

EDUCATION

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Getting KRE8iv

Program offers real-world experience in music production

By Sharon Myers
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A new program at Lexington Middle School is offering students an opportunity to learn through hands-on experience how to create and produce their own music.

Douglas Greene, CEO and founder of the nonprofit organization KRE8ivU, will hold an after-school multimedia academy teaching students how to produce their own commercial-ready songs through computer software to complete a professional quality project.

Greene said they will bring in professional music producers to show the students how to produce projects that could be used in the real world. He said the point of the program is to introduce the students to all the components of the music industry.

"These kids don't have any idea what it takes to make a product," Greene said. "In the software we use, everything is in the box, which means it is on the computers. We let them see how to create music by dragging and dropping things into the program."

Greene has a bachelor of science degree in music production and innovation and a master of science degree in entrepreneurship from Full Sail University in Florida. He has also previously studied arranging and composition at Berklee College of Music in New York. Recently, Greene has been working as a creative arts director for local churches including producing and directing video and audio recording, as well as setting up CD and DVD ministries.



KRE8ivU director Douglas Greene (second from left) and instructor Michael Benitez (left) play music recorded by students Angel Mandragon and Brandon Richardson (from right) during the first after-school music class at Lexington Middle School on Thursday afternoon. [DONNIE ROBERTS/THE DISPATCH]

Tuition for the KRE8ivU program is \$125 a month with a one-time setup fee of \$130. Greene said included in the tuition is the software, which students can download onto their personal computers, and a thumb drive to take their project back and forth to class.

He said that the program is project-based and will allow the students to create their own music or song from beginning to end. Greene said the program also promotes creative writing, math, engineering, problem-solving and teamwork.

"They will have the ability to create and tell their story," Greene said. "We are hoping to teach them several different parts of the music industry, to learn to work in groups, to learn creative writing. The whole program is project-based with the goal of getting to a completed song."

He said other projects in the program may include teaching the structure of a



Greene encourages Richardson to start playing notes on the keyboard to record music. [DONNIE ROBERTS/THE DISPATCH]

song, such as identifying chords and learning the difference between a bridge and a chorus. Greene said other projects in the program may include video production with a focus on storyboard writing, lighting and audio production. Projects are completed

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Douglas Greene, KRE8ivU director

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every five weeks.

Nicole Piggott, director of secondary instruction and supervisor of career technical education for Lexington City Schools, said she is excited the school system is offering students an opportunity to have real-world experience in the music industry.

"We are always looking for new opportunities for our students," Piggott said. "I don't know of anything like this being done in this school system before. We felt this would be a great opportunity to give them some hands-on experience and to be able to produce their own music. I think it is very innovative and relevant to today's students."

Greene said the goal of the program is not to encourage the students to become pop-stars or a promise of becoming a recording artist, but to give them a realistic idea of the many facets of the music industry.



Benitez gets familiar with the 'Reason' music-making software. [DONNIE ROBERTS/THE DISPATCH]

"As a kid, I never knew there were things such as engineers or all of the other positions in the music industry," Greene said. "All I knew was the artist on the record and possibly the producer, like Quincy Jones. I never thought of all the other careers that come along with the industry. There are people who make their whole careers just making music for games. I want them to

understand there are a lot of levels of this business they can make a career out of."

For more information about the program, check out the website at www.kre8ivu.com.

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Mandragon and Richardson collaborate to create music together on the keyboard. [DONNIE ROBERTS/THE DISPATCH]