By Tom Wearing

Soul mentors Janet and John Heppell have the opportunity to meet and share a conversation with Heppell at a ‘Skills USA’ event at Capac High. Since then, Heppell has maintained contact with the Antilla in an effort to share information and help bridge the educational gaps that exist between the United States and the United Kingdom.

On Sunday, Feb. 4, through the modern miracle of “Skyping,” more than 20 Kits students were able to ask questions and share information with Heppell about their mutual interest.

“For the first time in my life, and arguably the most influential academic in the field of technology and education,” Antilla said.

“BETT is a global community where individuals discover technology for education and lifelong learning,” said Antilla. “Every year, Stephen sets up camp for four days at the heart of the BETT exhibition.”

“Having made demonstrate ideas of how creativity, flexibility and technology can be combined to transform learning and teaching in schools,” Antilla continued.

“The show embraces innovative ideas that inspire, with the purpose of shaping the way people learn from classical to modern classrooms,” Antilla said.

“By allowing visitors to explore fresh ideas now taking place in schools, colleges universities and in the workplace.”

In an era of limited financial resources, Antilla views Skyping and other shared learning opportunities as being attractive, creative and even desirable.

“Ashley said, “it’s an excellent opportunity for our students to learn and share.”

“Our goal is for the kids to get the most out of the experience. Antilla said Heppell thanked the Capac students for sharing their hard work, adding that the Skype session went so well that many in the BETT audience were inspired to go build robots.

“The best example of how things should go done across Europe,” Heppell told the Capac robotics students.

“Dr. Stephen Heppell is a professor of New Media Environments at the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at the University in England. He is widely regarded as an educational visionary.”

**Capac’s Metal & Soul Skypes with tech guru**

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**Capac — Capac High School’s Metal & Soul FIRST Robotics team is adopting an international approach to learning.**

**During the past week, Capac robotics students have been Skyping with Dr. Stephen Heppell from the site of the 2013 British Education Technology (BETT) Show in London, England.**

Heralded as an educational visionary, Heppell has been described as Europe’s leading online learning expert and arguably the most influential academic in the field of technology and education.

Two years ago, Metal & Soul mentors Janet and John Antilla had the opportunity to meet and share a conversation with Heppell at a ‘Skills USA’ event at Capac High.

Since then, Heppell has maintained contact with the Antilla in an effort to share information and help bridge the educational gaps that exist between the United States and the United Kingdom.

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**Members of Capita High School’s Metal & Soul robotics team modeled global learning over the weekend by Skyping with technology guru Stephen Heppell at the BETT technology show in London, England.**

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**Trio reaches out for Hearts**

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Ed Tech students raise funds to support Hearts for Autism

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By Catherine Minolini

ATTICA — Three Lapeer County Ed Tech students are reaching out to help others and learning the skills to impact lives and affect change through an autism awareness and support project.

Ashley Gray, Katie Curell and Paige Williams have teamed up to support Hearts for Autism in Lapeer County as part of a Skills USA project for their Careers in Education course.

The trio chose the project because of their interest in pursuing careers in social work and special education, and Ashley’s volunteer efforts with Hearts for Autism in Lapeer.

Ashley’s step-sister is autistic, and her step-mom is involved in the program. She began volunteering to show her support.

“I have seen what a difference the program can make,” Ashley says.

The students are raising funds to support Hearts for Autism in Lapeer County. All donations will benefit local families participating in the program.

“Raising a child with autism can be more costly and it can also be very stressful,” says Katie, a North Branch High School senior. “Our fundraiser will allow families to spend more time in the program and give them more resources.”

Ashley, Katie and Paige have been raising funds during break time at the Ed Tech Center. Donor’s names are put on a puzzle piece and posted on a giant heart in one of the school’s hallways.

The students are also creating a Power Point presentation detailing their project, which will be reviewed by a panel of judges for Skills USA. They’re also preparing a notebook outlining their objectives and procedures.

Careers in Education teacher Katie Josef says the students are proud of their efforts, noting that they are learning skills that will benefit their career choices.

“They’ve been working hard and are doing a great job, and it’s good for the community,” Josef says.

Ashley, also a North Branch High School senior, plans to pursue a career in social work.

Paige, a junior at North Branch High, wants to become a special education teacher.

Anyone interested in supporting the Hearts for Autism project may send a donation to the Lapeer County Ed Tech Center, Careers in Education program, 692 Lake Pleasant Road, Attica, MI 48412. Please note “Hearts for Autism” on the check.

More about Hearts for Autism in Lapeer County is available online at www.hearts4autism.org. Monthly meetings currently held the third Saturday of every month at 10:30 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 433 N. Calhoun Street, near the post office in downtown Pontiac.

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**‘Cooking for crowd’ program in February**

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**ST. CLAIR COUNTY — Beneficial events that include food, from bake sales to a spaghetti dinners, are a fixture in our community. Experts at Michigan State University want to help community groups serve up grub that’s both delicious and safe through their Cooking for Crowds program.**

On February 26, they’ll offer a class in St.Clair County at the Extension Office, 200 Grand River Ave, from 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Attendees will learn about the food safety risks associat- ed with cooking large volumes of food and how to reduce those potential problems. Those strategies are similar to those used in commercial food settings but are translated into practical meth- ods for non-profit groups.

Cost for the class is $10 per person, which includes a 13 page manual with check lists and information to help safety plans and implement food fundraisers or events

To register call MSU Extension in Huron County at 989-209-9499, ext. 602.