

ByeongJun Moon's video *#CaptainLee* took home the Seaspan prize for grades 8–10 in the WorkSafeBC student safety video contest.

Students put themselves in employers' shoes

By Gail Johnson

When ByeongJun Moon, a grade nine student from South Korea at Langley's Walnut Grove Secondary School, saw a poster for the WorkSafeBC student safety video contest on the computer department wall, he jumped at the chance to enter.

He hopes to one day have a career in film and video, and he saw the province wide competition as a way to jump-start it. While Moon is passionate about video making, he admits he was initially stumped when it came to young workers' health and safety.

To fit with this year's theme, "You're the employer: How do you keep your young workers safe?," Moon came up with the idea of pirates to convey a safety message.

"We all know that pirates wear eye patches because they did not have such a thing as glasses to protect them," Moon says. "The video, *#CaptainLee*, is a story where the main character, Captain Lee, is trying to save his fellow pirates from safety hazards. The video shows examples of pirates losing one of their

eyes by getting eaten by a shark, getting shot by a gun, and sword fighting. Although it's not realistic, we implemented safety glasses to prevent them from getting hurt, and they work!"

Moon had three friends act in his video, which he shot at one pal's house and by the Fraser River at McMillan Island. He entered in the grades 8–10 category and won. "This contest has truly empowered me to keep working toward my career," Moon says. "I was excited to work on it. And I learned that safety is about more than wearing a helmet at a factory."

Kick-starting a film career through health and safety

The annual contest gives students the chance to make a high-quality video from start to finish, including writing the script, plotting out the storyline, scouting locations, filming, editing, and incorporating visual and sound effects. The cash prizes, \$10,000 overall, are a motivating factor; so is the opportunity to gain hands-on experience. For some, it helps fulfill an academic requirement; for others, it's a building block for a future career.

The through line is learning about young workers' rights and responsibilities when it comes to staying healthy and safe at work.

"We talk a lot about the role that WorkSafeBC plays in society," says Ryan Radford, who teaches video production, visual effects, and graphic design in Walnut Grove's computer department. Entering the contest is optional, but his students have won the last four years in a row.

"These kids are just getting into the work field, and most people don't think about the safety aspect at first. When they're just starting out, they might worry about how much they're getting paid or how many hours they're getting; they're not thinking 'What if I get hurt and what are my rights?' That's where this contest opens their eyes a little bit," says Radford.

"What they like is taking the idea of what may seem like a boring topic and trying to make it fun and entertaining."

Learning to speak up in the workplace

Matt Kennedy, who owns a company called Young Moviemakers, runs an elective course at West Vancouver's Mulgrave Secondary School. He helped students at Mulgrave garner a winning entry by conveying a serious message in a lighthearted way. The students shot with Canon C100 cameras and edited their videos on Final Cut; besides being entered in the contest, the videos were also uploaded to Mulgrave's YouTube channel.

To give students a sense of what effective videos look like, he showed them past entries — including some of his own; when he was in high school over a decade ago, he regularly entered the contest himself.

"A lot of them haven't had jobs yet, so it's always fascinating to me to see what they bring up and what

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—Ryan Radford, teacher,
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they think is important," Kennedy says. "We talk a lot about specificity. This gives them a good starting place to think about specific issues in the workplace."

Nathalie Scott-Desfosses, who teaches visual arts, digital media, and film at North Vancouver's Handsworth Secondary School (which had a winner in the grades 11–12 category this year), says the contest allows students to brainstorm about different safety risks in various types of workplaces, especially those where young people are likely to work — on a film set, perhaps. The project is mandatory for her students, who end up learning more than the importance of realistic dialogue and logical progression of events in making a compelling video.

"These students are realizing that you have to speak up when something feels unsafe," Scott-Desfosses says. "That's a really beneficial aspect of the contest."

To see the winning videos and learn more about the contest, visit worksafebc.com and search for "student safety video." 📺



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