

**ABCDE FOCUS**



**Summer 2018**

## President's Message

What a beautiful sunny summer day it is here in Smithers! I trust everyone else is as excited about summer break as I am and no doubt you all need the time to recuperate and rejuvenate. I have learned so much in my new role as president and in reflecting on our year I am beyond grateful for our hard working ABCDE team! A big shout out to these beautiful people; Colin Plant (Squamish), Lana O'Brien (Vernon), Katie Everson (Langley), Christine Knight (Campbell River), Lori Mazey (Courtenay), Ryan Grenier (Kelowna), Jenn Ohlhauser (North Vancouver), and Zelda Coertze (Port Coquitlam). A heartfelt thanks to Gord Hamilton (Langley) and Sharon Conrad (Vancouver) for their continued work on behalf of the ABCDE as well!

Sharon and Gord were the brains and brawn behind this year's National Theatre School BC Drama Provincials. We had such a lovely time at Douglas College appreciating the performances of students around the province and participating in workshops together. Lana O'Brien continues to keep the Goodwill Shakespeare Festival alive in Vernon BC. If you have not yet attended this event with your students I strongly urge you to contact Lana in the fall.

Our students have also had opportunities to write and perform in the ABCDE sponsored Youthwright competition. Recently we also awarded scholarships to students of ABCDE members. See their bios on our website. If you ever have questions about the programs and opportunities available to you and your students please do not hesitate to contact someone on the executive or visit our website. [www.bcdramateachers.com](http://www.bcdramateachers.com)

In the meantime we are busy planning the fall conference "CREATIVE SPACES," which will once again take place at the Vancouver Film School. We are thrilled to be welcomed back into their space to learn and play together again soon. Be sure to let the film and media teachers in your school know about this amazing opportunity.

As we all reflect on our year let us keep in mind our amazing colleagues who work so hard to provide meaningful programs for their drama students. Consider acknowledging one of your fellow drama teachers with an award presented at the AGM during the fall conference. Visit our website for more information on how to complete this process. All the best in wrapping up the craziness of what is undoubtedly the best job in education, teaching drama. I wish everyone the most relaxing summer. See you in the fall

Heather Lee

## My Fair Lady - John Barsby Secondary, Nanaimo

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2017/2018

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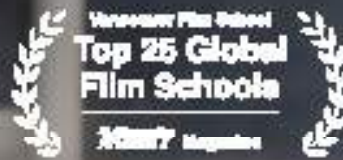
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Association of British Columbia Drama Educators  
presents

**2018 Drama Conference**  
**October 19-20**  
Vancouver Film School  
151 W Cordova St, Vancouver, BC V6B 1B2

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for more information please contact Katie Everson  
email: keverson@sd35.bc.ca

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**ABCDE Fall Conference 2018 - Rate \$259.00**

**YOU MUST BOOK BY September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 TO RECEIVE THIS RATE.** With 65 guestrooms, the St. Regis Hotel's sleek interior design and crisp tailored look creates a perfect atmosphere for the discerning traveller. The St. Regis Hotel is a 100% Canadian owned and operated boutique heritage hotel, located within Vancouver's central business district which is within walking distance from Robson Street, UBC Robson Square, BCTI, SFU, the Convention Centres, Pacific Centre mall, Holt Renfrew and acclaimed restaurants such as the on-site Gotham Steakhouse and Cocktail Bar. We even have a Starbucks on-site! The St. Regis Hotel is TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice Award recipients for 2017.

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Please call the hotel directly to book your room. 604-681-1135 or 1-800-770-7929. You can also email [info@stregishotel.com](mailto:info@stregishotel.com). Refer to the Group name "ABCDE Fall Conference" when making reservations.

To get this rate you must book your room before September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. After this date you will be offered rooms at the Best Available Rate.

\*Rate based on double occupancy. \$30.00 charge per extra person in room.

### ABCDE Fall Conference special...



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The rates for this group are as follow:

Standard Queen: \$134 per room per night  
Standard Twin: \$144 per room per night

Indicate reservation #1028869 and Event: ABCDE Fall Conference upon room reservation





## Working with my kids.

First, to clarify, when I say “my kids” I do actually mean my own children. This is a frequent point of confusion among my friends and extended family as I talk about “my kids - meaning my students” in the drama department ALL the time!

As many drama teachers do, I put in many, many hours with my students in

the evenings and on weekends for our own rehearsals and to see other companies and school's shows, and taking them to places like New York, London, and Oregon Shakespeare festival for extended periods of time. I do seriously say that my incredibly supportive husband single-parents from September to June. At least... he did!

For the last five years I have been blessed to have my eldest daughter, Shaughnessy, at the school, actively participating in the drama and choir programs I lead. And, for the past two years, her twin siblings have arrived here as well. Delaney is also an active participant in drama and choir, while her twin brother, Fraser, is a serious hockey kid and only pops in to give me a hug, tell me he loves me (and then ask for my bank card) once in a while. Dad still does ALL the hockey driving and tournament stuff!! We divide and conquer.

Having my own kids in the theatre program is both a blessing and a challenge. When Shaughnessy arrived at Seaton, she was an established community theatre kid who was demonstrating some serious acting chops already. With “Mom” at the head, it was really important to both of us that she create her own space, friends groups, and reputation on her own before being linked to me. As she was transferring from another school district she had the advantage of no one knowing her. Her first class on her first day of high school was Drama 8! And we pulled it off. Many of her classmates didn't know she was mine until the end of the year.

Shaughnessy has always earned substantial parts in our productions. This has not always been easy for her. She has had to prove that she did indeed earn those parts, and was not just given them. She works incredibly hard, and is deeply and sincerely supported by her friends and company members. She was just named Valedictorian for her 2018 class, and was accepted into the University of Alberta's Acting Conservatory program, (which only takes 6 girls and 6 boys a year). I am BEYOND proud of her resilience, determination, and incredible talent. Her experience navigating the sometimes murky waters of high school has also prepared her for the competitive world of being an actor.

And now, just as Shaughnessy is graduating, Delaney, too, is proving to be a very strong actor. In fact, as I am writing this article, we just opened our spring production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Last week, one of our graduating students could no longer fulfill her obligation to the company. The students in this senior class asked if Delaney would step in and learn the role of Peaceblossom (in our singing, dancing fairy company who wrote all the music themselves for this show). I was honoured - and worried - that they asked her. Worried, because, here we go again....my kid getting picked for the part. But, she proved herself in her drama class, and she knows the show because....she is mine, and she is here! I absolutely LOVE getting to share my passion for theatre and choir with my girls. It is such a gift to have “MY” kids among “my kids.”

## Beauty and the Beast - Carihi Secondary, Campbell River







## Sister Act

Gleneagle Secondary,  
Coquitlam



## Grease!

Alberni District Secondary, Port Alberni



## Congratulations to the 2018 ABCDE Scholarship Recipient

Shaughnessy O'Brien  
W.L. Seaton Secondary, Vernon



Shaughnessy O'Brien is a 17 year old student graduating from W.L. Seaton Secondary school this June. She is a member of her school's general, and honour choir programs, is the lead player in both the senior jazz band on alto saxophone, and the concert band on clarinet, and is actively involved in her school's theatre program. She is also involved with the leadership and yearbook teams, and is representing her graduating class as the valedictorian. Shaughnessy was brought into the world of theatre from a musical standpoint. "Music was something that always brought my family together, and from a very young age I was singing at my church and learning to read music." When she was 9, she tried out theatre for the first time at the Asparagus Theatre in Armstrong, BC, acting in a musical alongside her mother and grandmother. "That experience really stuck with me, and when I started middle school, I immediately got involved with their theatre program and started playing in the band," Shaughnessy said. From that point on she was hooked and began pursuing the arts in many different ways. Since then, Shaughnessy has been in two more community productions with Powerhouse Theatre in Vernon, BC, and has acted in five shows through Seaton's 27th Street Theatre Company portraying such characters as Anne Shirley from "Anne of Green Gables," Annie from "Annie," Mayzie la Bird from "Seussical the Musical," The Artful Dodger from "Oliver," and Lysandra from "A Midsummer Night's Dream." For the shows she couldn't fit into her timetable, Shaughnessy did tech, and has worked backstage as a fly-line operator and assistant stage manager. When she was in grade 10, Shaughnessy had the opportunity to travel to New York with her school's drama department, and it was there she discovered that her "hobby" was truly her life passion. "I was watching 'Matilda' on Broadway, and I had this sudden emotional revelation that this was it! I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else with my life at that point." Shaughnessy then started taking her acting more seriously. She took up dance, and now studies ballet, tap, jazz, and modern disciplines at the Okanagan School of Ballet. She also went to Vancouver last summer and participated in the Arts Club senior musical theatre intensive program for three weeks. "It was such an eye opening experience working with completely new directors who taught in a different style than I was used to. It definitely fueled my passion to move out to a bigger city to search out more experiences like that!" said Shaughnessy. Shaughnessy will be attending the University of Alberta in the fall and will be working towards her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting through the U of A's theatre conservatory, into which she was given guaranteed placement for the 2019 year. "I will be doing my pre-requisites for my degree this year, and then am part of the incoming class of 12 students who will move through the 3-year conservatory together. I can't wait!" she exclaimed. Shaughnessy says she is excited for her new journey in Edmonton, but will miss her local theatre and school family, and she is thankful for all that they've taught her. Upon graduating post secondary school, Shaughnessy is planning to work for theatre companies around central Canada, as well as partake in film and TV endeavours.



The Lion, The Witch,  
and the Wardrobe

Ladysmith  
Secondary



## **SPOTLIGHT ON**... Gulf Island Secondary School

The Gulf Islands Secondary School Theatre arts programs are taught by Jason Donaldson, student of Dave Brotsky (WL Seaton) and Juliana Saxton (UVic). He has a masters in Arts Ed (SFU) and is influenced by Keith Johnstone, Philippe Gaulier, Anne Bogart, Julie Taymor, Old Trout Puppet Workshop and Andy Kaufman.

The GISS Theatre programs include:

Two Drama 9/10 blocks, one each semester. These classes are not typically performance based although it is not uncommon for them to culminate in a play building project.

Two Acting 11/12 classes: closer to the new Company 11/12 courses. These have a rich tradition of two productions per year. The first semester class often focusses on higher production values and goes up in early January. Recent shows have included Peter and the StarCatcher, 1984, and Charlie & the Chocolate Factory. We rode the Mary Zimmerman train for several years as we typically need ensemble roles and episodic storytelling for a very large cast. The second semester show is often an “alternative” undertaking, usually collectively created and produced in site specific adventures. This year we satirized the history of living room plays in a community hall and recent shows have included A Midsummer Night’s Dream in the school courtyard, Cyrano in the local skatepark and Commedia in the Saturday Market. These tend to provide a vehicle for absurdity and an exploration of theatre history.

Further, the school has an Advanced Arts Academy program, the Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts (gispa.ca). This is an integrated arts school with strands in music, dance and theatre. Placement in this program includes an audition and a participation fee. Workshops, masterclasses and clinics have included The Frantic Assembly, Lori Triolo, The Electric Company, The Only Animal, Noah Drew, Catriona Leger and many other innovative regional theatre artists. Performance objects, mask, clown work, viewpoints training and physical/ensemble devising are typical focusses of the theatre strand. They also travel to Victoria and Vancouver several times a year to see professional productions, tour facilities and attend workshops. We produce an integrated collective creation each spring. This year was a resetting of the Orpheus & Eurydice myths with a Judy Garland/Dorothy mash up, and a Pinocchio production in the past two years. These shows are designed, composed, choreographed and devised by the students.

The school also participates regularly in the Vancouver Island region of the Canadian Improv Games and has made six treks to the national tournament with a couple of big years in a row these past two years.

Check out [gispa.ca](http://gispa.ca) and email [jdonaldson@sd64.bc.ca](mailto:jdonaldson@sd64.bc.ca) with any questions about the school.

Photos by John Cameron, except improv shot by Corbin Smith



Gulf Island Secondary School - Saltspring Island



Bugsy Malone - Colquitz Middle School, Victoria





# ABCDE NEWS!

## ABCDE Teacher awards

The ABCDE has three awards which it can award annually:

**DRAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR** for a practicing teacher and ABCDE member. It may go to anyone who teaches K-12 and incorporates Drama in and beyond the classroom, such as touring shows to other schools, going to see other people's theatrical work, having professionals in the school working with students etc.

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE** is for an individual who is an advocate for Drama in B.C. schools and whose work reflects the policies and goals of ABCDE. This award could go to administrators, university instructors, community members, parents, professional individuals and companies etc.

**DRAMA IN EDUCATION** is for a member of ABCDE who has shown outstanding work in the field of Drama as an excellent teacher with students, an advocate of the arts, and as a facilitator and/or teacher of other teachers.

Please consider nominating someone deserving. Deadline for nominations for next year is September 30, 2018.

## ABCDE Youthwright

Thank you to the student playwrights and sponsoring teachers who submitted a total of ELEVEN plays to the Youthwright Festival 2018.

Congratulations to the top three Outstanding Play Winners:

Odd Man Out by Alyssa Formosa from Mission Secondary School, Mission, BC. Teacher: Rebecca Meyer

Moonlight Jazz in New York by Trinity Valera-Mertineit from Mission Secondary School, Mission, BC. Teacher: Rebecca Meyer

Backstage by Raine Graham from Terry Fox Secondary, Port Coquitlam, BC. Teacher: Dan Tilsley

Please see our website [www.bcdramateachers.com](http://www.bcdramateachers.com) for information and application forms for any of our news items.

## High School Musical - South Delta Secondary, Delta



### **Become a member of the ABCDE... a PSA of the BCTF**

#1 Do you want to join/subscribe to the ABCDE? Need to renew your membership? Online registration can be found at <https://www.bctf.ca/psa/join.aspx>

#2 Do you prefer to print off the application and mail it in? Find a link to the form at [www.bcdramateachers.com](http://www.bcdramateachers.com)

#3 Join our moderated email list-serv and connect with other Drama practitioners! Share ideas, ask for help, post info about your shows. Almost anything Drama-related goes. Anyone can read our list-serv, but only members/subscribers can post (membership has its privileges ...\*sometimes we will post FREE offers for teachers on behalf of non-members)

To join our list-serv:

Use the drop-down list to select “psa-abcde” (fortunately we are the first one in the list!).

To post a message to our list-serv, please email Colin Plant at [colinplant@shaw.ca](mailto:colinplant@shaw.ca)

Our list-serv is moderated to avoid getting spammed.