

BEATS ACROSS AMERICA

Museum teaches students hip-hop history over Net

BY TANYANIKA SAMUELS

A GROUP of Kingsbridge high school students got to jam at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum last week — all without leaving the Bronx.

About 25 students at the Information Network Technology Academy on Tibbett Ave. sat down for a special videoconferencing lesson on the history of hip hop and technology. Their teacher was at the Hall of Fame, in Cleveland.

"It was a great opportunity for students to learn in a different environment," said technology teacher Belkis Marrero.

As the students positioned themselves before a large television in the school library, Hall of Fame teacher Jason Hanley took them on a journey through time.

Students watched video clips of hip-hop pioneers like Afrika Bambaataa, DJ Kool Herc and Jazzy Jay as they spoke about how hip hop was born in the Bronx.

Hanley and the students also talked about the different ways hip-hop culture influences today's culture from video games like Def Jam's "Vendetta" to Bratz dolls.

"This just goes to show how much hip-hop culture has made its way into different parts of our lives," Hanley said.

And then there's the music.

As they watched with rapt attention, Hanley walked the students through the early days of disk jockeys with turntables to modern-day use of computer programs.

To bring it all home, students got to create their own music using the popular software program "Reason."

"I'm going to play three drumbeats for you guys, and you vote on the one you like the best," Hanley offered.

The beats played one by one. Students bobbed their heads, smiling and nodding at each other.

After all the beats sounded, the students voted by a show of hands. Drumbeat No. 2 won.



Marie Baker (standing), librarian at the Information Network Technology Academy on Tibbett Ave., guides students through the history of hip hop, which was born on the streets of the Bronx. Jason Hanley, an educator at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, participated via videoconferencing on the TV at right, live from the Cleveland museum. Photo by Enid Alvarez

Then students voted on different DJ scratching sounds. Scratch No. 1 took the vote.

Finally, students voted on three different melodies. A synthesized club mix came out on top.

As students watched the screen, Hanley then mixed all their favorites together.

The students bobbed in their seats and

smiled at the result.

"I like that," one student said to another.

The videoconferencing lesson, which was part of the Hall of Fame's On the Road distance-learning program, was a first for the school's technology class. Marrero said it won't be the last.

"I think it really opened their eyes to different things," she said.

That was certainly the case for Deyandely Gutierrez, 15.

"That was cool," she said. "I didn't know you could make music like that with technology."

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NOTEBOOK

Lifestyle coaching

Time to get your exercise on!

The nonprofit Young Athletes Inc. is holding its first "Get Up and Get Fit!" physical fitness event Saturday to help combat the borough's obesity problem.

In Mott Haven, organizers said, one in four adults is obese, and 33% report partaking in no physical activity. Nearly one in four children is obese.

Children and parents will learn about the dangers of childhood obesity and how to lead healthy lifestyles. After a round of seminars, attendees will be invited out to a football field for football and exercise drills.

The event will start at 10 a.m. at the Alfred E. Smith High School, 333 E. 151st St., in Mott Haven.

Grant links programs

Lehman College has been awarded a \$500,000 grant by the New York Health Foundation to form the CUNY-Community Partnership for Public Health.

The partnership will include master's in public health programs at Lehman, Hunter and Brooklyn colleges.

Under the partnership, students at each college will intern with local nonprofit groups to help better address community health needs.

"They help us by helping our students, [and] we can help them by upgrading how they deliver services," said Marilyn Aguirre-Molina of Lehman's program.

Honors for documentary

A borough high school teacher has taken a top prize in a nationwide competition for his work with students on a documentary about the Bronx.

Don Cerrone, who teaches at the Jonathan Levin High School for Media and Communications in Tremont, was among 14 national winners in the 2008 Cable's Leaders in Learning Awards.

He was honored for his creativity in helping students film and create "Recapturing Glory," a documentary about the Bronx.

Finalists win a \$3,000 prize and a free trip to Washington, D.C., to attend an awards ceremony and gala in their honor at the Library of Congress in June.

Familiar voices on tour

Listen up!

A new audio tour for students at the New-York Historical Society will feature some of the Bronx's own.

Five high schoolers from the Bronx were among the teens be-

hind the audio tour to accompany the exhibit, "French Founding Father: Lafayette's Return to Washington's America."

The students — Ariel Ramikissoon, Ashley Bell, Chantay Morales, Jennifer Ramirez and Talice Sagerer, all 17 years old — are part of the society's High School Internship Program. All attend Louis D. Brandeis High School in Manhattan.

The exhibit runs through Aug. 10 at the New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., in Manhattan.

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If you have a news tip or an item for the education page, e-mail tsamuels@nydailynews.com