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## Tad Low founder of VH1's Pop-Up Video Speaks at Purnell

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Students had the rare opportunity of a visit from Tad Low, Multi-media Producer and founder of VH1's now re-launched hit series from the 90's, *Pop-Up Video*. Low encouraged and challenged students to utilize the amazing technological outlets offered to them today. Low said, "it's up to you guys to go out there and make something of your own." With ready access to video cameras and editing equipment, and with public upload options such as YouTube, Low told students there isn't anything preventing them from creating their own content on a regular basis which they can then utilize as springboards for internships, or even to pitch their creative ideas to any number of television and online networks.



Low explained that the impetus of *Pop-up Video* arose in the early 1990s when he was working for VH1 as a reporter. He would listen to the behind-the-scenes stories of a friend who was a stylist for Mariah Carey. Upon returning from on-location video shoots Low's stylist friend would share little known details about the making of the video and Low began to conceive of the idea for *Pop-Up*, saying he was most interested in "exposing the machinations that go into creating rock-star mythology." He and his other producers would elicit stories from all the people working on video shoots from make-up artists to limo drivers to find out what "really" went on during the shoot, since what the viewers received was clearly a glossy edited two-minute video of a shoot that involved hundreds of people and possibly several hours, if not days. With this subversive intent of "demythologizing" rockstars and the belief of producers that people wouldn't want to "read" videos, *Pop-Up* had a somewhat precarious start. The conundrum with which the rock stars soon had to contend, however, was that the "popped" videos of their songs started to gain ratings five times higher than the regular videos and the show became a hit. VH1 is still banking on *Pop-Up Video's* popularity as the network relaunched it this past October.

In keeping with his mission to celebrate "the lives of non-celebrities" Low's media company has several "short-form" shows on diverse networks including Animal Planet, Fios 1 and Nickelodeon. *First Impressions* allows "man on the street" interviews to help you guess a person's hidden talent, while *Photo ID* allows regular people to tell their life stories in ten photographs.

Low guided students through the process of pitching a TV show from the one-page treatment, to creating demo videos and "vibe reels" (sample videos that can give producers a feel for the essence of a pitched show.) Low also spoke about how TV Producers have to budget out a proposed show, projecting what the possible costs might be from hiring talent, to securing locations, to paying editors.

Low gave students a glimpse into two shows he's currently pitching: *Blowin' Up* is a series that would use pop culture as a way to explore the laws of science like understanding how hair follicles work by posing the question, "Just how big could Justin Bieber's hair actually get?" *Rock The Block* would be a weekly amateur dance competition where producers would set up a giant remote pick-up truck speaker, find the best dancers in one city block, turn up the tunes and have the local storeowners and proprietors judge the best dancer, eventually sending them to a national competition.