

Hi. I'm Cleo O'Brien-Udry, and I've been a student in the Creative Writing Department of the ACES Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven for three years now. Please, support raised bill 6666, section 5. At ECA, we are taught by professional artists and our teachers must be given adjunct instructor certificates or they won't stay to teach at ECA anymore.

The teachers in my department have published volumes of poetry, monologues, short stories, plays—every little piece of writing sweated over, slaved over, revised again and again. Just like us, they're mental enough to stay up until three in the morning working on a single sentence. They know just how hard it is to write. They know how hard we work because they've been there—and this common thread of insane devotion to writing, to this crazy craft, makes us trust each other.

At ECA, we don't work for the teachers, we work with them. This mutual respect lets us build monumental pieces of writing—we've won awards that have taken our writers from Miami, to Ireland, to New York City. Our writing depends on the astute comments of our teachers. Through ECA we've learned to taste every word we write, to understand how our language fits together and to really cherish the stories we read. You can't truly appreciate the beauty of Shakespeare's sonnets until you know how insanely difficult it is to write in iambic pentameter, or to rhyme every couplet, and our teachers, they really understand this lunatic art. We're privileged to have them pass on their knowledge and love of writing.

Please, let our teachers stay at ECA by supporting the adjunct instructor certificate.