

Friis, John

From: Emily Brochin [emily@digisynd.com]
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2009 7:23 PM
To: Friis, John
Cc: eca_pace@yahoo.com
Subject: Please Don't Shut Down ECA--Section 5 of House Bill HB6666

Dear Mr. Friis,

I am writing in response to the news I received this morning that there might be a chance that ECA could shut down by next year and am writing to strongly advocate for Section 5 of House Bill HB6666, which will allow for adjunct faculty certificates to be issued to the highly-trained professional artists, who serve as ECA's part-time faculty, to continue their 35-year record of preparing Connecticut's high school students for our competitive global economy. If they are required to become certified for 12-hour per week part-time positions, they will not be able to do so and the school will close. This will be a terrible loss to Connecticut's high school students in 19 school districts.

I graduated from ECA's Creative Writing Department in 1999 and I'm sure I'll be one of many when I say that my entire high school education was worthless with the exception of the education I received at that facility. I went to High School in the Community and Wilbur Cross and I fell through the cracks. Not in the sense that I was a problematic student but that I was completely and utterly unchallenged by curriculums that were (necessarily) dedicated to giving the bare minimum to its students so they could graduate. For example, my guidance counselor informed me that he thought I had a very good shot of getting into Gateway Community College. With the patience and vision of the professional artists at ECA (not to mention their recommendations), I overcame the limited guidance of my counselor was accepted into Brown University, where I majored in Comparative Literature in Spanish.

Surprisingly, Brown University's well-regarded writing program PALED IN COMPARISON to the workshop environment of ECA's Creative Writing Department. Luckily, the skills I learned at ECA carried over into my professional life, where I drew on my 1998 newspaper course to help me as a freelance journalist for the Philadelphia Weekly, LemonDrop, Uwishunu.com, and Daily Candy. The skills taught to me in my monologue and playwriting classes were essential to my recent assignment to create a character to market a major motion picture for Disney.

Being instructed by working professionals taught me to trust the opinions and guidance of my teachers because they were coming from a place of both pragmatism and passion. It was an inspiring 4 years and I can honestly say that for 12 hours a week for 4 years, I felt lucky to be a part of the public school system. I have discussed my experiences there with many fellow writers and nobody can boast of the same careful training I received. ECA was essential to forming my personality, my work ethic, and my professional successes. Please do the right thing and allow them to continue to teach future generations of students hungry for a real education.

Emily Brochin
Creative Writing Department, 1999

3/20/2009