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## Students sought to examine Romeo's SE quadrant

by **CHRIS GRAY**  
**Observer Staff Writer**

Award-winning local designer Jason Arnott is looking to further the education of Romeo students with some real-world experience right in their backyard.

Arnott, owner of Earth Environments, is seeking local students who are interested in helping to analyze and improve downtown Romeo's southeast quadrant.

Arnott, a graduate of Romeo Community Schools, said he was awarded scholarships through the Romeo Historical Society as well as the Starkweather Arts Center. He said if it weren't for the community's support, he wouldn't be where he was today.

"It helped in my career path, it helped me in my skills to create better places and spaces, so now I'm trying to give back to the community," he said.

In that regard, he is initiating an education outreach and internship program that will be made available to students from Romeo High School and the Romeo Engineering and Technology Center (RETC). He said the hope is to have the program up and running in a couple of weeks.

The program will be a multi-media plan that will document the southeast quadrant's current state, and will require research into past documents as well as talking with property owners, business owners and patrons.

"I want students to get engaged in working on life skills for talking with people and collecting data," said Arnott.

He said the 15-month program would entail three phases, the first of which he hopes to start in the spring before graduation. Phase two would begin in the fall, and phase three in the final months.

"If it's after the spring, we can bring them on as an intern for some summer assistance, and can enhance their education as they go into their field of interest," he said.

Arnott is currently speaking with drafting teachers at the RETC to coordinate the program, and has also brought the idea to the Downtown Development Authority. He said if possible, he would like to involve scholarships with each phase.

DDA Chairperson Christine Malzahn said the DDA is happy to foster relations with local entities, including the school system.

"It's exciting, it's always a great resource if we can tap into any partnership ideas," she said.

Arnott said the program goes beyond students who have an interest in drafting and architecture, though. Everything from photographers to CAD users are welcome to submit their names.

"They can be into art, drafting, creative thinkers, programmers," he said. "Even artists and musicians, because they have a voice on creating outdoor space and know how to tie in land uses."

For more information, call Arnott at (586) 336-1772 or Evva Dossin at the RETC at (586) 752-0245.