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McQuaid student turns his dream into film

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Contributing writer

Many of us are familiar with the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child."

When Adam Vazquez told his parents, Jose and Dilia, that he wanted to make movies, much like the proverb, it took a group of dedicated parents, supportive teachers, friends and some generous strangers to make his dream come true.

Last year, Adam and his McQuaid Jesuit classmates Brad Collins and Zack Guido approached McQuaid's president about starting a film club.

"We wanted the club to be different by opening it up to students from other schools, and we didn't just want to sit around watching movies," Adam said. So the ambitious trio came up with a plan: The first activity for the McQuaid Jesuit Film Club would be to write, shoot, direct and edit an original short film.

"Often times, kids have big ideas, but no work ethic, discipline or maturity to follow through," said Tracey S. Bors, an English teacher at McQuaid whom the students sought out for support. "But, I knew Adam...you ask something of him, and because he sets his own personal bar so high, he goes above and beyond what is expected." Bors agreed to serve as the club's co-advisor.

Once the students' proposal was approved by McQuaid's president and the board of trustees, they began their labor of love.

Holly Nickeson from Irondequoit High School and Nick Schantz and Alex Caraballo from McQuaid soon joined the crew. To help fund the project, Adam approached local businesses like Mykonos Café and PHA Personal Health & Fitness Center, as well as private donors. And while passionate about film making, the students had little experience with how to run a camera, record audio or edit. So with the help of Rehema Imani Trimiew, a graduate student of film at the University of Rochester and Rochester Community Television's (RCTV) staff, the young film makers felt armed with the necessary tools for making their film. After 10 grueling months of production and post production, *Hermatia* was born.

Adam describes *Hermatia*, a 32-minute short film, as a modern day Greek tragedy. "It's the story of a young man who fears the world and everything that encompasses it."

"[The students] put in 12-hour days and gave up their week-long spring break and summer to finish this film," says Dilia Vazquez. She also recalls the crew shooting for days in one student's home and how the parents took turns making meals and bringing them over for the kids to eat. "None of the parents or families went on vacation that year so we all really came together to support our kids."

The film premiered at McQuaid Jesuit in October. In true Hollywood fashion, the crew arrived in a limo and walked down a red carpet to a cheering crowd of students, teachers, family and friends—a whole community of people who came together to make this group's dream come true.

Looking back, the crew says the hardest part about making *Hermatia* was time management and raising money to make the film. However, it hasn't stopped them from planning their next film project.

"We learned a lot from the experience of making that movie and that's going to make the next one easier," Adam said.


The McQuaid Jesuit Film club hopes to enter *Hermatia* into the High Falls Film Festival and plans to hold auditions for the next film in spring 2008.

"We really want to put a call out to all high school students who are interested in filmmaking to contact us so we can get together, share ideas and hopefully make movies."

If you want to get involved, contact Adam Vazquez at ghostav@rochester.rr.com.



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Provided photo
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Provided photo
From left, Adam Vazquez, Brad Collins, Mark Collins, Kyle Dewey and Nick Schantz pose with film equipment.

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