

Alliance Theater Internship – Final Reflection

I could not be more grateful for the experience and knowledge I gained from my summer as a teaching assistant at the Alliance Theater's virtual summer theater camp. With everything the pandemic has done to our society and life in the arts as we know it, it was really uplifting to work with such a passionate group of people who pushed many boundaries to continue their summer programming. Although my usual day-to-day work mostly involved camp games and interacting with the students, the connections we were still able to make with campers age 3-18 was really substantial. At the start, I was hesitant to see how a virtual theater camp would operate since theater is such a personal and hands on craft, but with such casual settings like these Zoom rooms, the campers could still engage and learn a lot about whatever class they were taking (improv, camera acting, tech theater...). From all these little uplifting moments (which brought back fond memories of my own summer camp experiences), I was able to gain a little more hope for this industry to get back up on its feet, despite the format being altered. It's so easy to get caught up in the losses to the world we know and love, that I have sometimes overlooked the innovation that is coming out of this time.

All this hope and aspiration for the future of the arts was also backed by the incredible amount of work put into planning this camp. After having some conversations with the heads of the education department and those planning this camp at the Alliance, I was able to see more clearly the rocky path they had to take to even get to this point and continue their mission. Because I joined the team for only the July session, everyone was already pretty settled into their camp routines, and I do wish I could have done the June session instead to see firsthand how the staff handled new issues as they arose. All my supervisors were great about keeping

positive attitudes throughout the summer, though, and I could not be more grateful for their level of dedication and communication with me regarding my requests for extra meetings and information about their COVID planning.

Notes / Recommendations for a future Elon Student

I would strongly recommend working at Alliance theater to another Elon student. Even in the completely uncharted territory of a virtual summer camp and slightly broken communication lines, I still felt a sense of community created between myself and the staff / other interns I worked with throughout the summer. As more theaters continue to shift their programming to virtual and more accessible options, I was really proud to work with one of the trailblazers in theater education.