

Student is focused on his career

SAY CHEESE: Falls student has started his own photography business as part of high school class.

BY RICK FORGIONE
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Before this past fall, Niagara Falls High School student Bryan Zaczek only dabbled in photography when he was on vacation or wanted to capture a moment with close friends.

The hobby has now developed into a career opportunity.

"It definitely beats working for minimum wage," said Zaczek, a senior in the school's entrepreneur class.

Taught by Derek Zimmerman, the course provides students with a \$100

loan to start their own business and then continue running it for real. Zaczek used his money toward the purchase of a Kodak 35mm digital camera. It didn't take long for the jobs to start pouring in and "Pictures by Zaczek" to answer the call.

"I would've never started this business if it wasn't for the course," said Zaczek, who started off by taking photos of school sporting events and plays, but has branched off into several different projects. "You can go out and spend \$3,000 on a camera, but if you don't take good pictures, it doesn't really matter."

Since the class started in September, Zaczek has taken countless shots of the American falls, sporting events, pep rallies, school plays and

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THE FEATURE

Saturday People Profile will run every Saturday on the front page. Local residents you know and some who you probably don't will be featured. If you know someone who you think would make an interesting story, e-mail arkind@gnnewspaper.com.



JAMES NEISS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SURE SHOT: Niagara Falls High School student Bryan Zaczek, 18, shows off some of his scenic art photography. He has been honing his skills shooting school sports and actors in plays. His work will be on display at the Aquarium of Niagara, beginning in March.

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Bryan Zaczek

■ **AGE:** 18

■ **EDUCATION:** A senior at Niagara Falls High School. He hopes to attend either Buffalo State College, the University at Buffalo or the Rochester Institute of Technology to study photography and business.

■ **FAMILY:** Son of Guy and Cathy Zaczek of Niagara Falls. He also has a brother and sister.

■ **HOBBIES:** In addition to photography, he likes to skateboard and play tennis.

■ **BUSINESS:** Operator of "Pictures by Zaczek." To hire him to take photos, or for more information about his services, call Zaczek at 10-2222.

ZACZEK ...

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anything else that captured his eye and has the potential to sell. His favorite target is his fellow students.

"I take just about all of the photos for the high school yearbook," he said. "Capturing the emotion of people is the best thing about being a photographer. You can't stage a picture before you take it. You have to go on instinct."

In addition to the yearbook, Zaczek's photos can be found in the Our Schools newsletter. For the entire month of March, his work will be on display at the Aquarium of Niagara — a partnership that will give him a lot more exposure.

"To a young man like this, it's a tremendous opportunity," Joseph Bel-

lonte, coordinator of the business program, said about the Aquarium display.

Zaczek said the exhibit will include about 20 to 25 framed and matted photos, including shots he's taken during trips to a butterfly conservatory and New York City. Gay Molnar, director of development, said this is the first time a high school student's work will be on display at the Aquarium.

"I think his work is wonderful," she said. "He's a very talented young man and has a lot of potential. It's nice to see a person of that caliber coming up in our community."

Bellonte said Zaczek is gaining valuable experience in the course while running his own business — he's also making some money.

"He's got that entrepreneurial bug," Bellonte said.

Charges for Zaczek's services range and are based on whether someone wants to pay him by the hour or purchase photos individually. While most of his gigs have been school events, he's hoping to see a jump in business with the upcoming wedding season.

"I'm even willing to do my first wedding for free," he said. "At this point, I'm just trying to get a portfolio."

Once he graduates, Zaczek hopes to study photography and business at either Buffalo State College, the University at Buffalo or the Rochester Institute of Technology.

"I hope to make a career out of it, but no matter what I do, I'm going to be an amateur photographer all of my life," he said.

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