



"Empowering youth through multimedia"

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SPY HOP PRODUCES FILMS FOR CYCLING WEBSITE FEATURING THE TOUR DE FRANCE

Salt Lake City, UT – Spy Hop Productions and Cookie Jar Publishing are collaborating to produce a series of short cycling films now playing on www.mikeandthebike.com. Several Spy Hop alumni have spent the past few weeks producing the animated, documentary, and narrative pieces featured on the website launched in conjunction with the Tour de France. The films were created to help promote the children's book *MIKE AND THE BIKE* and to get youth excited about cycling.

MIKE AND THE BIKE was written by guitarist and cycling enthusiast Michael Ward, with a foreword by his friend, six-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong. The website mikeandthebike.com is closely tied to the Lance Armstrong Foundation, The Outdoor Life Network, and The Tour de France for Kids. Spy Hop Productions and Cookie Jar Publishing are working together to keep the project as youth driven as possible, with short films made by youth for youth. Former Spy Hop students have brought their fresh perspectives and unique ideas to the films ranging in subject from bicycle poetry to competitive racing.

The *MIKE AND THE BIKE* project is a great opportunity for Spy Hop alumni to showcase their talents. The website offers youth-oriented content covering the sport of cycling, with cycling-themed activities and a photo album where kids and fans from around the world can post pictures, wish good luck to racers, and write thank you or farewell notes to Lance Armstrong as he goes for his 7th Tour de France victory. Executive Producer, George Starks comments, "From the very start, I knew this project was special. The kids at Spy Hop bring the energy, enthusiasm, and youthful spirit and innocence that embody exactly what we are doing with Mike, and their unique and creative expressions of what it means to 'enjoy the ride' capture the message that we are trying to get across, that EVERYBODY can enjoy the freedom and benefits of riding a bike!"

Spy Hop Productions is a nonprofit youth media arts center dedicated to empowering youth (K-12) through multimedia, including documentary arts, film and video production, radio, audio engineering, web design, 3D graphics, and animation. With the help of professional mentors, Spy Hop's young producers' works reached national audiences exceeding two million in 2004. Spy Hop has successfully served more than 10,000 young people in Utah since its inception in 1999.

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