



PHOTO BY AMY SYLVESTRI

The SCAT TV crew at San Leandro High has grown from a handful of students to over 50 since the acting club was started by Blake Spears two years ago.

By Amy Sylvestri

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For the past two years, San Leandro High student Blake Spears has watched his dreams of making entertainment for teens grow into a reality.

Spears' project, SCAT TV, started in 2010 with Spears and a handful of his friends. Now, more than 50 SLHS students contribute their ideas and skills and more students join the group each week.

SCAT (which stands for Sketch Comedy Acting Teens) gathers after school each week to write sketches, practice acting, and learn production skills.

"It's basically our way of giving our perspective on what's going on in the world," said Spears. "Our outlook on things like the election, the news, and pop culture stuff."

The SCAT TV kids started with a few shows on Youtube and have expanded to a radio show and programs that air on the city's public access Channel 15.

"I met with the city manager and he has agreed to let us make shows for the city," said Spears. "It will be a youth roundtable."

Spears and his crew even made a video to welcome incoming freshman to the school that SLHS played for all the incoming students this year. He showed the kids a tour of the campus and classes as his signature character "Granny B," an older woman with plenty of attitude.

"The teachers love what we do, we like to do it, it's great for everyone," said Spears.

A special "Christmas with Granny B" event will be held at the Bal Theater on Dec. 15 at 7 p.m., featuring the SCAT TV crew with plenty of singing, dancing, and comedy.

When he is not busy being Granny B, Spears has interviewed celebrities including Jane

Goodall, Nickelodeon stars, and local hip-hop artists and is in the process of getting big names on the show. He and the SCAT TV members not only write their own shows, they have taught themselves about the business side of entertainment by reaching out to publicists and networking.

They are currently saving money for a trip to Los Angeles to learn some more. Last year, about 20 SCAT TV members got to go on the trip and attended the NAACP Image Awards and visited the Disney studio to see how the pros do it.

“It was amazing, we got to see shows being taped,” said Spears. “We learned a lot and bonded.”

Spears will graduate this year and plans to continue pursuing his television career and SCAT TV will keep entertaining San Leandro High with new students next year.

“It’s really great seeing what this has grown into and seeing everyone involved,” said Spears.

SL High Students Making Their Own TV Shows

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For more information about SCAT TV including a schedule of shows, visit www.facebook.com/SCATtv.