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Lamorinda Teenagers Host International Internet Radio Show

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From left: Host & Administrator Steven Zhou, Field Reporters: Courtney Cheng, Rachel Glass, Vivien Lee, and Alex Pawlakos. Photo Cynthia Brian

Taking internet radio by storm, the teen radio show Express Yourself featuring Lamorinda teenagers recently hit the airwaves with the first show debuting on November 22 to over 132 countries.

Hosts Steven Zhou and Chan Dara Paschal, along with field reporters Courtney Cheng, Rachel Glass, Vivien Lee, Eric Pawlakos, Jacqueline Tao and Courtney Tran, discuss and report on topics interesting to teens.

So far the teens have covered a variety of themes including, "Out Into the World" (life after high school), "Finding Our Special Gifts," "Branding" (launching products, services and self), and "Hip Hop, Radio Star, Glee & Movie Secrets."

With the hosts and reporters calling in from different locations using Skype, Express Yourself airs on Voice America Kids Network every Tuesday at noon. Zhou, a senior at Miramonte, is based in Moraga, while Paschal, a 17-year-old college student, reports from Los Angeles. Field correspondents report in on a variety of topics from finding the best apps for your smart phone to college campus living. Most of the reporters are high schoolers with the exception of Glass who calls in from the University of Oregon and Tao from Stanford University.

Zhou hopes the show will reach out to teenagers and inspire them, "For me, it's not so much about meeting famous people, but the show is a way for me personally to get to know other people who are fulfilling their dreams, and use their inspiring stories to reach out to other people and motivate them."

It all began with the Express Yourself website (www.BTSYA.com) where teenagers have a forum to "voice and publish creative works and positive media for the young-at-heart." The popularity of the website led to the creation of the radio show.

In addition, the website and radio show originated from the Moraga-based Be the Star You Are literacy charity founded by Cynthia Brian. Along with producing the radio show, Brian has worked with and mentored the teens in volunteering with the charity.

Now with several shows already produced, plans for future shows will include guests from other countries as well as adding field reporters from Europe and Asia. Themes are evolving too: covering tough issues such as parents divorcing, drugs/alcohol, sexual issues and etc., anything that teenagers may be going through. "Musicians, educators, authors, and entrepreneurs are all included in this global campus of youth voicing opinions and experiences. Nothing is taboo and nothing is off limits. If kids are talking about it, so are we," says Brian.

Next steps, besides production of future shows, says Brian, are to find sponsors for the radio show. For more information on Express Yourself and for links to archived shows on Voice America, visit www.ExpressYourselfTeenRadio.com.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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