

OVERVIEW

The Dorsey Film Program at Susan Miller Dorsey High School in Los Angeles, was launched in 2015 to provide learners with the rigorous and integrated academic and technical coursework required for a career in the media and entertainment industry.

The three-year program of study courses include investigative video production, audio/visual fundamentals, storytelling, web series/television script writing and journalism. Learners gain real-world skills in digital videography, sound recording and image and sound editing as they develop live and recorded videos. Learners can also earn early college credit for both core academic courses and video production courses through an articulation agreement with West Los Angeles College.

Student Demographics (120)	Percentage
Male	51%
Female	49%
Low Income	89%
Minority	100%

OPENING DOORS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS WITH TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION

The comprehensive high school campus serves an ethnically diverse population of 53 percent African-American and 45 percent Hispanic learners. The school also serves special populations with 78 percent low-income, 3 percent homeless and 4 percent foster youths. The film program wants to ensure that when youths age-out of the foster system they are equipped to perform a wide variety of tasks needed to compete for the technical positions in the industry that are most likely to provide living wages.

To ensure that the program of study is meeting industry demand, a new program is being developed to train learners to qualify for high-demand below-the-line jobs in the areas of grip, set design, lighting and construction to give learners the ability to work

behind the scenes on Hollywood production sites. The Pre-Apprentice Union Program will include a two-year curriculum starting with grip and rigging and ending with lighting and construction. An articulation agreement with West Los Angeles College will be established as well as a partnership with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees union, removing the barrier of access to union membership for learners.

Upon completion of the program, learners will be able to build and take down sets, read blueprints, operate stage lighting and live sound systems/acoustics and more.

Learners will gain the skills needed for an industry that has a thriving creative economy with 1.6 million jobs available in entertainment alone.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNERS GAIN FILM SKILLS IN THE SUMMER



In partnership with the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), middle school learners can begin gaining hands-on video production experience by participating in the Dorsey Summer Film Academy. This three-week summer program teaches youths how to produce their own short films while getting them acclimated to the high school campus.

This bridge program is meant to ensure that the community has access to art enrichment programs. Learners who participate will qualify for a full scholarship at CalArts upon admission.

Dorsey also has an articulation agreement with Audubon Middle School to allow students from the summer bridge program to seamlessly transition into the high school film program of study.

A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD



The future is looking bright for the Dorsey Film Program as it continues to grow and expand its course offerings to include animation. In addition, the current script-writing course is working toward counting as an English credit upon completion.

The Dorsey Film Program also includes learning the business side of the industry. To assist with this, a new creative partnership with a global advertising agency, KASTNER, will provide mentoring within the industry and new learning opportunities for students.

Lastly, a new facility is being designed to ensure that learners are working with state-of-the-art equipment.

“Our program does really well working with students who have learning disabilities, are autistic, or aren’t engaged on campus and have been written off. I think by the nature of the arts we are able to reach them in a way that the other classes aren’t.” — Robyn Charles, Program Director, Dorsey High School Digital Film & Theatre Arts

Success by the Numbers



100%

Graduated High School



40%

Enrolled in Postsecondary Education



80%

Earned Postsecondary Credit



43%

Entered the Workplace and/or Military

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