

Photo courtesy of Joy Smith



Morgan Denhart, left, is seen onscreen with Anthony O'Hayon, student director of Conch 5 Studios, during the closing ceremony of the Student Television Network Convention in Orlando.

The victory was a sweet one for team members Morgan Denhart, Austin Svedjan and Riley Schill, who collaborated on the winning effort. The West High School's Conch 5 Studios National Team have placed first in the nation in Ed Smith's television production classes, and have been involved in these annual competitions for years.

Three students from Key West High School's Conch 5 Studios National Team have placed first in the nation in Ed Smith's television production classes, and have been involved in these annual competitions for years. The victory was a sweet one for team members Morgan Denhart, Austin Svedjan and Riley Schill, who collaborated on the winning effort. The West High School's Conch 5 Studios National Team have placed first in the nation in Ed Smith's television production classes, and have been involved in these annual competitions for years.

Local students win top broadcast award

Citizen Staff

BY TERRY SCHMIDA

KEY WEST

Award

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The team's 20 members competed against some 3,000 students from high schools across the country. About 300 competed in the category that Conch 5 won.

"Last year, I placed fourth in this category, but I was competing on my own," said Denhart, a KWHHS junior who has been grooming herself to become a newscaster since she was a little girl. "This time around it was a different set-up and format. It became a live reporting event, where our team had to provide our own audio, video and graphics. Our prompt was that we were behind the scenes of a convention competition. We had to basically find the story and write and deliver it, like if they sent us out into the field to report on a breaking story."

Teammates Schill, who is his senior class' assistant director, and Svedjan, the director of photography, are equally amazed and pleased at the team's performance.

"We were really surprised by the level of competition we were facing," Schill said. "We were a little worried at first that we wouldn't be able to compete with them, because they just had much better gear with them. It was intimidating, but we were excited. We were thinking that we would never make it to first place."

Upon hearing that his students had won first place in Team Live Reporting, teacher Ed Smith was so overwhelmed that he actually passed out while attempting to give Denhart a congratulatory hug.

"I went down like a sack of potatoes on top of her in front of 3,000 people," Smith said. "They also broadcast this event live around the world. It was a little too much excitement for me."



Photo courtesy of Joy Smith

From left, Key West High School students Riley Schill, Morgan Denhart and Austin Svedjan show off their awards with Instructor Ed Smith in Orlando.

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Ed Smith
Instructor

his public gaffe, Smith couldn't be happier with the showing of his students.

"It's every teacher's dream to see their students bring their dreams to life," Smith said. "When they win, I win 10 times. It's very exciting, because when we walk in, we're always the underdogs. One of the schools we were competing against rolled up in a \$150,000 production truck, and

There's no rest for the Conch 5 Team, however. Its members, who each year must earn their place on the road squad by proving their mettle in the first semester of school, are readying themselves for their next adventure: a trip to Las Vegas for the National Association of Broadcasters Convention. There they will showcase their talents and accomplishments in the hope of winning valuable sponsorships from computer and software companies.

"This one's extremely important to us as well," Smith said. "We're always looking for sponsorships, so that we can put out better product all the time."

For information on the team, and