

Former student heads theater dept.

By Nathan Sturgess
The Clackamas Print

When Michael Gerber, Clackamas Community College's new theater director, was asked to describe his experience as a CCC student, his immediate response was, "Fantastic!" Said with the most confident, no-doubt-about-it expression of finality, he soon followed by a cascading gush of words that seemed almost magical as he recounted his story with much enthusiasm as he talked about any theatrical drama.

His story began humbly as a young man flipping stereotypical burgers at a drive-in, "dead broke" as he describes it, but with big dreams. Thanks to the suggestion of a couple his friends after seeing one of his early plays, he soon found himself in the office of David Smith-English, CCC's then new theater director.

When he came in, (Smith-English) was down, he hadn't even read the script yet and he was excited about the fact that there's this kid that's interested in writing. It was probably the warmest welcome I have ever gotten," Gerber recalled. After that meeting, Gerber's relationship with Smith-English became more and more vital to his current success.

At the same time, Gerber auditioned and received the role in Smith-English's first play at CCC, "The Trap," written by Agatha Christie. Smith-English was so pleased with Gerber's performance that

he brought him back in to his office to try and encourage Gerber to stay in school and get a degree.

"I was still headstrong," Gerber said. "I honestly thought I could take this one acting class, finish the one show ... and strikeout on my own."

But thanks to the persistence of Smith-English, Gerber received a tuition waiver and decided to stay on and get his transfer degree.

According to Chris Whitten, Clackamas' long-time technical director, "(Gerber) is an example to students that you don't have to be a necessarily academically tracked student in order to attain your dreams ... as long as you commit yourself to it."

After that, Gerber's love for both acting and directing began to take root. He played major roles in several CCC plays like "The Lady from Debuke" and "Moon Over Buffalo," as well as being given the opportunity to produce and direct seven of his own plays here at CCC.

The high point of Gerber's time here as a student would begin with another meeting in Smith-English's office.

Smith-English had somehow secured a visit to CCC by the playwright Edward Albee, whom Gerber described as "one of the

biggest playwrights ... of our time."

Unknown to Gerber, Smith-English had submitted one of his early plays to be critiqued by Albee. Smith-English told Gerber that Albee was coming and that he would probably want to talk with him about his play.



John Petty Clackamas Print

Former CCC student, Michael Gerber, returns to take the role of department head for a year.

"Oh My God! I have no idea what's going on!" Gerber said.

A few days after Albee delivered his lecture, Gerber received a call informing him that Albee did in fact want to meet

with him and discuss his play. When that day came, he found out that several newspapers and a local TV station were covering the event. Along with two other playwrights, Gerber and Albee discussed his play.

"(Albee gave) me insight on what to do with my play," Gerber said.

Further encouraged to study acting and theater after this experience, Gerber went on to get his Bachelor of Arts from Western Oregon University and after graduating he returned, at the request of Smith-English, to be an Artist in Residence at CCC.

Later he received an Irene Ryan scholarship for acting and went to Ohio University where he received his Masters of Fine Art for directing.

When Smith-English became eligible for a year long sabbatical, finding a substitute was an easy decision.

Heather Ovalle, Clackamas' current Artist in Residence for an unprecedented second year said, "He's doing an awesome job. He's bringing a lot of new things to the program ... I've personally learned a lot from him in the first three weeks of school."

Both Whitten and Ovalle agreed that Gerber's real-world experience in both directing and acting and his previous experience as a student make him an excellent addition to the Clackamas theater department.

Gerber's first play as CCC's theater director is a comedy called "Leading Ladies" by Ken Ludwig which will begin Nov. 11 and will run until the 21st.

new social network for students

By Joshua Baird
Arts & Culture Editor

new social network, Kikini, allows students to connect with singles at school

space, Facebook and Twitter. These three are the top social networks in the world today. The problem with them is they cater to every age and social group. In fact, they allow to advertise, actors and actresses to advertise on these sites if they were your friend. Kikini is one of the newest social networking sites around town. What they don't do is cater to the businesses and entrepreneurs that overrun every town. They have a fresh twist to the social networking sites. They focus on college students.

you signed up with a clackamas.edu e-mail, your location would be "attending Clackamas Community College." Eddy Escardo Raffo, an engineer and co-founder of Kikini, stated in an e-mail.

This is nothing new; in fact Facebook itself started as a network for school purposes. However it was intended to be a site dedicated to learning, whereas Kikini is intended for flirting with other students.

"We refer to Kikini as a social matchmaking site. In other words, a social network for meeting people to date. It's one of the things I love most about Kikini, approaching dating as a social network. No one's really ever attempted that before, and it opens up so many potential fun ways for people to flirt!" said Rachel Vincent, co-founder of Kikini.

The thing that sets Kikini apart from most social networks is the ability to flirt with other members who go to colleges near you in the vein of traditional online dating sites. "Like most other social networks, Kikini is 100 percent free," said Vincent.

"We noticed that most other matchmaking sites target older

singles looking for 'the one' and overlook the needs of college students just looking to have a fun time dating. The tough part about college is that with classes, papers, extracurricular stuff and working, there often just isn't enough time to meet as many people as you'd really like to. Our goal is to respond to those needs: to make it fun and easy for college students to meet and flirt with lots of people, and to make flirting an easy, ongoing conversation," said Escardo-Raffo.

Kikini was born in San Diego, Calif. "We officially formed Kikini in March of 2009 and spent a little over a year in development before we officially launched the beta on Sept 28, 2010," said Vincent.

"There have been a lot of challenges mostly because we're interested in building the best thing we can, not necessarily the easiest. None of us had built a website when we started, although a bunch of us have degrees in engineering and worked at Microsoft as developers after college," stated Gabe Nell, an engineer and co-founder of Kikini, in an e-mail.

Check it out at kikini.com!

Host Families Needed for German Exchange Student

Oct. 25 - Nov. 5 (11 nights)

David Miller, Clackamas Community College German instructor, needs four more host families for German students visiting CCC as part of the CCC - Stadthagen Exchange. The students are in their late teens to early 20s. Hosts will be asked to

- ☐ Provide their guest with breakfast, a sack lunch and dinner,
- ☐ Transport their student Monday through Friday to CCC or a Tri-Met stop so that he/she can arrive here by 9 during the week and
- ☐ Involve the student in the host's normal weekend routine during the one weekend he or she will be here.

These German student and their families have already hosted CCC students who traveled last June to Stadthagen in northern Germany. At least one member of the CCC hosting family will be entitled to two weeks free room and board on any future CCC trip to Stadthagen.

For more information, contact David Miller at 503-394-3247 or millerd@clackamas.edu.

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Maze Game
Start on the left side and finish at the bottom left corner!

