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THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2009 • chron.com/bellaire

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WORKSHOP HOUSTON



LEARNING TO SEW: Darnell Jarrow, 13, and Zach Moser work on a T-shirt-to-tote-bag conversion in the Style Shop at Workshop Houston, which will reopen Aug. 31.

R. CLAYTON MCKEE PHOTOS: FOR THE CHRONICLE

Creating their own sense of style

■ Students learn to sew, repair bikes, invest time

By **KIM MORGAN**
CHRONICLE CORRESPONDENT

TODAY, boxer shorts; tomorrow, prom suits.

That's the vision of Zach Moser, a 29-year-old East End resident who is in charge of the Style Shop at Workshop Houston, 3615 Sauer.

"We've been making pillow cases, reusable grocery bags and boxer shorts," Moser said. "My visual goal of prom suits is probably a couple of years off, but it's been fun learning how to sew."

Sewing is just one aspect of the Style Shop, where students ages 12-17 are welcome to come to work on projects of their own creation.

Moser is more interested, and admittedly more adept, at the design aspect of style.

Along with volunteers, he teaches students about silkscreening and the various computer programs used to create whatever their vision might be. They learn the basics of sewing and create custom-made fashion and accessories.

The Style Shop is one of five shops making up Workshop Houston, founded in 2003 by Moser and three of his former classmates from Oberlin College in Ohio — Seth Capron, Katy Goodman and Benjamin Mason.

Workshop Houston's mission is to provide youth with creative, technical and



WELDING SKILLS: Christopher Williams, 14, practices his welding skills in the Chopper Shop at Workshop Houston, a nonprofit organization with eight employees.

educational resources.

The group's first project was the Third Ward Community Bike Shop, followed in 2006 by the Chopper Shop, the Style Shop and the Beat Shop. The newest addition is the Scholar Shop.

The Bike Shop is a little different, Goodman said, in that it's open to people of all ages who want to take part in do-it-yourself bike repair.

The rest of the shops are for students who are enrolled in school.

"This is not for dropouts," said Reginald Hatter, 27, coordinator of the Scholar Shop, which is for tutoring and academic enrichment. "We understand that school is the No. 1 priority."

Even throughout the summer, every student participating in a workshop

was required to put in 30 minutes a week of reading time at the Scholar Shop.

"We made reading mandatory because this is a fundamental part of life, something you have to do no matter what industry you're in," Hatter said. "If you want to be in Workshop Houston, you have to read. We are a fun place to go, but all of our programs are educationally-based."

Lonnie Hilson, 14, who will be a freshman at Sterling High School, 11625 Martindale, said he was a little taken aback when he learned about the new reading rules.

"But I got used to it," Hilson said. "It had to be done. I grew to like it."

Hilson was part of Workshop Houston's Summer Leadership

At a glance

The days and hours of Workshop Houston shops, 3615 Sauer, are:
Third Ward Bike Shop: Do-it-yourself bike repair from 3-7 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays; 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays

■ The Chopper Shop: Welding and metal fabrication from 4-7 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays

■ The Beat Shop: Music production from 4-7 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays

■ The Style Shop: Fashion from 4-7 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays

■ The Scholar Shop: Tutoring and academics from 4-7 p.m. Monday through Thursday

production, said coordinator Seth Capron.

"I've played a lot of different instruments but the thing I'm most interested in is writing music," said Capron of Montrose. "You can have experience playing an instrument at an advanced level, and that's great, but a lot of music is editing and computer-based."

The Beat Shop is a music production studio with a small recording booth, DJ turntables, mixers, digital drum machines, instruments and computer software for recording, sequencing and creating new music.

Workshop Houston is a nonprofit organization with eight employees, an annual operating budget of approximately \$300,000, and is funded by foundations and private donors.

Workshop Houston will reopen and launch its fall schedule Aug. 31.

DEVELOP

District unveils urban design

The International Management District has a public meeting to unveil the Environment and Urban Master Plan.

The plan addresses issues such as street signage and esplanade enhancements southwest I

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A diva is more dress up

MAR... Bel... Me... and Melissa... have fun looking... painted for... participant... Exchange,"... clothing swap... that Bell org... The group a... funds to cha

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