



## Focus and Enthusiasm Define this Academies of Nashville High School Student



When Daniel Shelton was a little kid, he dreamed of being a sports broadcaster. “When I was in the backyard, I’d throw the football around and be my own commentator,” he remembers. Daniel, a senior at Hillwood High School, is gaining the skills and experience to make that dream a reality through real-world training in the Academies of Nashville through the Metro Nashville Public Schools. His academy, The Art, Design, and Communications Academy, offers a variety of programs in the fields of art and communications, including digital

design, journalism and broadcasting, and visual art. Working in conjunction with local business partner, Nashville Education, Arts, and Community Television Network (NECAT), students get studio training experience from experts in the broadcasting field.

Daniel says the academy helped him focus on a particular career path. “When I first came to high school, I knew I wanted to go into communications but I really didn’t know what I wanted to do in that certain field. Through the classes I’ve taken at the academy, I’ve learned that broadcasting is definitely for me, and it really had me focus on the certain career I want to do: being a sports broadcaster.”

Not only is Daniel learning career-based skills, but the academy is also helping him to see how he’ll use his academics in the future and encourages him to become better in those subjects. “It really has you hone in on what kind of skills that you really need to focus on,” he adds.

Daniel works on Hillwood High School broadcasts, including providing play-by-play commentary for football games. Last summer he had the opportunity to complete an internship at NECAT, producing his own television show. Nashletes features Nashville high school athletes. “I was actually able to experience writing and directing my own show. The hands-on experience was amazing. I was able to work with a lot of people getting a show together – not just the production – but everything behind the scenes: the research you have to do, building a set, and getting everything ready.”

Recently, Daniel was one of three Nashville Academy students selected to participate in a series of radio and TV ads in conjunction with Ford Motor Company and Nashville Ford dealers through the Ford Next Generation Learning program. Not only was it an exciting opportunity for Daniel, but a great opportunity to experience another pathway focused on developing radio and TV ads.

“It was a great experience: learning how to do radio, how to get on air and speak and really get everything right, getting all the nuances of a radio commercial correct it’s a long process, and you do a lot of takes. It was great working with people in that field and actually doing a spot on radio.”

Mike Keith, Director of Broadcasting and “Voice” of the Tennessee Titans, took an immediate note of Daniel when he arrived at the studio for the commercial shoot. “Daniel had already done his part of our commercial. As I heard Daniel’s story and felt his incredible enthusiasm, I was quickly snapped back 27 years ago. I started a sports show on my local cable access television station in 1984 – the same thing that Daniel is now doing at Hillwood High School. As I listened to him talk, all I could do was smile. It was like looking in the mirror.”

Keith also noticed Daniel’s enthusiasm. “In my professional life, I have come to believe that the secret weapon to being a success is enthusiasm,” he says. “Enthusiasm makes you work harder because you love what you do. Enthusiasm gets you through the hardest times. Enthusiasm is contagious and it makes people take a look at you, it makes people give you opportunities. Simply put, enthusiastic people succeed. So if enthusiasm is the secret weapon to success, Daniel Shelton is fully-loaded for life! I learned that in ten minutes at the studio that day.”

Keith later invited Daniel to job shadow him for a day. Meeting Mike Keith was not only a thrill for Daniel but meaningful career experience as well. “When I saw Mike Keith come in, I said, “Oh my gosh, that’s Mike Keith! Since I’m interested in sports broadcasting, I started talking with him, and he was a really nice guy. To meet someone I’ve heard on radio before; it was awesome.”

“When I job shadowed him, he gave me tour of LP Field, the broadcast area, the press box, everything. We also went to Sports Park where the Titans facilities are – locker rooms, the indoor practice facility, everything. I got to meet not only one of the most important people in the Titans’ organization, but also I got to know what his day is like and what he does and how he operates his job.”

Daniel has his sights set on college after he graduates in 2012 and plans on majoring in Communications. “Academies give you a lot of real world experience and teach you a lot. The experiences I’ve had have been valuable. It’s like being in the real world and knowing what to do in certain situations, not just sitting in a classroom taking notes. The academy experience has not only helped me grow in knowledge but also as a person - professionally and personally.”

Remember this name: Daniel Shelton. Coming to a major league sports team as a sports broadcaster soon!

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