

Freshman Skills Day was a huge hit

by Brian Schunk
Sports Editor

Freshman Skills Day is an event designed to help freshmen learn skills that will be needed throughout their high school careers. What makes Freshman Skills Day so special is that freshmen are taught these skills by upperclassmen who were in their shoes just a few short years ago and now want to pass on their knowledge. This year's event took place over four days, Nov. 22, 25, 26, and Dec. 2, during which upperclassmen taught freshmen about pressures, relationships, self-image, and boundaries. Lessons took place in the small gym and in the health and fitness room, and occurred throughout the day.

To teach the freshmen, upperclass leaders used knowledge from their own experiences as a high-school student. In addition, one team filmed skits to show the freshmen different scenarios they might find themselves in during their high school careers. Leaders asked freshmen how they would deal with the situations shown in the skits, giving them choices and explaining the benefits of each one. The Freshman Skills Day leaders used statistics to aid them in their lessons, and to shed light on many common misconceptions that people have entering high school. Upperclassmen provided statistics on depression and divorce rates in Los Gatos to show the freshmen that they are not alone in regard to these personal and family issues. They also shared statistics on the percentage of students at LGHS who use CASSY and its services so freshmen would feel more comfortable reaching out to the school for help. Near the end of each lesson, freshmen could submit anonymous questions if they were not comfortable asking them aloud in front of everybody. Freshman Skills Day leaders answered these questions in front of the entire group of students.

Freshman Skills Day Leaders commit a huge amount of time, as the job involves weeks of practice and meetings before the four days of teaching. Meetings took place during lunch, tutorial, and after school in order to give the leaders sufficient time to prepare their lessons. Junior **Connor McGrath** said, "I had to spend a lot of time preparing because my topic, relationships, encompassed so much. I taught freshmen about relationships with their peers, which involved teaching them about gossiping, taking sides, bullying, friendships, breakups, and jealousy. I also discussed relationships with parents, which meant teaching them how to communicate with their parents, pick their battles, show respect to their parents, and be responsible."

Despite the huge time commitment, Freshman Skills Day was well worth it. McGrath said "I enjoyed the experience of being a Freshman Skills Day leader very much. I think the freshmen enjoyed Freshman Skills Day



B. Schunk

EDUCATING THE FRESHMEN: Junior Kira Welch lectures a freshman class about self-image.

a lot. It seemed like they were having fun and absorbing the information we taught them. I can't wait to to be a leader again next year."

Junior **Kira Welch** said "I thought it was really important to connect the freshmen with the upperclassmen through Freshman Skills Day. This year we have put so much thought into our self-image curriculum and it was really fun to see how the freshman took what we were saying to heart. My favorite part was connecting the students questions to our lives to create a feeling of unity between our grades and letting them know they aren't alone."

The freshman gained from the experience as well. Freshman **Charlotte Pla** said "Freshman Skills Day really educated and raised awareness to addressing common problems among freshmen; the skills we were taught are sure to help in the future."

Freshman **Annie Larkin** said "I greatly appreciated Freshman Skills Day. It was very well organized, and I learned a lot. The way it was run by students also made me feel more comfortable, and the activities provided made it feel much more fun. As well, it was good to become informed about self-image, handling pressures and stresses, and about maintaining healthy relationships. I am happy I had the opportunity to attend such a beneficial meeting as a new high school student."

Overall, Freshman Skills Day was a positive experience for both the leaders and the freshmen.

New patent filed

by Kelsey Fleming
World Editor

In an effort to make voice-based devices more user-friendly, Google and Motorola have innovated a new adhesive, wearable technology called the throat tattoo, a small electromagnetic device equipped with a microphone and wireless transceiver that connects to smartphones, smartwatches, and Google Glass. With simple voice commands, users can control their phone, tablet, and games conveniently. Despite the device's promise for commercial use, many are uneasy about the technology and what it may perpetuate.

Some critics claim that the throat tattoo has the potential to act as a lie detector in the future. The authors of the patent stated that the throat tattoo may soon be able to measure galvanic skin reactions, which are often used in modern lie detector machines. The patent reads, "It is contemplated that a user that may be nervous or engaging in speaking falsehoods may exhibit different galvanic skin response than a more confident, truth telling individual." Alexis Madrigal from The Atlantic has called the device "Google's creepiest patent yet."

However, many claim that the new technology has multitudes of potential benefits. For example, some supporters argue that the technology can save lives in the medical field. For elderly people who are immobile or have difficulties moving around, the technology could help them in the event of an accident. Acting as a modern Life Alert, the throat tattoo could aid those who fall and require immediate medical attention. Others praise the device's convenient hands-free use and ability to drain out unwanted noise. For those living busy lives, the throat tattoo could offer its users peace of mind.

Even though the throat tattoo may never reach the consumer market, it raises many questions in the technological world of today. As technology evolves and advances, users must consider what they are willing to sacrifice for convenience in an age centered around instant communication and immediate response.

(Sources: CNN, Huffington Post, Los Angeles Times, The Atlantic, ABC News)



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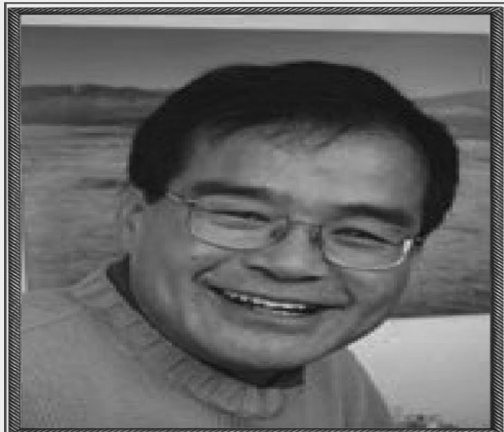
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