

## For Immediate Release

August 9, 2010

Eureka, CA—Access Humboldt is pleased to introduce Digital Arts Service Corps member Sam Kaplan, who will be spending the next year developing new programs to serve Humboldt County, as well as doing outreach to increase community awareness of existing digital media access programs and services.

Access Humboldt was selected as one of only thirty four-sites nationally for placement of a Digital Arts Service Corps member. "We are delighted to be part of this national program and to benefit from this dedicated support for our education and training programs," said Tracy Jordan French, director of administration and development for Access Humboldt.

By way of introduction, Sam agreed to a brief interview:

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself.**

I grew up outside Chicago, but I moved here from the Philadelphia suburbs, where I just graduated from Haverford College with a degree in art history. I took a lot of media-related courses in college, and I spent most of my free time working for the school newspaper and the student concert series. I was Editor in Chief of the newspaper and head of the concert series, both positions that required a lot of engagement with the college community, so I have experience trying to serve diverse groups of people—students (who themselves have pretty diverse backgrounds and interests), faculty, staff, administrators, etc. I've also interned for a few alt-weeklies—the Chicago Reader during high school, Philadelphia City Paper just last spring. As soon as I saw the North Coast Journal, I knew I'd like it here.

I was raised without a TV—my parents were always very anti-television—so I'm new to public access, but I've found that the skepticism towards corporate media that I developed as a TV-less teen seems to put me right at home in the public access world.

### **What are you hoping to accomplish with Access Humboldt?**

I want to find out what people here need in terms of access to media resources and skills and how Access Humboldt can best meet those needs. Right now, I'm just trying to soak everything in—meet a lot of people, get a sense of the community, try to see how everything fits together.

### **What are your first impressions of the area?**

It's all really interesting. I've never lived in such a remote place before, and I'm starting to see that there are a lot of challenges here, even just in terms of communication. How do you knit together these far-flung communities and get everyone talking and sharing

ideas? It's a challenge that Access Humboldt seems uniquely positioned to address. People might not be able to meet in one place, but if they can communicate over the Internet and on television, the physical distances between them might start to seem less significant.

Personally, I think I'm still having a bit of culture shock, but I love the ocean and the trees and all the old Victorian houses. There's a lot of really interesting history here, too. I'm looking forward to just exploring everything.

# 30 #

*Access Humboldt is a non-profit community media center on the campus of Eureka High School that provides training and other services related to digital media production, as well as managing the four Humboldt County public access channels. As part of its award-winning Digital Redwoods initiative, it is also working with other regional groups to bring high-speed broadband access to North Coast communities.*

*The Digital Arts Service Corps places Corps members at nonprofit media organizations nationwide with the goal of bringing media access to underserved communities. DASC is funded and sponsored by the Transmission Project, a Boston-based nonprofit that works to amplify the power of media and technology, and AmeriCorps\*VISTA, a national service program designed to fight poverty.*

**Picture caption: Sean McLaughlin, Executive Director of Access Humboldt (right) with Sam Kaplan, Digital Arts Service Corps member.**