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TUESDAY'S TEEN

Childress aims at life behind the camera

ANDREW CRITCHELOW The News-Enterprise Nov 26, 2019 Updated 2 hrs ago

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Central Hardin High School senior Bailey Childress studies in the Media Arts pathway at the Har and Career Center. He was accepted into the PBS Student Reporting Labs Academy in Washing
ANDREW CRITCHELOW/The News-Enterprise

Central Hardin High School senior Bailey Childress' knack for storytelling has taken him across state lines. A student in the Media Arts pathway at the Hardin County Schools Early College and Career Center, Childress took part in the week-long PBS Student Reporting Labs Academy in Washington, D.C., over the summer.

He was one of only 26 students from across the country accepted into the program.

Childress said participants were split into groups of four during the academy and were responsible for producing a news package in less than a week. He said his group was assigned a story on Early Growers, a program designed to encourage youth in impoverished areas of Washington, D.C., to connect with the outdoors and fight food insecurity.

“We did all our filming in one day and then we had three days to edit it and script it,” he said. “You go out, get your footage and for three days you just hunker down in this building, working over the script, revising it and editing it. That was honestly the funnest I’ve ever had on a video.”

This sense of collaboration was instilled in Childress early on in his media arts pathway. He said he has been on the pathway for the last three years and currently serves as an intern for instructor Mary Dunn.

“It’s definitely a collaborative effort because you can’t do it all by yourself,” he said. “It’s a whole process of pitching the idea, making the script, finding your sources and editing it.”

Dunn said Childress always is willing to help his peers in the classroom.

“Bailey is one of the most dedicated student journalists that I have ever encountered,” she said.

Childress has taken on a series called Bailey’s Travels at EC3, covering local landmarks. He said his favorite episode so far has been on the Kasey Cemetery in western Hardin County, colloquially known as “Gates of Hell” by ghost hunters.

Taking on a PBS story challenge on climate, Childress currently is working as the lead producer of a story on net-zero energy schools in Warren County. He is traveling to Bowling Green next month to work on the story, which ultimately will be published alongside other stories from around the country on the PBS Student Reporting Labs platform.

In addition to his work at EC3, Childress also serves as a reporter for Central Hardin’s newspaper *The Central Times*.

While in Washington, D.C., over the summer, Childress also participated in a panel with six other students in the SRL Academy, discussing the future of journalism from a student perspective. This panel was held during the 2019 National Association for Media Literacy Education Conference and was moderated by PBS NewsHour Weekend anchor Hari Sreenivasan.

Childress said he and fellow panelists discussed why they have chosen to pursue journalism despite the challenges facing print media and the fragmentation of the media landscape.

Following graduation, Childress said he hopes to pursue film or journalism at Western Kentucky University. He said these fields satisfy his desire to tell important stories.

“Personally, I feel like I just want to tell the stories that aren’t told,” he said.

“There are stories and people that go unnoticed in this world and I want to be able to tell them.”

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