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EDUCATION

YHS programs range from engine technology to welding

By Cathie Campbell - Special to the Sierra Star

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Students in their junior or senior years at Yosemite High School in Oakhurst are fortunate to have many opportunities to explore and prepare for their future careers through the school's Regional Occupation Programs (ROP).

Classes currently being offered include arc welding, oxyacetylene welding, engine technology, careers in criminal justice, careers in education, emergency medical technician, videography, photography and a new course this year, culinary arts.

Principal Steve Raupp notes that, "While many high schools have discontinued vocational education programs, Yosemite High School has managed to maintain a wide variety of courses which prepare students for additional post-secondary training or for entry level employment opportunities.

"The strength of the ROP program is one reason that Yosemite High School was one of only 12 schools in California to be recognized as an Exemplary Career Technical Program in conjunction with the California Distinguished School Award in 2005."

Randy Hyatt, the school's assistant principal, is now devoting much of his time at the helm of the ROP "ship." Hyatt's office furniture should include a ceiling-height hat rack, as he admits he has "many hats to wear."

Besides his responsibilities with the ROP classes, he also is coordinator of the International Baccalaureate program, deals with student discipline and campus supervision and is in charge of making arrangements for school facilities, such as the theater, being reserved for community or public use.

The ROP classes require two periods of a student's school day and some of them are entered with a prerequisite requirement or a teacher's recommendation, depending on the student's experience.

Hyatt emphasizes the fact that ROP classes open student's eyes to new horizons and offers them a chance to try out a particular field of interest and see if it's right for them. He has a daughter who plans to become a teacher and she went through the Careers in Education program, for which she received college credit.

This school year brings a new class to the ROP program at Yosemite High School. Dena Boortz will be the instructor for the "Career in Culinary Arts, Nutrition and Hospitality" class.

There is vast kitchen and food preparation space devoted to this class and it is predicted to become very popular. Students in Mike Monahan's classes (commonly referred to as "Auto Shop," but is so much more) will see a new piece of equipment that will enable students to perform alignment and brake procedures. Again, there is a lot of space for this class, as well as for the welding students. Roy Broomfield teaches the Careers in Criminal Justice and is also what students fondly refer to as the "campus cop." Broomfield, as a deputy with the Madera County Sheriff's Department, was honored on the prestigious "Wall of Heroes," sponsored by the AMVETS Mountain Post 1997.

Every one of the ROP classes is worthy of a separate article, but suffice it to say that students have a lot to look forward to when it comes to getting some hands-on experience dealing with careers they considered pursuing.

Sometimes students even discover a career choice they hadn't considered before. Thanks to a dedicated staff and leaders such as Raupp and Hyatt, Yosemite High School's ROP program seems to play a critical role in helping students explore, discover and enhance the skills they need to pursue their choice of careers.



Welding classes are part of Yosemite High's ROP program and cover both arc and oxyacetylene types of welding.

Photo courtesy of Cathie Campbell

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