



GHSCOMLAB Reports



GENEVA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
GENEVA HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS LAB

Welcome to Geneva High School's Communications Lab. Our program has been available to students at Geneva High School since 1978. The lab is in its third location since it began at the school district's Middle & Pulteney Street campus. Since that time it has evolved into a special place that has offered valued experiences for thousands of students.

The lab has a rich history through its relationships with industry, state curriculum development, undergraduate teacher preparation and national education associations.

The lab has hosted over 23 student teachers majoring in Technology Education at SUNY College at Oswego. This relationship with the college originated with several semesters in the role of adjunct professor and annual presentations at the Department of Technology's Fall Conference. The program's visibility lead to a role in curriculum development for communications courses with the NYS Education Department.



An initiative with the NYS Education Department involving professional development in computers in education lead to a collaboration with Apple Computer, Inc. A state-wide series of training and speaking engagements followed. The role with Apple Computer grew to tap into that company's technology applications at Gannett's USA Today.



Geneva High School was the first high school in the nation to access USA Today's global information and graphics network, long before the age of the internet. The program was recognized throughout the northeast as a model approach to digital technology and a curriculum that delivered new skills.

Hundreds of school district representatives visited Room 232 at the lab's second floor space on the Carter Road Campus.

The combination of the speaking engagements, curriculum writing, and innovation with two significant corporations led to a special experience with NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. In honor of Christa McAuliffe's role as first teacher in space, the program once again was thrust into a high visibility mode with extensive travel throughout the United States, television appearances and speaking engagements—all related to what took place in the ComLab regarding teaching and learning.



The pace of change hasn't slowed. As the technology has evolved, course activities have been adapted to emerging trends. Two constants have remained throughout this development:

1. The skill of communicating clearly, concisely and effectively in an information society is developed with every course activity.
2. Effective communication begins with an idea, is enhanced by its design and is made possible by its technology.

Communications courses and areas of study

- COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS
- GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS
- WEB.COM 1.0 & 2.0
- PHOTOGRAPHY

See page 6

Block G Video presents a powerful message

In September 2007, three students developed a goal of producing a video featuring the school's athletic program, to be presented at the annual awards ceremony in June. Each had taken at least one course among the ComLab's elective course offerings. Based on those experiences, they had an idea of how the lab's resources could contribute to the message. Featuring dozens of teams, hundreds of athletes, at a variety of venues posed a logistical challenge. Shooting schedules and video editing alone would involve hundreds of hours of effort. 10 months of sustained effort for such an endeavor would require a major commitment.



Alex Pool, Ben Bondor and Mike Reale edit the Block G video.

The team consisted of AP Scholars, three-sport athletes and students extensively involved with extra-curricular activities. For that reason, it was important to secure some dedicated time in their senior class schedules for independent study. Once arranged, they met as a group each day during a Photography class.

One member of the team, Alex Pool, '08, was enrolled in a Photography class earlier in the day and from the first class meeting, expressed interest in a career in photography. He went through the introductory experiences in this basic course including the technical and creative aspects of picture taking. That initial interest blossomed with an internship with the local newspaper's team of photojournalists. Within a few days he was accompanying them to community events and high school games. His early work was published and as the mentoring by these professionals continued its positive impact, the equipment provided to him was replaced by a significant investment in his



own digital camera system. He was able to contribute a library of several thousand images from which the team of video editors could choose.

After eight months of event video work, editing and scene selection, the final product was published as a DVD.



To a packed auditorium on the night of the event, the director of athletics introduced the video as the most professional film he had seen. The message proved to be clear and audience reaction was evident with the applause at key points. As a series of images followed thanking coaches, parents, teammates and fans, the audience rose with applause. When the four team members' names appeared the applause grew stronger and when the title 'Sports Photography by Alex Pool' appeared, the applause erupted into cheers.

What followed was a flow of compliments and a sellout of the available DVD's. Word spread the next day on campus and students, coaches and teachers were busy buying their copies. The message was delivered and the team was recognized for the effort and commitment to excellence. The Block G experience had succeeded and has proven to be an excellent example of quality work for students studying communications.



One of several thousand photographs in the iPhoto library. Each photo exhibited elements of composition: balance, rule of thirds and depth of field.

Geneva Varsity Lacrosse, 1/1000 sec at f2.8, 190mm focal length. Alex Pool, photographer

Communication Systems: The ComLab's Video Course



Alexis Trapp and Kelsey VanKirk work with video cameras, sound systems and video editing software during their morning class in Communication Systems. 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students many times work together on projects.

What was always considered a highly creative media, video production's current technology has simply made it fun. The days of splicing tape and film were over decades ago with digital editing becoming the standard. Students enrolled in Communication Systems use Apple iMovie® and the lab's cameras to get their message across. Those messages are their own creation and there is plenty of class time devoted to the creative flow.

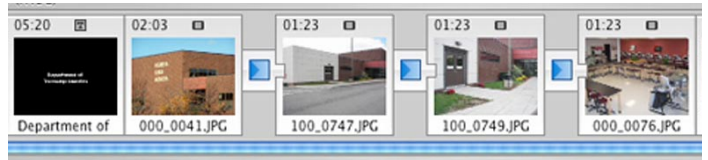
Students first learn how to work with the software. They each receive unedited video footage containing scenes of Geneva. With the goal of editing the video and creating a clear message, it takes several weeks to create a DVD. The first required video is a 3-7 minute promotional video about Geneva's lakefront. Students analyze the potential audience and develop a message with an opening introduction, main content and closing credits. The second option is a short documentary on Geneva's South Main Street. When they feel they're ready to launch their first project featuring a topic of their choosing, they can start filming. Cameras and tripods are available for overnight loans.



Several different topics have been in production this semester. They include: school spirit, HWS Colleges, cooking, Greenday, cheerleading, Geneva Boxing, History of NY's Yankee Stadium, NY Giants, lacrosse and skateboarding.



Mike Tyman uses iMovie and images downloaded from the internet to create his documentary on the history of New York's Yankee Stadium.



Each video segment and photograph appears in a timeline during the editing process.



Every ComLab workstation has its own DVD publishing system so when editing is complete, students create a DVD case design with Adobe InDesign. In this project-based course, students produced several different videos that are evaluated with a rubric.

Web.com students go on-line

Learning how the internet works is easy compared to actually producing web pages with the same software used throughout the industry. Students in Web.com have developed the patience to click accurately, avoid omission of any steps and follow directions. They have also discovered that it's a great feeling when a new webpage actually works.

Web pages require a language called HTML which is a labor intensive programming code that controls text, images, color and location on a web page—all interpreted on a variety of computers and internet browsers throughout the internet. Failure to create an accurate set of commands results in a page not appearing as desired or perhaps not at all. Using web software included with Adobe Creative Suite® allows the designer to concentrate on the appearance of the page rather than the lines of code. The code is written in the background as features are added. Another trend is the use of Flash® and Adobe Photoshop® to create the entire image of the page. This allows the

designer to have total control how the page will look on any computer than can display it.



Web.com has been included in the lab's course offerings since 2000. Each student develops skills in a variety of web page features. All of the projects are linked to a course index page on each workstation. As the course comes to a close, a portfolio page that shows samples of their skills is uploaded to the website so they have access to it after graduation.

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Matt DeJohn, Robbie Shuttleworth and Adolfo Colon collaborate on Matt's web-page header.



**The ComLab's digital technology...
A look at its computer system**

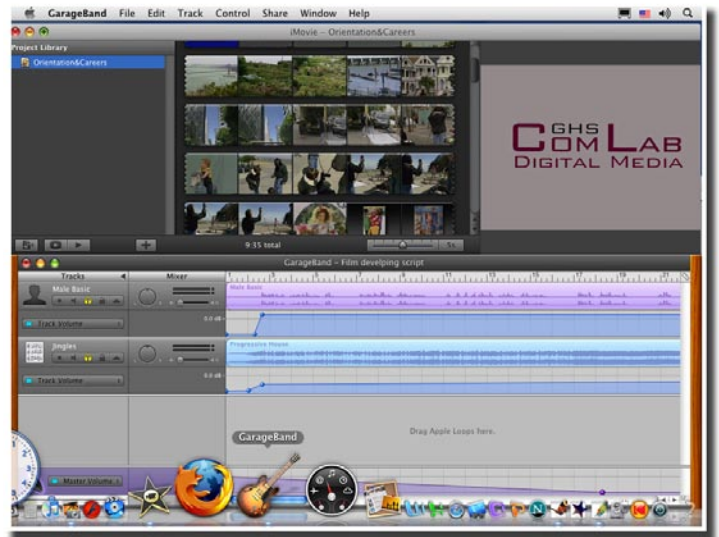
As communications media became digital, the tools used in the ComLab changed along with the industries studied. Massive documents, rich with images, demand fast processing speed, huge storage capability and compatibility with the industry.

The lab's 16 Apple Mac G5's feature Adobe Creative Suite and Apple iLife. Built into every workstation is the capability of sound editing, photo importing and editing, digital video editing, desktop publishing, graphic design and webpage layout.

What is iLife?

If the words 'iPod' and 'iTunes' mean anything to you, you are on your way to a full understanding of integrated digital media. iLife is a collection of software applications that enable people to combine sound, motion video, still images and connected devices and share it with a variety of media formats.

Sharing these messages can be accomplished in many ways. If someone has a series of photos and video clips that fit a favorite song, the photos can be stored in iPhoto, the video clips downloaded into iMovie and the melody can be editing with GarageBand. When the message is edited with iMovie it can be published to a DVD, uploaded to a webpage and if there's a desire to share it with the masses, the production can be uploaded to popular sites on the internet.



Video editing software easily accepts sound files edited with GarageBand® and iTunes®.

The iLife® Suite

iWeb

Garageband

iTunes

iPhoto

iMovie

iDVD

Student teaching in the ComLab

Colleges and universities with teacher education programs have found that there is no better orientation for a career in a classroom than a professional field experience.

The ComLab has hosted over 23 student teachers from SUNY Oswego's Department of Technology Education.

The assignments consist of eight weeks at a middle school and eight weeks at a high school. These college seniors rely on this experience in order to apply what they've studied in their education sequence of courses as well as their skill in the content area. They work closely with a college supervisor who makes two formal visits to observe lessons and demonstrations.

A first visit to the ComLab has been known to intimidate a few college seniors, but each member of this group has succeeded with the lab's technology.

Not every student teacher has continued a career in education. Their careers include school administration, professional photography and management as well as teaching communications in NYS. For example, Tom Averill is currently principal of Saugerties Junior High School, Tait Loe is at Hilton Central Schools, Tim Patterson is at East Syracuse-Minoa Central Schools, Eric Harter is at Lake Placid Schools and Jeff Carson is at Canandaigua Schools.



Learning how to teach. Jeff Carson, Oswego '06 completed his undergraduate degree as a student teacher at Oswego. He currently teaches Technology Education in Canandaigua.

Course Descriptions

Communication Systems

This course features the communication technologies of the GHS ComLab and the knowledge and creativity associated with media design. Projects include team and personally produced digital movies on DVD's using the lab's collection of digital camcorders. Skills with graphic design, desktop publishing and digital video are developed with Adobe Creative Suite® on graphics workstations.

Graphic Communications

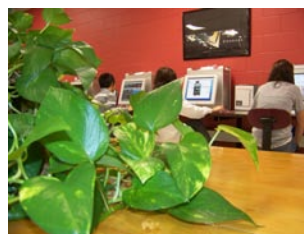
This course presents hands-on study in the areas of graphic design and pre-press image preparation. Students explore color image preparation and digital photography. This publication, ComLab Reports, is an example of a graphic communications product. Skills and knowledge developed in this course are beneficial in the workplace, college and life.

Web.com

This 1/2 unit, semester elective offers a higher challenge level using the resources of Geneva High School's Communications Lab. Students develop skills in web/internet concepts and systems, web design for the internet, image preparation, web publishing and career development. Projects include web page development, web graphics preparation, internet systems and independent options.

Photography

This elective course is a basic introduction to black and white photography. Seniors learn photographic composition, camera handling, exposure control, film processing and darkroom enlargement techniques. Digital editing is introduced through scanning, software editing and output. The informal studio atmosphere affords a highly independent approach toward the completion of weekly prints.



ComLab Reports is an internal communication within our school system with a limited run as a paper document. Its green version is a PDF electronic document that's viewable on the lab's website.



SUNY Oswego Annual Fall Conference presentations continue as a tradition

The tradition continues on the last Thursday and Friday of October when the GHS ComLab is featured at the annual conference hosted by SUNY Oswego Department of Technology Education. Among topics that span over the past 30 years, the focus of each presentation has been a delivery of what’s new in the lab. A dialogue follows among college professors, students and Technology Education teachers from throughout the state as Geneva’s approach is discussed.

The 2008 presentation presented the logistics of hosting the production of a school-wide video. Geneva’s Block G sports video was shown to the audience at each presentation.

Geneva High School’s participation in this annual event has yielded positive feedback and it’s our way of contributing to the profession. Sharing is learning.

SUNY Oswego, Department of Technology Education Annual Fall Conference Presentations

<i>Year</i>	<i>Topic</i>
2008	Producing the Big Video with Big Impact
2007	Achieving Excellence in 9-12 Communications Programs
2006	Selecting Learning Experiences for 9-12 Communications Courses
2005	Elements of Graphic Design
2004	Selecting Computer Applications for 9-12 Communications Courses
2003	Web-Based Instruction: An Introduction
2002	Communications Curriculum: Challenges, Trends and Content

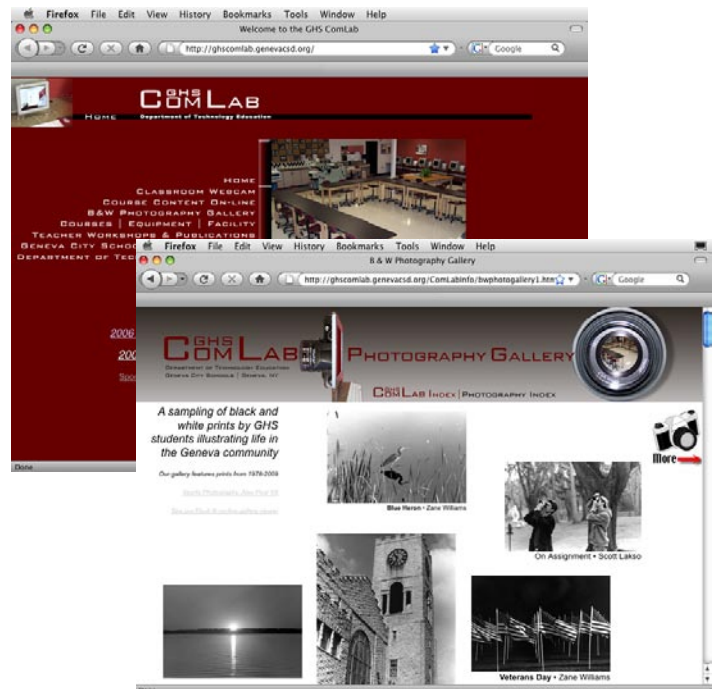
<http://ghscomlab.genevacsd.org>

ComLab Website features lab resources

The ComLab’s website provides students with instructional content and helpful resources. Its content is rich with images and illustrations that explain course activities and provide an alternative to paper copies. It’s possible for students to position an instruction page next to their work in progress on the computer monitor. If they are absent and miss a demonstration, a review of the webpage, along with some individualized instruction enables them to keep pace with all courses in the ComLab.

The site also serves as a model for students enrolled in Web.com, with some of the more advanced Flash® and menu features shown in actual application.

Serving as a ‘digital display case’ the gallery sections effectively present student work to the site’s visitors. Among the hundred or so web pages, a sampling of student photographs is featured on the B&W Photography Gallery link on the main site index.



<http://ghscomlab.genevacsd.org>

The Comlab website offers a web version of the teaching materials related to all courses.

GHS Photography: where seniors excel

When Geneva High School seniors discover the school's electives, many times new lifetime hobbies are developed. Each semester nearly 50 members of the class work with lenses, chemicals, Adobe Photoshop and other tools in the ComLab. Life in Geneva, NY appears on hundreds of photographs as students spend part of their weekends and afternoons capturing scenes on film. The outcomes consist of b&w images, scanned images on DVD portfolios and digital prints. Selected images appear on the lab's web gallery and on display in the hallway.

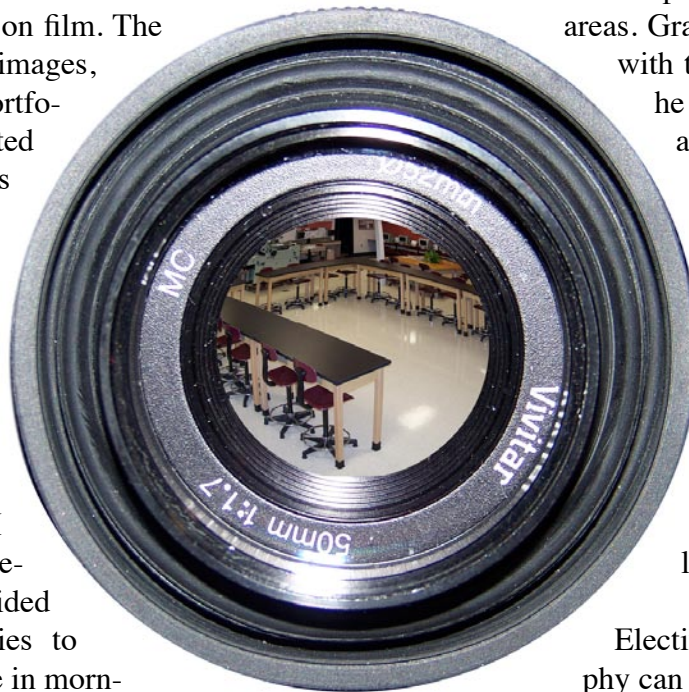
One featured contributor this year is senior Zane Williams. Shortly after all of the introductory lessons in the course, Zane's first roll of film was shot at 6:00 AM on Geneva's lakefront. His return visits at that hour provided him with more opportunities to photograph the local wildlife in morning light. He has since featured night photographs of the Veterans Day field of flags. Zane's work continues to amaze his classmates.



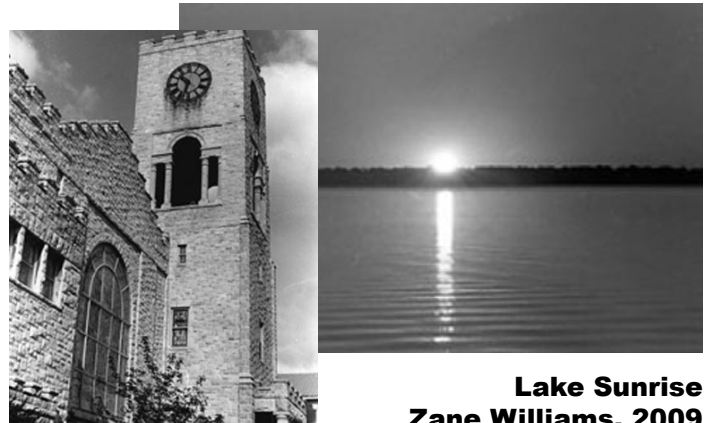
Morning Swim • Zane Williams, 2009

Senior Samantha Onorato has developed an interest in capturing Geneva's landmarks on film. Her favorite approach is to contrast masonry and shapes against interesting sky and cloud patterns.

Like Zane and Samantha, many GHS photography students develop special preferences for subject areas. Graduate Alex Pool '08 interned with the Finger Lakes Times while he was taking the course. As he accompanied Spencer Tulis to area athletic events, he discovered his interest in sports photography. He is currently majoring in photography at Rochester Institute of Technology. Alex's work was featured in the 2008 Block G Video and his nine favorite photographs are on permanent display in a new gallery near the school cafeteria.



Elective courses such as Photography can lead to new hobbies, marketable skills, college majors and possibly careers. The course serves as an excellent introduction to college electives.



**Lake Sunrise
Zane Williams, 2009**

**Geneva Church
Sam Onorato, 2009**