

Dominican Students Produce Live Baseball TV Broadcast

These students have been handed expensive equipment, expert instruction and a real-life challenge to produce a live television broadcast of a professional baseball game five times this summer. It is an engaged-learning experience that offers on-the-job training with little margin for error.

“We have the infrastructure in place so Dominican students get a chance to work in a live TV environment, which is a really hard thing to get into. We’re talking real TV. We’re not just streaming to the web,” said Scott Calhoun, an adjunct instructor in Dominican's Department of Communications and Media Studies who is also production coordinator at Community Media Center of Marin (CMCM). “Getting your work seen by anybody in this business is the impossible dream. It’s not an impossible dream for these students. It’s a reality. They are already broadcasting county-wide.”

The nine-week training program has caught the fancy of Dominican students as they are guided into pressure-packed roles right off the bat.

“No matter who I told about this, regardless of their age or what school they go to, they are all in awe,” says Janet McCarroll, a Dominican junior majoring in communications . “I feel very special. It definitely gives me bragging rights with other students.”

The Dominican Sports Broadcast Summer Camp is a collaboration between the University’s Communications and Media Studies Department, CMCM and the San Rafael Pacifics independent minor league baseball team. Students in the camp have a six-camera operation at Albert Park and alternate roles as director, technical director, cameramen, sound mixer and C.G., Character Generator. Working in tight quarters from the first base dugout beneath the stands and behind the Pacifics’ bench and VIP seating section, the students also learn operate remote cameras located on the top of the grandstand above home plate and above the centerfield fence.

“What’s unique about this is it’s a combination of university and high school kids and they are doing everything,” says Michael Eisenmenger, Executive Director of CMCM’s public cable TV network. “It’s a nice set up. It’s hands-on across the board. It’s such a great opportunity.”

The students produced the first of five live telecasts on June 11, the 2013 home opener for the Pacifics, played in front of a capacity crowd. The next day, the students critiqued their debut effort in CMCM’s studio screening rooms.

“Since it was live TV, they had not really been able to picture what they were creating while they were creating it,” Calhoun says. “Watching the recording after the fact is a great way to connect the dots. As far as how well the students are doing, they have all exceeded my expectations so far.”

The students feel as if they are receiving the maximum benefits of such an experience.

“This is really cool,” says Nadja Green, a junior at Dominican who has hosted her own radio show on [Penguin Radio](#) on the University campus. “The communications department at

Dominican always sets up really neat things for us. I don't know how Dominican does it, but it's really exciting."

Calhoun and CMCM also have assisted Dominican students in producing television broadcasts of Penguins men's and women's basketball games. However, those telecasts were taped-delayed on CMCM.

"I can't imagine there are many, if any, colleges in this country who offer an opportunity to their students to have such a unique hands-on experience to produce a live telecast of a professional baseball game so this was a no-brainer," says Brad Van Alstyne, head of the Dominican's Department of Communications and Media Studies. "As a department chair, you dream of having and creating opportunities like this for your students."

Van Alstyne last year worked with Brian Clark, one of the Pacifics' owners at the time, and team president and general manager Mike Shapiro to form a partnership that allowed Dominican students to contribute play-by-play and commentary to Pacifics home radio broadcasts. This year Shapiro, a former front office executive with the San Francisco Giants and Washington Nationals, switched the students' experience to live television.

"This is awesome," says Sam Vella, a communications major and co-captain of [Dominican's men's soccer team](#), who operated scoreboard graphics on the live telecast of the Pacifics' home game on June 27. "We are so lucky."

Being actively involved in a live television broadcast at such a young age is both thrilling and alluring.

"This is my idea of communications. Getting out, working with people, talking with people. This is what I wanted," McCarroll says. "I want to be out doing something that means something to me that I can potentially use in the real world. This is meaningful to me. It makes me feel important, like I'm headed in the direction to do something really special with my life."

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH LIVE BROADCAST OF JULY 25 GAME LED BY DOMINICAN STUDENT ANNOUNCER HUNTER HORENSTEIN](#)

July, 2, 2013