certain things, and you seem to be a, you know, a very reliable asset to them to get things where they want where they want. If they have a vision, they can't quite grasp all on their by themselves. I I do find that when they when you find, like, you know, there's a tech person that you find, and suddenly everybody's like, oh, there he is. Like, somehow, I've I've ended up being, like, the tech go to person at this school for a few people, and I'm like, no. Yeah.

I think. Yeah. So so just to to to build on that, when we're thinking specifically of, like, the in terms of, like, the technical knowledge, the skills that you use on the, you know, daily, weekly

basis for students who are looking to jump into this potentially after high school or after college, what are some ground level, like, you know, like, technology skills or resources that you think they should be looking into to kinda get a better understanding of what it is you, John Gibbons, do and the industry that you work in? Yes. So there seems to be a lot of, there's kinda 2 realms that you can try and specialize in in my my unique role.

You can either be more on the in the title of technical producer. You can either be on the technical side, and you're kind of, like, the trusted person to make sure drawings are correct, very good attention to details, just coming up with coming up with solutions and things to work, not just for yourself if you're operating equipment, but also for other easily for other people as well. So I'd say for that area, certifications are getting much more popular. I see a lot of places if you're getting into the AV industry in whatever capacity, they like to see a CTS, a certified tech technical specialist certification. It's kinda like an SAT for technical people.

I'm still undergoing some of the these at the moment. But, just have just knowing that those certifications are out there and they're they're have, like, free resources online, you can go online, search on your own, just research and study for study for these things. And if you already have an aptitude for some of these elements or are knowledgeable about networking, knowledgeable about video or audio, you can already get a solid grasp of certain things and work work your way out from there. And even if you don't take the test, you'll still have just from the resource materials, you'll have a nice knowledge to have for yourselves as well. That's more on the the hard skills technical side of things.

The The other part of my title, producer, that's more on the soft skills end. So if you wanna be client facing, talking to people, it's kinda more on, like, the marketing end, I'd say. So you'd have to be you can branch out to be, you know, just a producer, and you you're kind of, like, that point person to convey a client's vision with the rest of the internal team or other external vendors into whatever you're doing to make it make it happen. And then there's, even broader. You can branch out to, like, general marketing for a company and communications and HR.

Just any anything if you like in having a more extroverted side and being communicative and, with other people and things and collaborating, that's that portion of that as well. So there's there's plenty of avenues to go. Well, that's that's super. You could frame a whole class around that, frankly, especially I it's hard to encourage, you know, it's it's funny. On on one end, the creative aspect of the industry does foster, like, a certain introverted nature, but you do have to be able to communicate and express, which is something you can do through practice.

Specifically with this Oh, I'm sorry. No. No. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Oh, no. Yeah. I was just gonna say, like, even even film directors, like, you'll see you'll see, like, clips of them or, like, stories people tell them. Like, oh, they're so Peter Jackson session nerds in his little studio screenwriting everything. But he's on talk shows all the time.

He will promote his movies and things like that. So there's there's duality with those. When you get to that certain level, there's a duality on on your technical know how, so you're a trusted resource, and also your ability to convey those those very things. Yeah. And specifically, I I thought it was very helpful to mention that they look for certifications.

Do is the CTS a test and then certifications are separate, or is the CTS a test for certifications? Sorry. Just to clarify because I wanna I wanna look into that for the kids. So Yeah. It's, it's actually if you need to look it up, it's Avixia CTS, and it's a a world registered entity organization, I suppose.

But they they kinda set the bar in AV, for if there's, like, a AV installation going on in a corporate office or if it's a live event, like a temporary setup, like, these are the this is the certifications that a lot of companies kinda look forward and make sure, oh, if they have this certification, they're certainly qualified to do x, y, and z. And Okay. The way the certifications work, they have three levels, I believe. It's your standard CTS, CTS I, which is installation focused and specialized Mhmm. And then CTS d, which is design, and that's where so it kinda it kinda evolves.

You can take the first test, and then you have to pay another thing for a separate test focused on installation, methods and, with more of the work revolved around some installations on companies. And then d is for the design that you can, specialize in actually designing and, AV solutions with CAD, curated design software and video flows and all this other other stuff, so and jargon. So it kinda it has kinda 3 steps if you wanted to say t prep 1, 2, 3, like, you'll have you have plenty to work with. Awesome. No.

I mean, that's that's a great amount to work with. I'll I'll definitely take a look at that resource for some of the students because we we have links to mostly certification through just softwares. So hands on stuff would be nice because I I do have 1 or 2 students more interested in that kind of knowledge. Yeah. And, like, softwares are changing all the time too.

The industry really kinda has opened up, I guess, since we were in school, I'd say, even. Yeah. Like, it's just a lot more democratized. You can find YouTube videos on a certain software. There's a lot of softwares you can they're changing so much that you can just get, like, say I usually use vMix for, like, a webcast, like, video switching kinda software, but I've also used, Blackmagic Design Software because they also have a bunch of hardware elements, and they're kind of taking over the industry by storm just by how affordable they've made their products to both professionals and to all the way from, like, professional video switcher broadcasts for television all the way to, like, the YouTuber in their in their room just doing a a video game stream.

So it's, yeah, it's definitely gotten a lot more accessible. Certainly a ways to go, but, like, entire in terms of the grand scheme of things, when you used to have to pay, like, an arm and a leg literally for, like, a a video switcher in the seventies, you can now get your own little touchscreen iPad software to do this the same exact functions. So in that grand scheme, it's definitely gotten a lot more accessible. Yeah. And that's that's great.

I mean, even with the resources we have here, I mean, we've been focusing a lot on, like you said, maybe hard technical skills, but it does feel more, you know, you know, when I was in high school, like, I couldn't imagine having a computer just in my class that does the things that we can do now. So that's that's a really nice change for it. Sorry. That was my voice. One more maybe, like, kinda broadish well, maybe one more if I can think of it.

Broadish question. For the so I I have students, some are who are considering college, some who might be, you know, looking at employment or trades, potentially moving after school. Where what are some, like, good entry opportunities or kind of, like, opening opportunities that you regularly see in the field or good places for students to get started provided they have some background at least in an educational setting of these skills we've discussed? I think a good good place to start is kinda starting with yourself. It's kinda speaking to me as myself as an older person now, but, I kind of realized a little while into getting into the media industry that the nature of myself, I didn't quite like the freelance world, the lifestyle.

Of course, some people, it totally works for them, and they like having that kind of flexibility and everything. But I've I've seem seem to gravitated more to more toward, consistent and conventional kind of full time employed company man. I don't know. What else do you call? But, yeah.

I don't know. Just just, like, looking at looking in yourself, like, just seeing, like, as a lifestyle, how do you wanna to live at first? Because this is your career. This is what is gonna take up most of your time, unfortunately, in this in this world. So, I don't know.

Yeah. Just looking looking at yourself first, seeing what do I want out of not just what I'm doing in a job, but, like, how this job is going to affect me personally. And then you can kinda work out the kinks from there. Like, okay. Well, I can make if I wanna live have more of a freelance approach, then I should start trying to get small gigs and working my way up, and you can go to Upwork and others job kind of freelance sites like that.

You just make an account. You can get started. And just seeing posts online, volunteering to do hey. I'll do this for x amount, what your whatever that task is. And then if you're, trying to get more of into, like, more trying to, like, find a specific company that you, like, have looked at and you wanna kinda pursue that, you can try looking at similar companies that might like, if you're, like, kinda relate to banking, like, oh, I love Chase JPMorgan Chase Bank or something, like, whatever company it is.

In your field in your case, it'd be like a production house or something. But, whatever whatever you see there, like, you can see, okay. Well, to work my way up to that, I might have to find a smaller art house, production house, and something like that. And you can find internships there either through schools or through other programs. And, they even have a lot of, I call it externs, at my my job or my, place of work.

They'll actually hire local high schoolers in the in the school district areas as ex externs while they're still in high school, and they can work the summer job doing doing stuff in the office. And that helps a lot of a lot of kids get a leg up in the industry because they have that prior experience at a production company. Yeah. Well, our, tech center is is interesting that we offer co ops to seniors, which is basically for half the day. They can go out and work on a job site or something along those lines.

So if we could find some you know, it's a little harder up in the middle of Vermont maybe to find these companies, but, it's hard everywhere. There's a there's a few few token places that that tend to do it. But, yeah, it's it is hard, but once you do find some, there there is a very, very nice value add. Yeah. And I agree.

And mostly, the struggle is is that even with the the openness we've discussed, it still feels like a very difficult industry to break into in some ways. So trying to find these, you know, pathways, especially for kids, any any leg ups or anything are important because, like, when I was once upon a time gonna go to California, the thing that stopped me, it was like, there's, like, a 100,000 of me going out there every year, and I don't really have that, like, anything in my back pocket to make me look, you know, better other than, like, a song and a dream, but, like and that's why I made a movie here, and I I don't regret it at all. But, yeah, the more opportunities, the better. I had not heard of externs, though. It's like the university.

Yeah. They there's yeah. I don't know why they call it externs. They are pretty much like an internship, but you're still you're not at a college level, I guess. You're at a high school level, so they call it externs.

Alright. Well, sorry. Every now and then, it gives a little bit of feedback. My I I I think that's that's a lot of super duper awesome information, I guess. If there was, again, in closing any in terms of, you know, in the spirit of being a part of the advisory board, if there's any advice that you had for my film students or my digital media students, even if it's a repeat, what would in summary be any advice you'd have for them?

Closing statements. Yeah. Closing statements. I guess I'll just circle back to my my comment about being better. Yeah.

It was just I'll make it full circle. Just just stay curious. Be curious. Be open minded to things, try new things. You got this is what you're here for.

Just try new things. Don't be afraid to fail. That's how a lot of success ends up happening is when we when we learn from certain things, and you get to learn what you like about it. If you like doing certain things, if you like certain parts of a job, if you like identifying with a certain role or anything like that, it's that's part of the process. So please take chances.

Take it. Yeah. Just take care of this. Yeah. Alright.

Awesome. Hopefully, we can have you radio into class, and you can tell them that directly sometimes because it's I mean, like, even right now, I'm like, this this has a different vibe hearing it coming from you in such a formal setting. And I'm like, this is this feels like gospel. This feels like the truth. So You're a formal setting, you know, to tell her.

Yeah. It's the double horses behind you that's really kinda selling me on your your validity. Oh, is that second one a horse? I couldn't tell. I mean, I guess it was a horse, but after I said that he looks more like the kind of a grim reaper, the set of fairy wings or something.

Yeah. Like a Rorschach inkblot test. Yeah. But I mean, the other one could not be a horse, I suppose. It could be, like, like you know what?

Sorry. I gotta I gotta stop this recording because the advisory thing and I'm like, I I'm trying so hard to not say something unofficial. So, thank you very much, John. I'm gonna hit the end of the recording and then say a unofficial bye and go from there. Alright.

Sounds good, dude. Thanks for having me. It was a pleasure. So yeah. So, I just to repeat that.

I'm so sorry. The idea here is since I am one of the programs that has students who do have interest in college careers as part of my advisory board, I wanted to have, someone who could speak to that experience on, the topic. And I I know I sent you the questions a little late, but would you just mind kind of for the for the folks at home, telling, what your current role is and what capacity you serve at the college? Yeah. Of course.

So yeah. Hi. I'm Sam, she her pronouns. I am an assistant professor at Vermont State University, Castleton, in the communications, program here. I specifically teach video and filmmaking courses.

And so that's kind of my role. I, you know, I I teach courses, but I'm also the program coordinator. So I do a lot of outreach and connections with other high schools and tech programs. And there's so many other things, but the short and sweet, that's what I do. Yeah.

That that's that's the punchy version. Oh, I just realized something that's gonna be kind of funny because, oh, my god. That we're we're gonna wreak havoc on the transcript. It's gonna go Sam this, Sam this, Sam this. I don't know if I don't wanna look through it, but by god, I'll be like, what is this?

So I'll be like, it's a 100% accurate. I assure you. You were just talking to yourself having this conversation. Yeah. Well, it's worse has been done.

So thank yeah. Awesome. So I mean, just to start out with a little bit of your background, if you don't mind. When you talk about because you hold this awesome position at the college. I was one so generally speaking, so what kind of prior work experience or education have you done in the past that kind of prepared you to be in this role up to this point, like, for people?

Yeah. Mhmm. Yeah. That's a great question. So I have my undergraduate degree in film.

I kind of went into college. Well, I went into college being interested in telling stories and, like, a journalistic perspective. Yeah. So that's I was a journalism student and quickly found that I liked film, and documentary filmmaking, how that kind of all meshes together. So I have my undergraduate degree in film, and then I, partway through my undergraduate career, realized that I, yes, I love film.

I love making films, but I also was really interested in teaching and teaching at the college level. And so to do that, need a master's. So I very quickly, after I graduated, went on to receive my master's of fine arts in cinema, at San Francisco State University. I'm from the West Coast. Oh.

And, while I was a student while I was a grad school student, I, when I was in grad school, did a lot of, like, student teaching, in my program as well as kind of freelance work in the Bay Area. Lots of work on documentary films. So I have both, like, yes, students, that perspective, education, but also, like, working in the field as a freelancer, for several years. So that's kind of what I bring into my classroom is okay. Yes.

These are, like, the pieces you need to know to make films, but also trying to connect our students with organizations and people where they can go out and make things and put them out into the world. So I think that's really important beyond just, like, we're making a class project that's gonna sit on a hard drive, and you're never gonna do anything with it. Like, I I I have a lot of that experience from being a student. I don't want our students to have that experience. I want them to, like, be creating things that are going out into the world in some shape.

Yeah. That that mean that's a hard balance too in every day. It's like when I was getting my teaching thing, they talk about, like, this this example, like, the Grecian Urn Grecian Urn, which is like it was like, yeah. We made this whole thing. It represents Greece.

And this is like, what what are you gonna do with that? He's like, well, it's really pretty. And it's, like, I I it's funny. I didn't know how similar or backward in square in that regard, though. Undergrad film then kind of was, like, oh, I wanna teach it and then going back for the teaching.

That's kind of funny. So Yeah. I love it. Yeah. Absolutely.

So, and then, it's funny. The last few, I've kind of been more off the cuff because I wrote them all up for you now. I just kinda wanna go, like, pew pew pew pew. So, so specifically, as your position in the college setting, obviously a lot of my students are just kind of curious of like, you know, how does the process start? And my my goal of course is to try to provide them an education that will be valuable if they're gonna take this into the college setting.

So I was hoping kind of you could maybe expand upon when you think of, you know, forthcoming potential college students, what kind of skills and abilities are most valuable for them to learn if they wanna follow communications into college? Yeah. That's a great question. I think there's lots of different skills that they could be learning early on. I would say I mean, one of I'd say one of the bigger ones that I see a lot of students at the college level still struggling with is, like, media literacy, and how to find how to tell when something is basically, how to differentiate between, like, fake news and, you know, AI generated, like, stories and content versus, like, what was actually made and, like, what were the sources?

How do students find out what is accurate? Right? Accurate in quotation marks because that varies. But, that would be a big thing was it's just generally media literacy. So I think that leads to creating more well rounded content, whether you're doing journalism or filmmaking or whatever that looks like for for students.

I think basic writing composition skills is important in any field, quite frankly. But in communications, there is, you know, there is a writing component. Right? Even in filmmaking classes where students are writing scripts or treatments, or communications program isn't just film. Right?

It's journalism, and it's media cinema studies and public relations, and there's lots of ass facets to it. So I think just basic writing, reading and writing skills are really important. Did I answer your question? Are there was there any other piece to that that I'm I'm missing? No.

That's great. Yeah. Then definitely the media literacy and reading and writing. I I've heard also so far folks say about learning to kind of collaborate and work with each other, specifically, you know, because obviously in a client environment, but also in a creative environment, it's a medium that's inherently collaborative, which has always been exciting to me. But I I did wanna Yes.

Oh, go ahead. I I completely agree with that. That's a great that's a great point. Film is, like you said, a very collaborative medium. It's very hard to do by yourself.

And so being able to learn to work with people that maybe you don't necessarily get along with or difficult people, I think is a really just great soft skill to to learn, for everybody. Right. And I I do wanna see because when you said, we've tried to do some writing in class like whenever if they finish the film screening they're supposed to be doing their written analysis is and we've done some script. But when you say media literacy in terms of understanding how to differentiate between viable sources, do you also mean just maybe being exposed, like, a a wider breadth of Yes. Media?

I do. And I think looking at, like, I think media bias charts can be really helpful just and students recognizing, like, okay. This is where I get my information, or this is where I'm being told to get information, but, like, there's a large breadth of what of where our media sources lie on a

political scale, right, in terms of, like, biases. And so I think it's really helpful for students, to okay. I'm looking at media from this side of the spectrum.

What's going on in the other side of the spectrum or in the center? Right? Again, it's Right. The spectrum. So I I think it's helpful for students to kind of look at and see how those stories are being written or told or filmed, across the spectrum.

I I think it's helpful. Yeah. We've done 1 or 2 trying to help the debates, but I probably couldn't hurt to do a little bit more. So Yeah. Aside from some of those kind of just, you know, the skills that you've discussed there, a big, focus of our well, not a big focus is kind of, like, what we need in the future to be, like, a fully, like, supportive environment.

And I was wondering, like, are is there specifically, like, oh, how do I say this? Like, technologies, software, equipment that are frequently used in the college setting or your understanding of the professional sphere that would be handy for students to either have or have experience with? Yeah. That's a great question. I would say in terms of cameras, I I think if students I don't know the the specifics of what you have going on, and I would love to talk more about that.

But I I think a minimum, like, DSLR is just having, like, a basic understanding of how a DSLR camera works and, you know, f stops and shutter speed and how those things interact. It is something we we teach here, and most universities, if you're going into a film program, they're gonna teach that. But I think it's helpful because those are sometimes can be harder concepts to grasp for students. In terms of editing, we at, Castleton and VTSU at large, we use Adobe, softwares. So Adobe Premiere Pro is primarily what we're editing on.

That is what's happening by and large in the field. There are instances where there are other platforms being used, but I think if you learn Adobe Premiere Pro, you can learn any of these other editing platforms. There it's just a matter of, like, the shortcuts and the keys on how to do it. It's I think it's more the process of, like, okay. This is how you edit things together.

This is how you can tell a story, pacing, how to, you know, color grade, all of those things. Those are skills. It doesn't really matter what program you're in. Once you know how to do those, you can figure it out in any other program. But that's specifically what we use as Adobe.

Awesome. Well, it does my heart good. Pardon me. I just dropped the lens filter. I didn't mean to interrupt you there.

But, we we primarily have been trying to really get them to focus on using Premiere, so we've been doing a lot of that. And the other thing is is I I think that, I I don't know if they've really understood why. I'm just trying to find an example of something to show you, but I don't know if they'll be able to. I've been kinda beating them over the head with camera settings. So we've done like exposure triangle and t charts, and I was like, you gotta do one with fast shutter and slow shutter, and like I color stop, and they keep kind of not wanting to do it.

And so I keep being, like, take I literally have a cheat sheet I give them, Sam, of, like Yeah. Beats to hit, and that's one of the first things I do. So, you know, if you get a lot of, like, imposter syndrome as teachers, it's always very validating when you're like, you should do this. And I'm like, we kinda have. Yes.

That's great. Yeah. I think those are really helpful skills to have. And, yes, I think it's hard for students to be like, well, I can look at the back of the screen, and it's on auto. It looks fine.

It's like, well, there's more to filmmaking than Yeah. Having a camera on auto. So I'm I'm really glad that that's part of your curriculum. I love that. Yeah.

So I I I kinda we we do a thing, and then I try to hit the like, a cheat sheet version, and then I try to have these handouts that we go over. So that's yeah. That's great. So we most and we do, I I there's been a little confusion ordering things, but I we at least have a little bit of a fleet of some Canon ADDs, and that's kinda where I've been starting them out on. We have, like, a few extra, like, higher end cameras, like a Sony, like, FX, like, 2 cinema cameras, but I've been, like, we're just gonna do GSR till we're till we're absolutely locked on the the nitty gritty.

You know? And that's what I do here because we have a lot of students that are coming in good. Never have having touched a camera before. So Yeah. We really learned how to use we have some lower quality DSLRs that I kinda start with them off on some Sonys and then work our way up to the Canons, and then we have some cinema cameras that we eventually get to when they really understand how to work a DSLR camera.

Yeah. Like, who Now hold the 16,001. Exactly. Please don't break it. Yes.

Fingers crossed. Well, that's great because I I, you know, I it's kinda one of those things where it's like, learning MLA format. You're like, why I'm doing this now? It's like Elizabeth in college. So it's nice to know there's some correlation there.

It's definitely. Yeah. So and the other thing I would just like, well, one of the other two things is I just kinda would like to go over kind of some of the things we have been doing to and to see if those seem like they connect with the college curriculum. So, generally speaking, we're we've just wrapped our end of our Q1. For the last two quarters, I'm specifically gonna be offering 6 college credits to the class.

I don't know if we start to spoke about that. But, so hopefully, the the students can come in with a little bit of leg up. But Yeah. So far, it's it's kind of been a focus of, I broke it in with, like, a little bit of history, a film history to introduce the concepts of filmmaking that are basic. So we started out with like, we did studied some silence, a little bit of history and how to do purely blocking and staging without moving the camera as they used to.

And then, kind of, they did their own silent films, migrated into the twenties with, you know, cinematography adverts like the Passion of Jonah arc, and we did framing and blocking composition analysis. And now, I'm just gonna try to speed through it. And a lot of and then, of course, with the talkies, we've done, projects like they studied how to create ADR and Foley, create a soundscape to evoke a place purely just through the medium of sound. And then I took, classic film clips and completely robbed them of any audio and had the kids reconstruct it using in class soundtracks. And so Nice.

And so it's kind of been in the production post, and now we're gonna roll it back to preproduction and talk about scheduling, working with clients, screenwriting, and producing both, commercial works and creative ones. And I didn't know if that generally sounds somewhat aligned to what could be used in a college setting. Yes. 100%. I I think all of those skills that that students are learning, that's, for folks that come in having never taken a film course and are taking our intro course, which is used to be called intro to video and film is now called visual storytelling.

That's a whole thing. Yeah. It might change too. And it's it's an intro course. That is the gist of what they're learning.

We talk about silent films. They make a silent film. Really? They talk about sound design. They do sound design.

Right? Like That's crazy. Preproduction is a big part of it. Right? So Yeah.

They're learning how, yes, you make the film when you're filming, but you're making the film also in preproduction and in postproduction. Right? So Mhmm. All of that is very much part of our curriculum curriculum, and I think students learning that in high school is gonna help set them up for success coming into a college setting. Yeah.

My hope is, at least through the units, is to hit on a pretty good history with a pre, during, and post production unit by the end of Q2. Maybe even do a little bit of just streaming web content just because that's such a big market. And then for the 2 college courses is really honing down on making one really refined digital filmmaking product with the idea for the second 2. So Yeah. I just wanted to see.

Well, I you've already confirmed and it's very, like, oh my god. But It's so perfect. Yeah. At first, though, I I, I I don't know what the structure of it was privately, previously, but they were, like, why are we doing silent films? And there was a little bit of, like I was, like, I swear there's a good reason.

So Great. And, the way I pitch it to my students is I think when students are first making films, they wanna just fill it with, like, dialogue. Like, this is how you tell the story and, like, characters are telling the story. And I think learning to tell a story without words is a really important aspect of filmmaking. Right.

And that is something that is, like, I think, foundational. So I I think that's a really great place to start. And I like that you bringing are bringing in, some of the cinema history, because we have cinema production, but we also cinema studies that are very much overlapping, here as well. So Yeah. I don't know if how many high school teachers made him watch a Buster Keaton movie, but we did.

So I love it. Yeah. So they've been, it's funny, though. I've done things, like, we watched inception, but, like, I used, like, the theory of the dream state to explain sound design in movies in terms of Nice. ADR and all that.

And sometimes they're willing to go along with it. And sometimes they're, like, why? They're just like, why did you make me watch that? Which is sometimes kind of fun. Like, we watched, in historical context talking about cinematographer.

We watched original Frankenstein. Oh, that didn't go that didn't go over well. They were like, what? Oh, no. No.

No. They were not into that movie. But, it was kind of funny though. I I can't gamble because in, like, the other day, yesterday for obvious reasons, I'm like, we gotta do something light. So I gave him some, like, classic, like, you know, we do a screenings options.

And they went with Tim Burton's Ed Wood. And I'm like, that's what you guys pick. I mean, rock rock and roll. I love it. But, like, okay.

That's interesting. I forgot to guess that. Interesting. No. Because I was like, you guys are not gonna want I've already made you watch, like, 2 black and white movies about film production, and they're like, let's go again.

And I'm like, okay. Alright. Nice. The classic, but, yeah. So awesome.

And then if I might, just go back to a question, I guess, regarding your experience personally, what is a skill or, I guess, a skill, yeah, that has helped you through your career, both professionally and education that you think would be especially important to impart to students? And it's okay if it's a little bit of a repeat. I just kinda like that one. Yeah. No.

That's a great question. I would say I think it's linked to, like, learning to work with people, but more broadly, I think just learning to, like, talk and engage with people and ask questions. So I'm really coming my experience is I I teach across the spectrum in terms of experimental fiction, all of that, but I'm a documentary filmmaker. That's my kind of background, my niche. And so, you know, being able to talk to any and everybody regardless of, you know, if my beliefs line up with them or not, I think is a really good skill to have and be able to ask good questions to get good answers.

Because if I'm filming, I want the good answers. Yeah. Like, I want would be really passionate about what they're talking about. So, I think just learning to have those types of dialogues and being able to talk with people is a really, again, soft skill, but I think a really important skill, and I think will help students get far in in in their careers. Awesome.

And then Yeah. Just purely and then I guess my last question on the mode of just college is when I'm I I want to make sure I'm providing students support in my tangential way. And I'm just wondering, what does a student's in your mind senior look like if they're trying to apply for college in terms of timeline? And is there anything I can be doing to support them outside of, you know, the typical guidance counselor that I'm not? Kinda 2 separate things.

I'm sorry. Yeah. No. No. That's that's great.

So senior high school students starting to apply for college is correct is what like, what does that process look like, or how you can support them through that process? Yes. I, you know, I would say, at least from my experience, most universities and colleges, by and large I mean, obviously, like, art schools and things are different, but, like, state public schools generally aren't looking at portfolios, in terms of, like, students applying. Mhmm. At least that was my experience.

That's the experience I know for students coming here. Like, that's not something they need to apply. Oh, nice. It's like writing, I think, different universities again are have different policies, but, like, some will some take SAT, SAT scores. Some are getting rid of them because SAT scores are biased and racist.

Yeah. We take WorkKeys here. I don't know if that's yeah. Okay. Yeah.

I don't know. I so some universities and colleges, yes, you'll students will need an s d SAT, test that they need to do, but a lot of them are starting to get rid of it, because of the the biases in them. Usually, like, college essay is the big thing that they're looking at and grades. And sometimes students will need, like, letters of recommendation. It just really depends on the the institution.

I think from my experience as a first generation college student, just, like, navigating where to find that information, who they can talk to on at those institutions, that's like, learning those steps was something that was hard for me when I was in high school looking at colleges because I didn't have parents that had that experience. I didn't have siblings at that point that had experience. So I think just being a support, even if it's just you being in the room while they ask questions or ask for help or you know, I'm interested in these types of programs. Like, where can I go for that? Okay.

I think would be really helpful. At least, again, my experience, I I don't know the students are teaching if they're also 1st gen, but that was my experience. Just like that barrier to, like, I don't even know what the first step is. Yeah. I think, actually, the majority of them are, at present.

And Yeah. I I'm I'm glad you said that portfolio because just from my limited experience, I was trying to tell some of them probably portfolio to put some ideas together. So maybe it would be good to know that I I can kinda maybe stop using that as one of my quiver. But mostly, that's what I've done is answer questions about college life. I've gone over, like, applications and stuff with them, given out some ideas and stuff.

But I just it's just one of those things where I I myself was burdened with, like, a 120,000 in debt and that can be so demanding. I wanna make sure I'm the you know, we're not me, just me, but the program is helping them as best as possible. So Yeah. Yeah. I I mean, that's the other piece is the financial piece.

Right? Like Yeah. Especially being a first gen student. You know, where what are the financial aid opportunities? You know, the whole best thing is, a whole beast of your own of its own, especially if the students are doing it by themselves.

So Mhmm. I think just, like, sometimes moral support or support just helping navigate that process is really helpful. Mhmm. And I think having a portfolio is really helpful. Mhmm.

Just for students. Right? Like, I think it's that's you know, they're spending this time making all of these things. I think them being able to, like, put that together into a finalized thing is really helpful for them Mhmm. Even if it's not necessarily something that they submit to colleges, because, again, some colleges may ask for that, some may not.

I think it's helpful for them to have because then they have this piece of, like, okay. Here's where I started. Here's maybe where they're going next. And I think it's just like a nice, like, kind of end chapter to, you know, their academic career in high school, I think, could be really, really nice for them to have. Yeah.

Awesome. Alright. Well, I I don't wanna take up any more of your time. That was a a awesome interview. Thank you so so much.

I will say I have had 2 students express, serious interest if not outright leaning towards, the SU since we visited. So I'd love to hear that. Yeah. Hey. I think maybe the, one student, who I talked to you about the music.

Well, maybe that's all for me. It's kind of talk. But, anyway, I just want you to know that was a big success, and they all really had a nice time. So, hopefully, we can chat again in the future. That's That's awesome.

Yeah. I actually had 2 things I wanted to to check-in about. So, I'm so glad to hear that there's some students interested. Again, they can reach out whenever. Yeah.

And I'm just gonna pause the recording so we can just talk about them without the alright. So I'm doing a lo fi. I'm literally just recording the, the audio coming out of the computer, at present. So,

I I kinda have a a a light structure to it, but, obviously, you guys do some kinda radically different things. So I hope you kinda don't mind just ping ponging answers or as we go along, and I don't I hope, hopefully, won't take up too much of your time because I I, of course, really appreciate you guys being here and and doing this for the the program.

So if you wouldn't mind, I'm just gonna go in the order that I see on the screen. Tell me, what your name is and your, current position, your current role and position, and kind of what that entails, I guess. So, Keegan, you're you're first on my left. Alright. Hello, everybody.

My name is Keegan Shofa. I am a videographer for Mesa Community College. My roles include producing promotional and educational content for the institution, as well as managing a computer lab in which I assist students with multimedia projects. And I also teach digital art as an adjunct. Awesome.

And I'm James Blanchard, and I am a graphic designer. And I'm technically the art director of Lormann's. I'm also the direct digital printer. I run everything from direct printing machines to vinyl machines, large format work. I do screen printing, formatting, and as well as some web design at points.

Mhmm. And for myself, I do a lot of freelance work, and I do album design and book covers and a lot of, side commissions. And I also make my own illustrations, and I have my own brand currently at this point in time that I can Oh, Keegan, are you lobbed up or something? Lobbed? I I noticed it went as you stuck it.

It shouldn't be. Yeah. Oh, wait. Is this do you hear that? Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Oh, okay. Sorry. It's okay.

To do is It's all it's all going on the transcript. Don't worry about it. So it'll be Did you hear me fine, though, Sam? Oh, yours is perfect. I just for forever now, there'll be a grant proposal that has Keegan messing with his mic embedded into it.

Thanks. So I'll just, in the reverse order, I'll kinda work through some of the the questions I I have because, again, the goal of this is this is a, tech center for students who are juniors and, seniors. I was just making sure junior came before senior. And we're trying to prep them in the fields of digital media arts, which is interesting because, we were initially digital filmmaking as a program right up till, August. And so now we've brought into digital media arts, so that's why it's great to have both of you.

And we've talked I've talked to some people more on the business end of, you know, commercial video and someone at the college end. So, I would, just like to start with the, again, the intent that this is about how best to set up students to get where you guys are today. What education or job work or, you know, employment have you done up to this point that helped to

get you to where you currently are in your careers? And I'll do the reverse order. So start with James if that's alright.

So, honestly, I started my craft very young. I've always been into drawing. I've always been into making drawings for people if they've asked me, so on and so forth. That's just basic, like, just, you know, making small projects for people is how I started, I guess. And I went to art school.

I went to Plattsburgh State for, graphic well, I went to Plattsburgh State for a drawing concentration and print concentration, and I eventually changed to graphic design. I noticed that that was a more marketable degree when it moved in moving into the tech world and the technical world. And even if you were a drawing major or anything like that, you would want to be able to understand the technical aspects. So you wanted to do a digital art class or something like that. You're able to scan your work, work digitally, or anything along those lines.

It's, like, one of my first, like, realizations that moving from a physical art to a digital art was actually very useful and very marketable. And also, it, it's quite low cost to some degree. So I noticed that in those realms, I was able to get my art out into the world easier. I was able to get more freelance job while I was going through school, and I was able to do, like, graphic design logos to people as well. And then I, obviously left college.

I was very lucky. I actually had, been recruited from one of my graphic design classes to become the graphic designer for more of these. So it was, like, kind of a strike of luck for me, but at the same time, like, it's the connections that I made through college. And, it was actually one of my friends who I met at college through a painting class, and she had been working at a hiring program. So sometimes it is the connection, but it also obviously was where I was going, to school, where I was, like, spending my time, the things I was learning about, and it all was implemented directly to the job that I went on to do.

And I actually think that art degrees are a lot more useful than people went on in the first place. Because it's very often that an art degree is problem solving, and you're able to move further in other fields even if you're working in just purely the arts. Because, like, I've known people that have gone from their art degree and gone into therapy and, like, working, like, also in teaching and things along those lines. I think it's a big opening doorway to see the world with a bit different perspective. And I think that, like, art school really is one of the big ones for me.

And then just in general of always continuing your craft and learning more and being willing to be social and market yourself. I mean, social media is immensely, important just on the, opportunities that I've gotten and using social media properly through the digital, realms of art and finding communities in, you know, certain places that you wouldn't actually expect to find support. Like, I've found a lot of support on Instagram and threads and Reddit, and I've gotten commissions from, like, just posting my art on places like that. So I think that the world is very open to art. And as long as you're willing to put it out there and continue to pursue your craft, then that is gonna help.

So I guess I would say art degree, self promotion, and just, obviously, where I'm at my job now, I'm at a graphic design job, then it's great. But how I got there was mostly just, yeah, just putting in the time to learn my craft form. Oh, thank you. That was that was an awesome answer, James. And it's interesting too to I'm glad you gave the the perspective on the personal motivation and the education because I have a lot of kids, may maybe uniquely in the school that are considering college or trying to figure out if college is for them, and a lot of them are wondering about the, you know, the use of it in the modern world.

And I I do try to emphasize to them that I will actually say, just to emphasize that point especially, my art history classes probably have helped my understanding of my art and what my message is and my medium, and that has helped me further my ability to connect with people. It's even in graphic design and at my job, like, because I understand composition, because I looked at a lot of, like, you know, fine art, Monet's, whatever. Like, it, it actually does help you structure a lot of things that you'd be surprised with. And the history of art and the history and the knowledge of holding that history is very important as well. And I think that that has been something that has been speaking to me recently, and that I've been very thankful that I took the time to research and have a degree and actually pursue a fine arts degree in general.

Awesome. Well, I think you kinda hit on some of the other questions I wanna ask you, so we'll circle back to that. But, Keegan, if you wouldn't mind, same question about, for your path from, like, where my students are today to your current career, what were the work experiences and education that you found particularly useful? Well, starting from the beginning, I've always wanted to know how things work, how to do things. If something, was out there that I didn't understand, I wanted to take it apart and really understand how to make my own of that.

Started out in Crown Point Central School in a particular and, you know, so going from, Media Labs there to, high school I mean, to college. I went to a community college. I was not entirely certain that a art or a film degree would get me anywhere, but still, what else, would I do? I need to pursue something. So I figured, okay, I'll get into broadcast.

And I decided that broadcast television was not for me because I did not want to be part of the news. News to me felt more like a journalistic, expression, and I was more interested in the technical. I was more interested in the creation. I was more interested in essentially taking Oh, did you guys freeze? Oh.

No. No. I I had a my busy signal in my head. Sorry. It was just like I it just went on one second long enough for it.

I was like standing here. Shit. Like, I don't know if you heard me, like, test my mic. I was like, uh-oh. So, yeah, essentially, I went to a community college.

I moved from television to film. And in that field, I found out that everything is a practice and a trade. Whether you're doing lighting for a music video or doing lighting for a short film, you needed to have the music video lighting experience to work on the short film and vice versa.

You needed everything, compounded and built upon each other. I had this one class where it was the portfolio class, so the outgoing class where you put together footage of everything you worked on into a reel to market yourself.

And one of my classmates sent my reel with my permission to her boss, and they ended up hiring me for a company called All In Magazine, which, 2 months into working at that job, I got promoted to the technical director for the college poker tour, because we were, hosting the college poker tour, which was out there, collegiate level, sports, in in terms of card playing. And then the company went out of business, and I started doing more freelance work. It was essentially a house of cards due to, some Pun intended. Yeah. Yeah.

Essentially, because of the way, print media was trying to transform, and they were trying to make revenue online, but still have that print media, and it just wasn't working. I ended up working for a small production company of 2 other people where we produced medical videos. And this was, like you know, we went to a clinic that specialized in hemophilia care, and we produced weekly videos for them about, hey. If you're gonna if if you're gonna brush your teeth or floss and you have hemophilia, what are some precautions? You know?

And already with that topic, it's like, okay. There's a lot to explore here. And what I realized was, like, there is so much that, like, you start out with, okay, film, television, art. It's wonderful. If you look at what Hagel, talks about art, it it has to do with contextualizing and creating consumable information.

You can have a fact, but you need to actually put it package it in such a way that somebody else can get that. Here I am here lies in the art degree. Yeah. You can go find it. And so how do I draw a happy square versus an angry square?

And all of this is important because we are trying to package information to explain to people, hey. If you have a period with hemophilia, if you have, a scrape on your arm, if you have acne with hemophilia, like, what, you know, are you going to have to do? And then that turned into we started doing golf stuff, and then we got picked up by Fox Sports Arizona. So I started doing actually on the field camerawork, and I worked just about every position in any capacity there was. If I didn't understand how to do something, I would try to do that.

Audio and podcasting is probably one of the more recent, trades that I I got into in this field. Motion graphics and animation, I'm not much of a frame by frame animator, but, you know, 3 d and motion graphics. Well, Keegan, actually, if I could jump in, you're you're kinda kinda, like, teetowing right into my my next question. Oh, okay. If you if you don't mind.

Because I was like, wait. You both kinda jumped into it early, which is great, but I just wanted to get it out there. So, I I mean, again, this is great experience. I mean, I know you guys, but I I'm I I don't know. I'm not surprised.

I'm always so appreciative. You're such intelligent speakers about what you do. But I I so in terms of, you know, students, obviously, especially in media arts, careers and fields, there's really no fixed path of any sort. It's, you know, it's and that's been my struggle to figure out how to stage the program. But, Keegan, you were starting to get into this.

I was wondering if you think, you know, for students to kinda if this is this is essentially supposed to be their first kinda foot in the door where they either go on to a college or they go on to freelance, they go on to gig. What are some of the skills and abilities you think would be most valuable for students to be learning at this stage? Because you you just started going through a few that have worked for you. Yeah. But if you could relitigate a little bit to some degree, and then, James, I'm gonna throw it to you too.

I'm trying to get a pencil right now. No worries. Absolutely. One of the most important things you can do is study something that already exists and try to recreate it. So in terms of video, like, take a video from The Verge or Vox or Vice or any other YouTube channel that starts with the letter v apparently.

And you can see that the b roll that they use, you know, if they're doing a product review or they're talking about some kind of thing, there there will be low depth of fields, you know, blurry backgrounds, very easy to do in with DSLRs, with with aperture lenses. And then, you know, practice making those smooth moves, practice, everything that you see on screen. If you see some animations that that pop up on the screen, if you see some audio visualization of music or a voice in a podcast or a song breakdown, try to recreate what you like because then you will start to build the same skills that those people who made those videos developed. And so it's hard to design a singular, process for learning when it comes to multimedia because I don't know if you know about this about multimedia, but when it comes to media, it's multi. Because anyways, so if a student is passionate about podcast recording or even music production, go that route.

Whatever skill you don't cover, you'll pick up later. It's it's really important to make sure that you follow your passion, you follow your bliss. Because I started with lighting, and my whole thing was lighting design. And then I got into editing, of course. But as as a video editor, you can't just stop at video editing because there's video editors are a dime a dozen.

You need to have some kind of specialty skill on top of video editing, whether it's visual effects or color grading or motion graphics, because you need to be able to market yourself in an increased capacity. So I decided to focus on color, and that came in handy when I started working for Fox Sports because then I needed to color footage from 5 different cameras and make sure that we were using broadcast legal colors because we were going to upload our media packages to the distribution center in Texas to be syndicated on television all over the country. And that came from color. I got into camera when I needed to. I've been focusing more on photography now, and that's been helping my videography skills.

My videography skills have been helping my photography skills. Videography has helped me get better at writing scripts because I put myself in positions where there were needs to grow. So I could have, like, let's say a project has, like, 5 spokes to it. You know, there's some camera, there's some audio, there's some motion graphics, there's some editing. And if there's that 5th thing that I don't need that I don't know how to do, that's the thing that excites me is being able to practice and work on that new skill that I didn't know that I I didn't know that I'd be excited to do.

And so, like, I I mentioned being a skills may be excitement. Yeah. Yeah. Or having a positive viewpoint. You know?

Like Well, no. Yeah. And I mean, I even, like I can start. I can start. No.

No. Just just build off of that because, like, even what you're saying, Keegan, I I mean, like, like, the idea of this cross disciplinary education is is integral part of what's, you know, becoming a licensed teacher in Vermont. When I did my, licensing is this idea of, you know, how much skill that it's been proven time and time again that you enhance learning by, like, integrating it through other mediums. And Absolutely. What what the one of the the goals that we do here is, try in the programs to integrate to some degree English and math and social studies and science while we're also, you know, teaching digital media arts, which which can be challenging.

But, like, you know, if if we're already, like, mixing photography with writing with graphic design, it's it's an ideal. And, I mean, like, I got them got them going on the golden spiral ratio Fibonacci sequence the other day, and I was like, guess what? It's math. And they're like, oh, god darn. They're like It's all math.

Oh, yeah. Then Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, that's right. It always was.

Yeah. But I I I I will just say that, funny enough, coming from my point of view, I am almost I've almost worked backwards, like, because, coming from the point of view from film. Mhmm. I've become a big film fan through my pursuant my pursuit of art, history, and science. Like, because of those things, I have been much more apt to actually, like, enjoy a film, and just actually appreciate it for its angles and for like, the first time I was, like, learning about surrealism, I then started learning about Alfred Hitchcock.

Like, you know what I mean? Like, it's like Mhmm. I think they're all tied together immensely. And, like, same thing with literature. I some of the things I wrote down was read.

Like, read biographies. Read, read theory. Read philosophy. Read art theory. Read art history.

Read classic books. Anything that, like, comes from those periods so you can learn more about things that you may actually represent later on. Like, if you're reading a book from the 1800, it might give you a lot better opinion on the dialogue than watching a movie that's based on the 1800. Mhmm. So I think there's a lot of places there.

I think, finding like, one of the biggest skills I think anybody can have in this world that wants to be successful is finding a community. And I think that that doesn't seem like a skill, but being personable, being involved, wanting to be active and, involved in the community, actually participating, you know, putting the time and the effort to, like, actually get into it, you know, create connections that can further your life way down the line. I mean, there's many, many different ways to do that, and reading's one of them. But also social skills and and marketing skills just are always important as an artist. I know a lot of people in the art world are introverted, and we tend to be our own more tendencies as creative.

But remember that a lot of people in the art world are just as introverted as you. And so you were very, like, willing to communicate with them and built beautiful thing with them. So I I think that remembering that people are wanting to engage in your artwork, whether you might not find your niche at first or not, like, having that faith and that, like, actual, like, commitment is is very important. Important. It's willpower.

And I hate to be the person that will say that's a skill, but I I do believe that one of the most important things I learned in my first few years of college was that many people won't put in the effort and the time. And you have to have to do it, and you have to commit yourself to the craft. Because it's just like working a full time job, but it's working a full time job for what you love. So you have to put in the 8 hours every day to become a better creative, you know. And so I will say that willpower and commitment is important as well.

Like I said, watch film, practice, practice everything you can. Look at examples, find what inspires you. Like Degan said, practice your craft, whatever you like, like and continue it. Because from those neck like, from those skills, you'll find the skills further down the line that you need to find. If you like to draw, draw.

But also look at painting a little bit. Also, if you like to draw, look at still lifes. And if you look at abstract art, look at oh, vice versa. If you like still lifes, look at abstract art. If you like abstract art, look at still lifes.

See a little bit of the different things that you can look at. Obviously, get good at Adobe. You You I don't Go ahead. Go ahead. I don't wanna be much of a proponent for AI, but I will say, in certain terms, the tools are going to change the world a bit.

I don't wanna say go out there and learn how to do everything through AI because then I think that you're gonna be a very oversaturated market. You're not gonna have a unique piece of art because you're gonna be doing similar things to other people. But if you learn how to use it in terms of collage or research data or things on those lines that you could possibly use it as a absolute tool and bring it into your art, that could help your process. Like, I know people who are collage artists, and they take other people's photos and turn it into collage. So in certain terms, ethically, AI collage can be similar to that.

Not so much of just generating something. Who knows? It has its element. I'm not gonna shirk it. It is something that people should research, especially in this newer age.

Just in general, I'm not gonna try to hate on it too much. I do think that you should use your personal talent and your unique abilities way more. But I think that if it's possible, don't get left behind at all. I don't The possums. As a thing to say to do.

I would much rather you use your passion and create real things, but you know it. Yeah. I I wanna He can't wait to have a very opinion view on that. Yeah. I I wanna continue on.

Someone was trying to get into my, classroom, so you guys keep going. I I'm gonna pick up on technology when I come back. There are some ethical uses of AI my only point. There's some. Research them and figure it out.

Like, I call it welding, when you take several pictures and you put them in Photoshop and you're like, I'm gonna use the AI brush to weld these things together. Yeah. Recently, I've been working on a project where I've needed to remove logos from people's shirts. Yep. And, you know, you'll have, like, an Under Armour logo here, which would be a lot easier if this was a solid shirt.

It's not If it's a if it's a striped shirt It's a heatherd shirt, actually. I could see yours. Is it not? No idea who that was. I my apologies.

It's a lot of different things. I just Yes. I think that's called a heathered shirt when it has that rippling effect. I I also work in fashion. So but, yes, I I But, yeah, it's it it can be helpful for welding things together.

Yeah. One of the biggest uses I've used it for in my career is when I am using an image that does not fit the, the dimensions perfectly, and I'll use generative AI to expand the image so I can crop it. Oh. But it's already off of an image that somebody did. So, you know Well, this is a good Seems like that.

There's editable usage like you said. Like like Yeah. I I had a headshot of somebody, and I needed the headshot to just come down a little more. Yeah. And so I generated from here Exactly.

Here. Yeah. Things like that, I think there's a very it's useful. It's very good to know it. And I think that people should research it as much as they can so that they know when to implement it purposefully and ethically.

But that was one of the only tools I was gonna bring up that was controversial, I think. So Well, the next the next thing that actually is is that and I I'm really appreciative that you kinda keep serving up the perfect segues, James. It's like the 2nd or 3rd time you've done that is, or more technically because, of course, a lot of, you know, grant is applicable towards what we buy and supply with the school is specifically what tools, like technology, software, and gear are

advisable to have in our class at this time. So, for example, I mean, it it's good to know those those opinions on this. I I at the beginning of the year, I I did a my personally, I just did a carpe launch, no AI policy, but, you know, hearing from a professional graphic designer that it has implications is is good.

But Oh, welcome. What? Oh, it's a little bit. Just a little bit. Yeah.

Just a little bit. Yeah. I I honestly I agree with your opinion of no AI, especially for education. Yeah. So but Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Aside from so I I guess I'll give you, just a little heads up that, like, specifically graphic design, we have, the full Adobe suite for every student here. But are there any other, like, technology softwares? We have some drawing pads, but anything that you recommend particularly to have students kinda start to get practice on or begin on?

Then I'll throw to Keegan for the same question. Oh, me first? Yeah. Just because you you segue. I will say I I will say just in terms of, like, of software, Adobe is obviously great.

There's other things that you could use, but as a official program, I'm not really necessarily sure if you need to. If they're, like, in my career, in terms of, like, graphic design and, like, laying down, like, CAD cuts and stuff like that, then Corel Draw is great, but I don't think you necessarily would need that because Adobe Illustrator could pretty much do all that. Okay. I personally do my illustrations and animations. I do frame by frame animations and, just digital drawings and illustrations in Procreate on my iPad.

But, I think that I learned how to draw in Photoshop and do the similar frame by frame animation in Photoshop. So I believe you can pull off most of that with that as well. I know he can work in Blender, so he's gonna talk about that. I'm sure. Yeah.

I am software wise, I probably wouldn't have much input than having Adobe sleep, especially in the schools. I'm just trying to take it. Yeah. If you don't mind my asking then. I mean, some of my students do, you know, sometimes prefer to submit things on writing or draw.

Do you think even if, you know, students are seeking a graphic design career, there's benefits to sometimes using physical manipulatives, like, patient Absolutely. So I I use physical media constantly. A lot of my drawings, like, when I do time lapse of them, you sometimes just see something pop in, and it's because I drew it in another drawing. Like, I drew it on a physical drawing. Oh.

I'll take a picture of it, and then I'll just put it on a different layer on a different page. I'll just draw around that on my like, I'll create my drawing that I made physically. And then I'll pop it into one of the drawing. Like so there's absolutely an element for that. Knowing just how to scan an image and having your your drawings, you can literally make them come to life like that.

I mean yep. Go ahead. I just wanted to quickly interject here. There was this debate I was following on Reddit, and Reddit being, you know, a place where a lot of graphic designers, editors, VFX artists, you know, had have discussions about Yes. Not the objective, but the subjective part of this, the the, the nuts and bolts, if you will.

And so there was a debate in the graphic design subreddit about whether or not it was worth it to somebody asked, like, how do I make a ripped paper texture in Adobe Illustrator? And half half the people said, well Rip a piece of paper. Yeah. Rip a piece of paper and scan it in. Right.

And then other people were saying, like, no. No. No. You can totally do this procedurally. You just wanna generate several, different you know, you you start with your with your solid matte, and then you add some noise, and then you can add a little bit of warble with with the Musgrave.

You can you can add some, RGB noise. You can mute the RGB noise that isn't so if it's a blue piece of paper, you only have blue and green RGB noise. I do. Any. And it's and so, like yeah.

No. There's there's like, the answer is yes. The amount of effort that you put into what you're working on will be the determining factor. And so is it important to be able to know how to create construction paper procedurally in a piece of design software? Yeah.

Sure. You could also scan it in. And, either way, they are both help based. I've I've done I've done absolutely both, like, where I've made images that look like paper, and then I've also scanned in paper. So And then you can you can also take a procedurally generated, construction paper texture that you've created or even, you know, you know, brown paper bag texture.

And then you can scan in a ripped edge of paper and then use that as a mat to cut out the paper that you created. And so Yes. The the answer is yes. You need to know how to do it, and you're only going to learn how to do something if you have that need to do that and a practice to work on. For for instance, a lot of my students are like, can we just use templates for motion array in after effects and Premiere?

Well, it's like actually, just before I I hate to, you know, keep you guys off. It's just we have a hard out, and I wanna make sure I get to hear from everything from you guys. Oh, is it a hard out? Out? It's 7.

I I didn't think we would even get close. But, and I'm excited we're getting close, but I just wanna make sure I I real real quick. I just wanted to say one more thing really fast with Kia too. Yeah. I honestly think that there's not many people this is gonna sound actually, this may sound a little bit off the cuff.

I think that most people start traditionally no matter what. Mhmm. Most people start with crayons and Play Doh. I mean, like, realistically. No.

Most people start drawing with a pen and pencil and and paper, you know? I I think that there's a fundamental reason why that is. And bringing things from analog to digital happens in most medias of art. Usually, you start off doing things analog first. You start speaking before you start writing.

Before you start writing and typing, you you write by hand. Mhmm. There's wait there's some These are just different forms of media. Right. And learning to crawl before you walk.

Like, you you know what I mean? Like, I I think that, like but that does not mean that crawling is in terms of drawing digitally or physically is superior to one another. I think that there are definitely ways to learn. And I think the more that you know about physical media and physical drawing, the better you can implement those kind of practices to digital. So I I think, personally, as a printmaker and a drawer, like, it was especially freeing to get on digital and to have people to use those techniques.

That command z also helps. That's, that's a good idea. Then you feel more comfortable making taking risks, and then you can duplicate a file and then take line. I can make the same line. I can make the same line.

I can make the same line, and I can try it again. And it's And it can you can practice and iterate so much quicker and take safe chances. Yeah. Yes. Yes.

Without ruining your \$600 canvas. Yeah. Yeah. And then you can print it on the \$600 canvas. Imagine being Michelangelo, and you accidentally chip off just a little too much of the guy's nose, and you're like, alright.

New block of marble. 4 years old. Mike Colangelo is, but he's gonna have to buy a lot of marble. And if you're in something like Blender, then you're able to do exactly that, and then put the new inventory back on. James, perfect segue.

So, Keegan, if we can specifically hone in in the world of videography in terms of, specific gear, technology, or softwares that you think are beneficial for students just getting out pursuing potential careers or further higher education in this field. Is there anything you'd like to amend? I can tell you briefly what we have. We have the Adobe Suite. I'm gonna be looking at buying us new equipment, but at present, we have about 60 SLRs, 2 cinema cameras that are about 10, 14 years old.

Which what what are they? The Blackmagic ones? Bring you no. I have Blackmagic TV studio cameras. Oh, yeah.

And then Is there a dark room in the school? No. Unfortunately. I mean, light room. Yeah.

And then we have assorted, just some LED light panels. So we're we're a little light right now, but I'm curious, with that said, what what you would advise. Where is it? Where is it? Where is it?

Where is it? This is a nonmedium A 6 50 watt light. 6 50 watt light. Yeah. I actually replaced a bulb in it earlier.

I'll send you the specs, but, I really like using traditional lights over LEDs because LEDs can give you these hot spots that you're seeing right here. Mhmm. I mean, these are the those are fluorescents up there, but they get they can give you those hot spots a a lot easier. And I feel like the best way to, oh, oh, covered wagons. Oh, Sam, you need to do a covered wagon workshop.

So a covered wagon, I'll send you the specs. It's essentially a light that somebody builds themselves. You take, just a standard light bulb, and you take a plate that you screw it into, and that goes into a board and then you anyway, it's a little involved, but then you use chicken wire and diffusion. And so no. Sorry.

Let me go back here. So DSLRs are great. Blender. Blender. I would not recommend Maya or other 3 d pieces of software because one of my goals is to make sure that the students in my lab leave being able to easily acquire the tools that they learned to use at school.

And so Maya being \$2 a year for a software subscription is a it it is it it's it's excessive. Prohibitive, frankly. Yeah. Prohibitive. Students who want to do frame by frame animation have a lot of choices, whether it's Procreate Yeah.

Or Adobe Flash I forgot to or Blender. Like, if you own a iPad at home and you want to do frame by frame, get like, Procreate's fun. It's very fun to practice. Like, that's a good practice form. But, another thing to keep in mind is I try to practice the fundamentals of the tools and not the tools themselves because teaching you how to do video editing is very different from teaching someone how to use Adobe Premiere.

Because one of them is a tool and one of them is a practice. And so if you can get the, fundamentals out there, for for example, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, After Effects, Procreate, Blender, literally every piece of software out there uses the same fundamentals such as, blending modes. So you have multiply screen. Those opacity modes work the same in every program. If you can understand how to create a matte or a track matte in after effects, you'll understand how to do it in Premiere.

Albeit, you won't know where the buttons are. That's just learning the piece of software. But to be able to understand, okay. I can make a track map with this. I can take this white text, and I can make the white text now a sky that's that's, you know, city skyline with a black background.

Like, to understand how to do that in multiple different programs is paramount to being free from a specific tool because I don't ever want to train someone how to use a DeWalt, DeWalt, Impact driver. I want them to be able to use an Impact driver. Mhmm. With the whole tool set. Hey.

Yeah. One of them. And so you can do frame by frame animation in Blender. You can do frame by frame animation in Flash and Procreate. I think they can do Photoshop as well, can't you?

Yeah. Yeah. Photoshop has it too. Yeah. Yeah.

And so Yo. If you wanna draw like Walt Disney, like And so, like, the the other thing I I wanna like, talking about Blender, Blender has this practice that has paid off so well for them. What they do is they every year, they have, they they actually use grants. They get grants and donations to fund a short film, and every short film they create pushes the boundaries of what their software is capable of because every time the animators and the filmmakers working on that project have to go walk over to the, the developers and say, hey. This feature isn't very easy for us to use, or this feature doesn't exist at all.

You know? When when they released, that one that was 2 d frame by frame animated, That, you know, they made some leaps and bounds. And so to create need, or to have need and then to be able to problem solve is the way to synthesize new practices or or, make concrete practices that you've already had before. And so, yeah, it's it's the, oh, we're doing a video on on this one topic, a video essay on this topic. We already have in every video we have, the, the screenshot of the the the website, the news site popping on the screen.

How can we make this nicer? Do we put the background? Do we animate something in the background? Do we do, like, a construction paper thing and, like, have a pen and an arrow move with a little bit of drop shadow? I I got to a point where I was like, wait a minute.

What if I just used Blender for creating b roll that does not exist? So Blender and After Effects turned into a way for me to create b roll. So we had this thing. It was like the founding fathers, talking about the writing of the bill of rights, and I could show the picture on the screen. Or what I could do is I could hop into Blender.

I could pick the picture behind like, the painting behind a a a frame, put that frame on the wall, put 2 candlesticks on the wall to light the scene, and then I just have the camera move in a little bit. And we start talking about Washington. We move over here, and we start talking about, you know, them other guys. We move over there, and then we zoom back out. And so we just create places where we can practice or build or synthesize new new skills and practices.

Well, yeah, that that's I think that's that's both really good. So just the the last 9 minutes here, what I I'm just gonna ask you guys is give you a little bit of kind of the shape of how the program has gone so far. If you feel like what we've done or what we're going to do kind of seems logical in the career sphere, and then just end with, like, one really quick little question. So, the the first half of the year has kind of leaned a little bit more maybe towards Keegan's Warehouse in terms

of, started out with some film history, some basic fundamentals of blocking and staging using the original film. And as we've progressed forward, we've added sound, sound mixing, creation of sound through Foley and ADR, creating soundscapes, mixing in music, sound design theory, and recently been focusing on camera composition framing in the long kind of, like, elements of composition that look, James, you know, leading lines, negative space, multiple frames.

And now we're gonna be kinda more heading into, working with, you know, preproduction in terms of working with clients, with actors, with script and screenwriting. Specifically, our our programs are done by a metric of what IRCs, which are industry recognized credentials were offered. Now I've struggled a little bit because the only industry credentials that I can offer are basically certifications in individual Adobe programs, different types of creative portfolios, and web design. So what I have opted to do instead is because we can either offer 2 IRCs or 6 college credits. And I I think I said off the top that I'm gonna I'm gonna try to offer my students 6 college credits, and we're gonna do digital filmmaking as a college course and, intro to creative cloud in the spring.

So I will say just in my integration of graphic design, James has thus far been mostly relegated to the design, like I said, composition fundamentals encourage Yeah. Did you do color? What's that? Did you do color at all? We've done a little bit of color theory with lighting.

Mostly, I, we we've, this last week, been doing high and low contrast in relation to light. So I was I I was just thinking of color when you were saying all that. I can, pull up an example while we're talking. I think I also just think that competition, obviously, is huge. I don't know if you've, like, done done, like, the rule of thirds.

Obviously, for. Yep. Yep. Obviously, tons of that. Leading lines, composition, framing.

Yeah. So, yeah. And a few of my students are are pretty adept at that. But, again, I'm just curious. Again, for me, it's trying to balance this original digital film aspect with all of these different requirements.

And I was just curious if that sounded like a shape that would help set students up for success or if there's anything you would add or suggest. I think that sounds good to me. I think that if you wanted to blend it more to some degree Mhmm. It's like do you wanna like, do you want, like, a suggestion of, like, something you could ask? Yeah.

Suggestions would be amazing. Yeah. So imagine if they designed something, to be on a set. What do you it designed Like, a sign for a set of shots. What'd you say?

Like a like a prop? Yeah. Anything. Like, let's say it just needed to be, like, a a poster in the background of their set. Okay.

That's a bit of self true to the scene or period. Right? Yeah. Yep. I mean, that's just that's a graphic design project.

But it also could be, you know, a mixture of film media in general. I mean, because at some point in time yeah. Like a prop. Like, building a prop or something of that degree. Oh, that'd be great.

Yeah. Because that would create that would that would bond the physical in the film. I don't know. That was just a suggestion. No.

No. I mean, that that's the kind of suggestion that we we want. You you know So, like, filters? I don't know. Have you have you talked about filtering at all?

In in what way? Like, the shining. Like, putting a blue filter on your whole panel. Oh, oh, okay. Oh, did they do that?

I I Yeah. I think I haven't gotten to that yet just because I know that's something that's kind of frowned upon in film, to a degree. But, like We we do it with light. Important. Just That also could set, like, tone, mood, color.

Yeah. You know? Also, I I just personally like, when it comes to me with visual art and film, I think it is important to convey like, to think of the emotion. I know, like, I know composition can invoke motion, but, like, once you mix color and composition and ambiance of music or anything like that, like, that could all be combined in. You know?

Yeah. That that's great. That's a lot, obviously. No. It's perfect.

And I I think we'll probably, throw it to Keegan and then and then probably put the button on it there. So if, Keegan, you wanna add thoughts Yeah. Ideas? So it looks like you've got 3 credits of intro to CC and 3 credits of intro to digital filmmaking. He knows so often.

Yeah. And I and ideally, again, we're gonna be getting those IRCs, at least one Adobe certification in addition to the intro, and one creative portfolio of their choice. Yeah. I I think that the intro to Creative Cloud could probably be better as a intro to digital art Yeah. Just to separate the, necessity of it.

But regardless, that that's not my main point. What I found is after effects is kind of a border region. Mhmm. So if you were to imagine after effects as a mountain, you're either going to be creating animated motion graphics and digital art with after effects on, like, this side of the mountain, or you're gonna be doing green screen explosions compositing on this side of the mountain. And so I would say that after like, anything that you would create for a looping animation or a GIF or, like, any other form of digital art would be best practiced in, like, anything on that side of after effects would be great for digital art, and then anything on the green screen side would be good for filmmaking.

Because after effects has this bad rap for being too hard to learn, and that's mostly because there is too much you can do with the software. Much like Blender, There is too much you can do with the software to to actually, like, start from the beginning. So Mhmm. For art, you're gonna be doing things in Photoshop and after effects. For filmmaking, you're gonna be doing things in after effects and Premiere is the way I see that going.

Well, I can absolutely yeah. Those are just the My intro my introduction to all this wasn't a digital art class. And I did everything from Photoshop to Illustrator to Adobe in design and from photography to doing color palettes for branding things from a photo, like, so on and Cast the absolute widest net you can when it comes to digital art. And you will find your students will self sort themselves into which passions that they want to follow. That's exactly what happened to my class.

If you've got an animation student, they're they're gonna be focusing on animation now. They're gonna get into videography later. If you've got a videography student, they're gonna be focusing on videography now, and then they're gonna be doing motion graphics later. And so whatever their passion is, follow that first, casting that wide net, and they will self sort later to pick up places. And you can actually craft projects that can use every one of these programs.

Mhmm. You could be, like, create a moving image that conveys this. And just that alone, you can do it digitally through Photoshop, like you said, through an animation, or you can do it through film. A fictional pizza place. Yep.

Fictional pizza place is a great one. Exactly. Or even go to a real pizza place, and you'll need the, you'll need the digital filmmakers to go and record it and to, you know, get that b roll. And then you'll need, digital artists to create the motion graphics and the logo for the pizza place. Yeah.

And something that we fall into too much where I work is, we start too practical. We start too (*expletive*) practical. Oh, sorry. So, anyway, we start way too practically, and we really need to, start with students practicing and creating things that they want to create and not going, hey. Let's make a video about the college program.

And it's like, no. No. No. No. Right.

Make it fun. Like, there's like, the the students will learn better if they're doing a project about zombies or superheroes. That he had mentioned too is do do a pizza place. Like, one of the things when I first came here to PSA, they were like, go downtown and look at the local shops and decide Yep. On that you would like to rebrand.

So it if you can do so many things like that, and it becomes very involved. And especially when you, like, make pro like you said, projects more entertaining, more something that you wanna do. It's like, yeah. Go find, like, a skate brand that you like. I'm a skateboarder, so I'm gonna instantly think about something like that.

But, like like, you know, like, honestly, even to this point with where kids are now, it's like find the influencer that you like and rebrand their influencing space, their Twitch stream. Like, you know what I mean? Like, there's a Twitch logo. Like, there's also, like I don't know. Like, what kind of lighting would you do if you were on this podcast?

Like, I don't know. Like, there's so many things that you could look at nowadays where the media is there for sure. Oh, I didn't want you to stop talking. That that was a really nice point there, James. I'm sorry, Keegan.

I was just trying to say the type the typing sound was very loud in my mic. Sorry about that. No. No. You're okay because I wanna make sure we caught James.

Yeah. No. I I I was just saying there's so many examples of, you know, just in different maze ways to make people involved. And I I'm sure that, just like the the new digital world, there's, like, honestly, most of what we're seeing is created by people like you guys. Like, the majority of stuff I see when I go on, like, Instagram reels and I see we love you, which is one of my favorite pages, and and they have an absolutely dutifully, cinematically crafted piece.

Yeah. They might have some capital put behind it, I'm sure. But you can do that on your iPhone 16 now, and you can activate people. You can create such a powerful message. And the the the simple projects that you can use now that wouldn't even have thought about being, like, film projects in the past, I think are a mess.

I think you can really implement it and you can even take, like, oh, I saw this funny reel. Guys, try to make something backwards from this. Like, you know, like, anything. Like, there's so much you can do. Well, those are all awesome.

Yeah. I I mean yeah. Thank You can recreate Who Framed Roger Rabbit these days with an iPhone and creative cloud on a computer. Yeah. Who who AI Roger Rabbit.

Exactly. Recreating one scene from who who framed Roger Rabbit with digital and film would be amazing. Because we no longer have big pieces of machinery that we have to draw and paint, literally paint on top of clear cell sheets. You can actually just do that in the computer and going back to digital art as you can safely experiment and try new things with that undo button. Yeah.

Well, guys, that's that that's our that's our time there. I just wanted to say, thank you so much. I I think I said it briefly, but, again, it's a real pleasure to hear, people who are so passionate and able to speak so intelligently about what they do. I I wish we could have had the the whole board here together at once, but, obviously, thank you too so much because it was so beneficial just to have 2 people in the room talking at the same time. If you wanna hang around after I hit stop record, I'll just screen share one thing really quick, and maybe just I can turn the room around.

But, thank you guys so much for being here. Yeah. Thank you. Happy to be here.

So I'm kinda doing it low fi. So I've just got a recording on my end because what we do is, we do an audio recording, then we provide a transcript as part of our grant application. I apologize if I hit on things that you already know. You're the only, info, I think, who've done this before. So I my spiel is no?

I've never done this before. Oh, really? Oh, okay. No. That's who maybe I'm a little turned around then.

Because, when I initially was reaching out, I think. Okay. Well, either way, I got my facts all mixed up, but, I I it was Friday. I had to try to present, something to my staff meeting there, and I was like, these are and, like, I just gave up. And I was like, here's what it is.

I got I'm out of words. So, but in the, in the idea of time and obviously letting you go back to to getting better, I'll try to provide a little bit of a more truncated version of this for you. But if you wouldn't mind, just since this is, going on some, you know, official grant work, would you mind letting me know, who you are, what your current role is, and kinda what that entails in terms of, duties and skills? Sure. So my name is Wendy Mays.

I'm the executive director of the Vermont Association of Broadcasters. We are the nonprofit trade association that unites, supports, celebrates, and advocates for all over the air television and radio broadcasters operating around the entire state of Vermont. I've been in this position for about 5 years. And, so whereas I'm not the person who's doing the hiring, I'm the person who's going and recruiting for our stations. One of the things that became quite apparent it was actually apparent before COVID, but but became more apparent after COVID was, that our industry has always relied upon, we've always been very passive when it comes to recruiting the next generation of broadcasters, relying mainly on the appeal of our industry, both radio and television, for people to want to naturally flock to us.

And so stations have always, in the past, received all sorts of demo tapes, resumes, you know, whatever the case may be, and has always had an ample pool from which to to pick, you know, new hires. And, much like every other industry in the country, broadcasters are not immune to the, the the workforce recruitment shortage. So, the Vermont Association of Broadcasters has become a very active organization when it comes to recruiting the next generation of broadcasters. So about, about a year and a half ago, I started reaching out to the Career Lizzie And, since then, I have just been open to, as the Vermont Association of Broadcasters, again, representing my entire industry. And by the way, there are over 100 radio and television stations operating around the entire state.

So there's there's quite a few, both commercial and noncommercial. I represent Vermont Public, and I also represent all of the commercial television and radio stations, and then I also represent some of the community and, college radio stations. So, we are so so the conversation that I had with Lance, and that I extend to you is that I I really wanna have a relationship. I, I would love for

the VAB to, be able to do anything that you feel is appropriate that we can do to, nurture any sort of love of audio visual, storytelling. And, and part of that is educating students on the broadcast career paths that are available because, you know, this is the 1st generation that hasn't necessarily grown up watching television or listening to the radio.

And so they might not be aware of the the multi faceted career paths that are available. In, for television in project in particular, anything from you know, you don't have to necessarily be in front of a camera. To be on television, you can't there are so many jobs available behind the camera. And that's what we want to make sure that people understand both in operations as a a news editor or an assignment editor or a producer or a news dress newscast director or whether it's, you know, being in creative services and being a commercial producer or a promo producer. So there's all sorts of career paths.

And so, I volunteered to Lance, and again, I extend the invitation to you to, you know, whatever that looks like. If it's me bringing in speakers, into your classroom, If it's, you all coming up to do a station visit, and getting a hands on experience at a station. If it's, you know, us identifying a student who really has passion and potential, who might fit be a good fit for a job shadow experience, or even along the lines of maybe some summer internships. So the possibilities are endless, and it's just a matter of finding the right fit and finding the right students and whatever is appropriate at that time. Well, that's that's impact that's amazing because really, like, that's so much like what I wanted to do with students in terms of visits.

We have co op eligible students for the whole ideas, placing them for for shadows and summer internships. And Mhmm. While they offer that you, you know, do that for us is is impeccable. So I absolutely like to work together, have you guys down, have you Because I've I've, you know, it's been kind of wild with the 1st year here. And I've been trying to foster some community connections, but it has been, you know, kinda hard to get people on in the hook, generally who might be willing to invest and coordinate with us as a program.

So that's absolute like, I guess, it's almost the thing that there's so many possibilities you just said. Like, I don't even know what I'm here to start. I know it's a little inconvenient. Right? Yeah.

Because that all that all sounds great. So I'd, I'd say first and foremost, maybe if you could come some time to talk to these opportunities to the students. Mhmm. Because we certainly have a a mixed interest group this year. I I think next year will be a little different, but, like, this year, there's you know, it's hard to tell exactly what's gonna be passionate about.

We did, we did do a a broadcast news demo at VSU Castleton last week as with the whole news prompters and camera switching. And one student was like, I think I could do this. And so, like, he's my first he's my first thought. I don't know who I could just send to you. But, that would be, yeah, that would be outstanding, I I think, just to open up all these opportunities.

Because, at the end of the day, like, the way I see my role and and especially, like, the purpose of having these, committee meetings that we're on right now is trying to make sure the the

programs provide the most opportunity possible, but also giving students access to the connections and resources to meaningfully succeed in these careers either post grad or post second, you know, higher education. So it would be exceptional to do that. But if I may, there's a few just kinda more, like, technical specific questions specifically regarded to the the grant that we apply for through these advisory meetings. And while I've, adjusted them slightly, one of the main questions that I like to ask are for students who are potentially seeking to go into the world of broadcast specifically in Vermont. What, skills or abilities do you think is most important to be learning at this introductory stage that then can be expanded upon or used as a basis going forward into the greater career sphere?

That's such a great question. Oh, thank you. That's very nice. And so I'm trying to okay. So are Take your time, please.

I I appreciate you being here. So no no rush. Yeah. Are you are you looking for an answer that is specifically related to broadcasting, or are you looking for, like is it more like what employers look for? I'm looking for specifically broadcasting and and more actually, specifically, your your opinion on this be because, you know, reaching out to you guys directly is because you are, you know, skilled professionals with a lot to say and a lot to offer.

So I am curious what you, even if it's subjective, would would say to that point. Yeah. I mean, so, you know, obviously, having some sort of working knowledge of the of the of the equipment and the software, that's used, the only problem with that and I I will look at I will try to get an answer for you for this, but so this the different stations use different equipment. So, like, for example, I think, oh my gosh. What's it called?

OBS? And that's that I'm it's I've been I've been on this side of things for 5 years now, so I'm not as familiar with the tools that they're using. But I I know, like, for example, a lot of radio stations are using Adobe Audition. Alright. So, like, having just a so from the radio point of perspective, like, having a working knowledge of how Adobe Audition functions and and how to use it would be would be key for an entry level position.

And for the television stations, I will get back to you. I I I know they use specific pro software programs, and, you know, I can I can find out what kind of cameras they use, and I'm just sorry that I'm not I'm not as up to speed on the television side of of the software? And that's okay because that that was actually my follow-up question was specifically related to, in the you know, like, broadcasting software's gear and technology that we would be, a boon to, you know, introduce students to already. So that that kinda hits a nice segue into the next one. I I will say, I guess, just briefly what we do have just to to get your opinion on it if you think any of this is, sufficiently preparatory.

We do have the full Adobe suite for students. We do a lot of premiere at present. My hope is to do more of the Creative Cloud including audition, especially throughout the spring and some, you know, after effects and a little bit of Photoshop and in design, in design, illustrator. I had I

had to I had to draw to think of it. And then the the other things we're doing are more kind of related.

And and I I do think perhaps, so we lean too much into the not to not lean too much. But so far, what I'm doing is a lot more, you know, filmmaking based in terms of production. And I you know, just because that's where my my background comes from. And I wanna make sure we integrate more broadcast, which would be the great part with partnering you guys to the extent that you mentioned earlier. Because so far, we've done things like principles of, you know, blocking and staging actors, you know, people and props, doing a little bit of, you know, lighting temperature design, composition and framing, audio, soundscape, ADR Foley, and then we're gonna get into the preproduction planning aspect of things.

But, obviously, you know, the the idea of broadcast, especially live and how to, you know, package for different markets, my friend does that down in Arizona. He's, like, having to redo the color profile for broadcast in the Texas market. And even I'm like, I couldn't tell you how to do that. So, was there I mean, aside from the skills of, you know, you know, integrating these programs, specifically software programs into our teaching, What other in terms of, like I was gonna say lessons, but that's like a teacher thing to ask. What lessons should I be teaching?

What are in your ways kinda like the the soft skills in terms of less of, like, a specific program that you think are advantageous for people looking to enter the world of broadcast to know at this stage? I I I have always found that the people who are assertive are the people who are, finding jobs easily. You know? I just I think being assertive is it's kind of an all encompassing word to show that you're confident Mhmm. That you feel like you have a grasp on what's going on around you, that you're not afraid to just jump right in and and and be willing to try something new, that you kinda take the bull by the horns and are are ready to, like, just get going and share your ideas.

Like, to me, those are all things that that fall under the category of being assertive. And all of those things, I think, are is a trait that makes someone very employable. Oh, that that's great actually because, kind of the in this question of, like, the more interpersonal skills, we've gotten a good breadth of, like, you know, collaboration and, like, you know, 1 on 1, but also the this idea of being confident in your vision. That's that's a good thing for, I think, students to hear and to to practice. So I I appreciate that perspective.

And and you and it may be the same question, probably the same answer. But if not assertiveness, what would you say has been one thing in your career that you found has helped you kind of succeed and kinda get you to where you want to be at least professionally? If it's assertiveness, it's okay. I just And that's actually exactly what it is. Yeah.

Sorry. I just I had that problem once where they were like, it's the thing I already said. And I was like, I'm gonna try it again anyway. But So if I go back and if I need to do an a different answer for the for the the other question, I think the thing that I forgot to mention that I think is so super important is, you know, the ability to meet a deadline. Oh.

You know? In our industry, everything we do is deadline based. You know, we're we're 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. We're we're producing content for broadcast. And, you know, there there's no such thing as, oh, I was, you know, I was just not feeling it today.

I'll I'll try to get that done tomorrow. No. It's it's it's all about meeting deadlines. Right. That can be a a challenge, I for for some students.

I found, you know, the idea of of an influx of you know, the a lack of natural inflexibility in some ways. So Right. It's a it's a hard skill to cultivate in schools, but I I think those who are passionate about it be willing to to put in the effort to make it possible. So Yeah. That's very helpful to that's a very helpful skill to add.

And I guess, generally, just to roll it back just because, again, the idea is for prepping students before they go out. And once again, in terms of your, you know, speaking to your experience of or you're you're in a unique situation where you work with coordinating many people in this industry, what education experience or work professional experience has kinda helped you get to your current point or, like, a full time broadcaster? Like, do they traditionally seek further higher education in the field, or is it just about getting in there on the ground or some mix of both? I would say a mix of both. Okay.

I think I think the general the general philosophy is we can teach we can teach someone how to use a piece of software, we can teach someone how to piece use a piece of hardware, but you can't teach instinct and you can't teach passion, so that's really what they're looking for more than anything else is instinct and passion Mhmm. And potential. So I think that, you know, secondary education is it's not as critical as it is in some other industries. I think, having a good eye or a good ear, is is more important. So I think I think experience is just as important as secondary education when it comes to broadcasting.

Okay. Well, that's good to know. Because what I've been struggling with is how much to balance, you know, a rigorous lesson of technical education of, like, pure concept of, like, high contrast or low contrast lighting with, you know, direct instruction versus how much value is there and just kinda letting them loose on a project and seeing how it goes. You know? Yeah.

I mean, yeah. I can see how that you would struggle with that because it is kind of 2 schools of thought. But I think, you know, in the end, you know, to prepare them for real you know, getting out there into the real world and and being employable. I just think that the more content that they can produce and then have it be critiqued, so that they can learn from, you know, things that they could do differently, to improve, I think that that is that is key because, you know, to graduate from your program with, you know, having a demo reel ready to go is gonna give them a leg up. So I just that's my opinion.

Well, I'm actually writing that down because I I think that's a great idea. Yeah. Because, I have talked briefly about you know, we we the idea is doing some form of portfolio of refined work

come the spring because it is my intent to at least offer, 6 college credits to the kids through CCV. So they're coming in at least of a little bit of higher education just through doing the program. Yeah.

But that that idea of, you know, create, create, create was kind of the methodology that got me where I was. And I, again, I as I kind of because we just wrapped our Q1, maybe rethink the structure a little bit. It's it's much appreciated to hear that affirmation. That's like, you know, maybe we don't have to be rigorous on sheets and readings every single day. So yeah.

But Well, I don't I guess it depends on, you know, how a student learns. You know? Yeah. I mean, I'm gonna have to learn by doing. Yeah.

So it's it's a mix. When it comes to reading, I have to read a page 3 times before I can comprehend it. But if I but if it's trial by fire and I get thrown into a situation and I just have to figure it out, I figure it out pretty darn quickly. Yeah. Alright.

Well, those are, my main questions there. I I just would open if there's anything else you think would be valuable for us to consider as we're planning our programming for the future and how is, you know, we submit, you know, for this grant and hopefully keep the program going. It's totally okay if not, but just kind of a blanket opening for a closing statement if you had any ideas. Just that I think it would be really helpful if I only because you you seem like you are somewhat new to your position there. So I think I just started in, July.

Yeah. So I think that because I give a perspective that's more of, like, the 30,000 foot view. I think what I would love to do is introduce you to at I'll pick, like, a a radio operations director, and I'll pick a TV operations director, and have you have this kind of a similar Yeah. Albeit, albeit, truncated conversation so that you can really get from them who are actually doing the hiring. Mhmm.

You know, because I can give 30,000 foot view picture Yeah. But I can't give specific details. And I think that's important for you to have. And and I agree. And I really, that's been something I've been wanting to cultivate.

I just had a struggle to do it from my limited, you know, the film makes fear sometimes very freelance. So just the the offering of those would would be outstanding, and I know some students would really adore to actually see the tangible career paths because it is an idea of a career education. So seeing people in those realms would be super exciting. Because I got one musician. Like I said, I got one broadcaster.

So Yeah. Anyway okay. Well, let's definitely, keep in touch about that. I will let you go for now. I appreciate you making this work so we can talk together.

And, I can't thank you enough for those offers too. That's that's incredibly exciting partnership you've proposed. And if there's anything I can do in exchange, especially in regards to our program to help support your guys' mission, please let me know. Okay. Alright.

Thank you so much. Soon. Have a good one, Wendy. You too. Bye bye.