

# Framing Industry

## California High School Art

by Margery Schwartz

Community involvement is often a rewarding part of business. Our own industry suppliers and manufacturers are often active in supporting local efforts to educate and teach framing to students by donating instructional and merchandising materials. One of the most successful programs is offered at Sutter Union High School, Sutter, CA, through the R.O.P (Regional Occupation Program) Applied Photography's Basics of Mat Cutting and Picture Framing Course. The program, led by Gary Mason, a photography instructor and Certified Picture Framer (CPF), is the only one in Sutter County dedicated to picture framing. The six- to eight-week program is self-directed by the students who, upon finishing all program requirements, receive an official, signed Certificate of Completion.

The corporate sponsorship has been overwhelming for this unique high school program aimed at providing students with an overview of custom picture framing and a basic foundation in the knowledge and skills required for framing artwork.

Corporate sponsors include: Crescent Cardboard Co., Foster Planing Mill; Frame Square Co.; The Fletcher-Terry Company; Frame Tek, Inc.; Columba Publishing Co.; Larson-Juhl; Lineco, Inc.; The Neschen Co.; Nielsen Bainbridge; Sepp Leaf Products; Studio Moulding, Inc.; Tru Vue, Inc; and Wizard International.

Says Patti Dumbaugh, Tru Vue's Director of Marketing, "Tru Vue's support of Sutter Union's picture framing program ensures that the students have the opportunity to explore the craft and enhance their academic education, as well as to prepare for a career in the industry."

Most recently, in April, Wizard donated a computerized mat cutter along with the software. Edd Pratt, Sales and Marketing Manager at Wizard states, "Wizard is excited to be involved with the project at Sutter High School. Our goal as a company is to produce technology-based products that make the framing process easier while advancing framing capabilities. Introducing computerized mat cutting technology to the 'framers of tomorrow' provides them with both an educational and competitive edge when entering the custom framing industry. I would love to see other school districts around the country adopt similar programs for their students."

Dave Dannhauser, Archival Products Sales Manager for Neschen says, "The decision to support the program at Sutter High was an easy one. Providing students with the chance to learn skills that can be put to use no matter where their careers lead them, and providing professional framers with a pool of potential employees trained and ready to work can only be good for our industry. Even those students who never work a day in a frame shop will leave the program with a greater appreciation of what custom framing



Gary Mason, CPF, and his students examine glazing samples. Mason reviews how to select the appropriate glazing for specific artwork.



The students learn to work effectively and efficiently in this compact classroom frame shop.



Students learn how to join frames using glue application and proper machinery.

# Gets High On School

## Framing Program Supported By Industry

entails. Neschen is very pleased to be part of this innovative program and after hearing about all the other companies who provided their support, very proud to be a part of this generous and thoughtful industry.”

In addition to industry suppliers, several local frame shops have offered their support as well. Abreu Gallery, Sacramento, CA; Village Frame and Gallery, Santa Rosa, CA; and Goforth Frame and Moulding, Biggs, CA, have all donated supplies and have even hired the students as part-time workers.

“The program provides students with several benefits, including a meaningful skill for part-time employment while in college,” says Mason. “Many frame shop owners in Northern California have indicated to me that they would be interested in hiring students who have completed this program following high school graduation.”

Mason’s background includes working as a projectionist at night and a part-time substitute school teacher during the day. He was also a photographer who found a growing need to frame his own work. He was hired 17 years ago by Sutter Union High School to teach woodworking, photography, and science.

The R.O.P. program naturally evolved, and Mason started the program in September 2002 with the support of the professional picture framing industry. Through networking and cold calling, he established relationships with leading manufacturers and educators in the field, which resulted in donations of educational material, industry-standard equipment, and products.

“The support of the industry has made it possible for this program to be created. I am encouraged to pass along my own passion for framing to interested students so they might profit from it. This is my goal as a teacher,” Mason explains.

Mason’s students are excited about this program and its potential. Many of the students are appreciative of the opportunities they have been given. Yuriana, a senior, says, “I’m in the program because I like framing my own artwork and also because it will give me an opportunity to find a part-time job while I’m away at college.”

Other students echo her enthusiasm. Linda, a senior, comments, “I would recommend this program to my friends because you have a great opportunity to learn different mat designs and framing techniques which preserve and display artwork. I really enjoy the challenges

that are presented with each job.”

Dena, a junior, has already finished the course. “I completed this course last year but continue to participate in the program. I can’t help taking advantage of this great opportunity Sutter High has to offer and the head start I have been given in the custom framing industry.”

Other students including sophomores Share and Courtney, and senior Linda, agree that the program has shown them how to use style and design to enhance artwork and given them the ability to work part-time.

The program is open to 24 students annually. Equipment and instructional materials, however, are available daily to 200 students in the art, photography, graphic, and communications departments.

Industry support to programs like this, especially in these turbulent times, provides corporate experience and encourages teens to set goals. After all, these are the future leaders of America. ■



Using a thumbnail miter, students determine the stick length needed, then cut 45° miters, routing the ends for the thumbnails.



The Wizard computerized mat cutter gives students a greater perspective on design and keeps them up-to-date on the latest technology.