



Tarrytown-SleepyHollowPatch

SCHOOLS

Lights, Camera, Action!

The SH Digital News team won Best News Magazine from Reel Teens for the second consecutive year.

By **Sarah Studley** October 30, 2010
Audio engineer, production editor and lighting director aren't titles typical high school students hold, but those in Tom Mormile's first period *Digital News* class are anything but average.

"It's the best class ever," said Richie Doyle, a senior who works on the creative side, writing copy and serving as part of the on-camera talent.

"Everything we've got going on now is great; it's hard to believe how much technology we have here."

Doyle and his [Sleepy Hollow High School \(/listings/sleepy-hollow-high-school\)](#) peers enthusiastically check microphones and time images to match teleprompter text on cue as they film this week's Digital News update in the high school's high tech control room and brand new filming studio.

"We still have some lighting issues," said Mormile between takes of a segment highlighting the cross country team's recent efforts, which takes a friendly jab at the team's well-liked coach, Paul Gersfeld.

Mormile has been heading up the school's annual Digital Yearbook product since 2001, which features clips from school events like the annual Talent Show, Spirit Week, sporting events and plenty of digital memories for seniors to revisit after graduation.

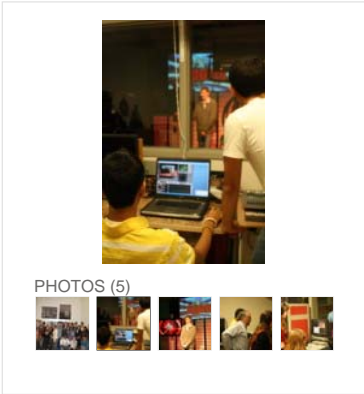
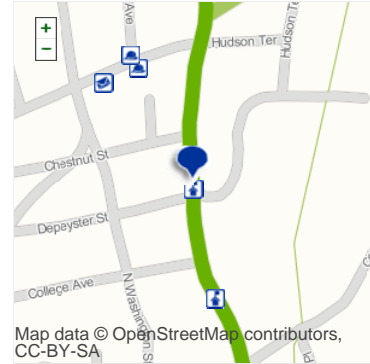
In 2007, Mormile and his students launched the first Digital News report, and in 2009, the team began airing it every Friday at the end of third period. Yesterday marked the first weekly report for the 2010–2011 school year.

"There's no one in this school who doesn't look forward to it," said Doyle.

The 10-minute or so treat sums up the week, highlighting anything significant that happened and reminding students what the next week holds.

"It's a way to immortalize what's going on in the school," said Ishmael Mejia, who serves as the team's technical director.

Mormile said he tends to recruit students for the Digital News classes, as it's helpful for them to have some experience relevant to working in the highly digital environment beforehand. The first weeks of this school year have involved assigning roles, organizing broadcast content and teaching the students how to use the relevant software and equipment.



"Mormile is unbelievable," said Doyle. "He works harder than anyone in this building."

Mejia, a junior, said he comes from a very technically-inclined family and handles everything from lighting to software and the cameras.

"It's in my blood," he said.

Added Doyle, jokingly, "He makes me look good."

Doyle and Mejia stressed the team aspect of their product, as well as Mormile's strong leadership, insisting every last person is vital in bringing the final products to fruition, and they have the awards to prove it.

The team recently won the [Reel Teens](http://www.reelteens.org) Best News Magazine award for the second consecutive year, which is unprecedented for the organization, beating out more than 600 national and international competitors. They also earned an Adobe Site-of-the-Day Award in 2007 and last year, former student Alex Berger received an MSG Varsity award and \$5,000 grant for the team for his short film *Our Legend*.

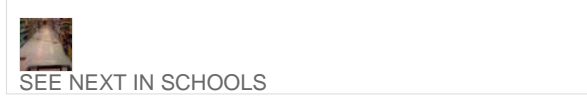
The digital news products are also shown on local television [all day long](http://www.sleepyhollowhits.com/TV77.html) (Cablevision channel 77, Fios channel 42), as well as posted on www.sleepyhollowhits.com.

The group is thrilled to continue producing content as the year goes on and Doyle is looking forward to the launch of his own show soon. He will be interviewing students and teachers about school happenings in a more relaxed way than the weekly news report.

"We will get to be more creative," he explained.

Mormile doesn't foresee the overflow of talent and enthusiasm slowing down anytime soon.

"Kids can really tell a story," said Mormile. "I'm proud of the way they worked as a team."



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