

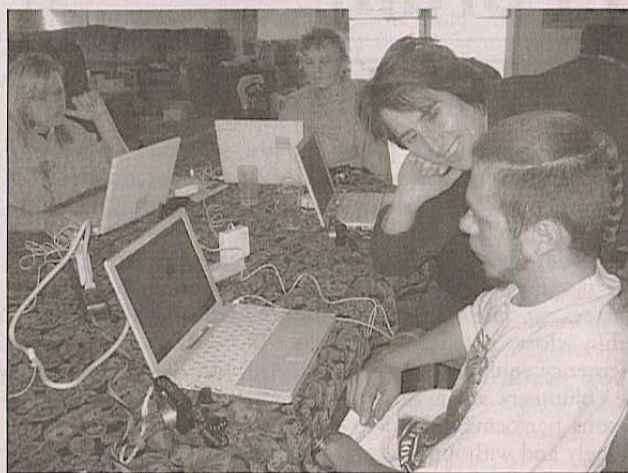
'Up from the Understory' presentation set for June 1

'Up From the Understory,' a UC Davis project focused on documenting the revitalization of the economy, forests and local pride in the Blue Mountain region of northeastern Calaveras county, has moved into its 'storytelling' phase, where local youth will interview area residents who have contributed to revitalization of the region during the past 10 years, according to program coordinator Jesikah Maria Ross.

"It's a pilot project that aims to gather, present, and discuss images and stories at a project presentation and celebration at West Point School on Sunday, June 1, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm," said Ross.

The idea of project is to use media as a tool to bring people together, reflect on community history, document recent renewal efforts, build pride and solidarity among youth and adults across Blue Mountain area, and help residents consider how to move forward with continued renewal efforts, according to Ross.

"Specifically, the project brings youth who have



Jesikah Maria Ross helped West Point youth Chris Burley learn computer skills for the project.

learned the basics of community, photography, blogging, and crafting stories together with adults who have been involved in recent efforts to revitalize the area's economy, arts, culture, and community services, as well as sustaining the local forest, rivers, and natural resources," said Ross.

"Together, youth-adult pairs will share their perspectives on the positive sides of the Blue Mountain area and tell stories of how they are involved in making it a better place to live, work, and play."

Local youngsters will produce digital stories combining photography and audio narratives that explore how an area moves from unfettered to sustainable development. Included will be personal stories of community advocates, Native American leaders, environmentalists, business owners and elected officials.

The youth attended workshops with Ross on Wednesdays and Saturdays in March at the Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth and Families, learning fundamen-

tals of community photography, computer skills and how to set up and contribute to a project blog. They have also learned how to work respectfully and effectively with their photography subjects (ethics, representation issues), according to Ross.

The youth have created a Web blog, <http://upfromtheunderstory.blogspot.com>, where the project will be documented in perpetuity.

The project involves UC Davis scholars, staff, local organizations, schools, and community members.

The event will feature a community potluck with live music and project blog exhibition and demonstrations.

From 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm there will be a presentation and discussion of

youth-produced digital stories on community renewal efforts.

"For me, the idea behind the project is to act as a tool, bringing people together to reflect on their history and document recent renewal efforts," said Ross. "I think that if we can help folks remember how the area was compared to how it is now, and it can help them determine what differences they want to make moving forward, this project will have been a success."

"From the perspective of someone who works at UC Davis, if the project builds a bridge between area residents and UC Davis, locals will have a better idea of the resources available." Contact Ross at 530-320-1819, or jmross@ucdavis.edu.



**Don't Forget
Mother's Day!**

Wedding Packages for Every Budget
Floral Deliveries • Gifts

Pine Grove Flowers & Gifts

20171 Hwy 88, Pine Grove **296-2228**
Open 9-5, M-Sat. **Closed Sunday**