

# Sprite Refreshing Films contest to give film students a taste of the big time

Lauren Ramsdell  
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Staff, students and Sprite swag crowded into Studio B last Monday for the interest meeting for the Sprite Refreshing Films Contest. Scores of future cinematographers packed together to hear the words of Dreaming Tree Films representative Aviva Kleiner.

Dreaming Tree Films is the partner production company with Sprite, Kleiner said. Dreaming Tree focuses on teenage talent, promoting films through various contests including the Refreshing Films one.

The Refreshing Films Contest has three ways to get involved: script writers, film crew and staff interns.

Only a portion of the Refreshing Films Contest is open to students nationwide. Any interested students from the age of 13-19 can apply to work sound, video or even storyboarding in the film crew department. The other positions, script writer and staff intern, have to come from only 12 predetermined schools.

Paul Castro, visiting professor of communications, made sure that Elon was one of the 12 this year.

"I called the Coca-Cola company and asked that Elon be allowed to compete," Castro said.

Castro said he was so impressed with the film students at Elon, both when meeting with them through Elon in L.A. and upon working at Elon.

"I thought, 'They should be on that roster,'" he said.

The three positions require applications. Script writers may submit up to five screenplays, but each requires an individual application. Script writers may also be from any discipline at Elon. In fact, at the interest meeting three accounting majors were present, as well as an English major and a theatrical design major interested in applying.

A short application and no experience is necessary for this position to be a part of the film crew.

Staff interns are the producers, directors and technical directors that make the films. These positions are required to be filled by communications majors from the eligible schools.

The staff intern position will be able to count as experiential learning and can be taken for credit. Though the title of 'intern' sounds more distant from the action, it's not always so.

"You will not be the intern to the director," Kleiner said. "You will be the director."

The winning submissions for screenplay, as well as those chosen for the film crew and staff intern positions will fly to one of six partnering cities: Atlanta, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York or Dallas to begin a marathon seven-day shooting event.

Casting calls, script tweaking and initial production begin on the first few days, then shooting the film takes one day and editing consumes the last few. Dreaming Tree and Sprite are working with celebrities to make cameos in the films. There is no word on an official list

of the celebrities involved.

The films will have budgets between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Following production, the films will premiere online and a national voting system will determine which is the best film. The winning movie will be shown at a film festival in June.

"This is national exposure for Elon students," Castro said. "It opens doors for writers, directors and producers. You can quickly go from a zero to hero."

Castro is familiar with the partnership because, as a student at UCLA, he entered his refreshing film and won.

"It's an opportunity to work with a lot of other talented students," he said.

The scripts will have to fall under a theme.

"We're looking for stories with a specific message: 'Ingenuity takes the unexpected path, and is rewarded for it,'" the competitions website says

Junior cinema major Michael Balderston said he is excited to be the chance to compete. He plans to submit screenplays as well as apply for the staff intern positions.

"I'm in the process of shooting a short film right now," he said, "And I've written a couple of scripts."

He has been a producer before, but said he would love to have one of his screenplays recognized.

"This would be a fantastic opportunity," he said. "It would be seen, naturally. Putting it on YouTube will make unrecognized students recognized. That is, if I'm lucky enough to get it."

## POSITION SPECIFICS

### Script writers

- No specific genre, just the theme "ingenuity takes the unexpected path, and is rewarded for it."
- Examples Dreaming Tree Representative Aviva Kleiner gave were "Milk" or "Ferris Bueller's Day Off"
- Elon University students can submit up to five screenplays
- Screenplays must be five to 15 pages long
- Must fill out one application per script

### Staff interns

- Paid experience
- Positions producer, producer, technical producer and behind-the-scenes documentarian
- Must be in School of Communications
- Travel/hotel paid for if chosen
- Students cannot write and direct, but can apply for both
- Experience needed

### Film crew

- Must be 13-19 years old by Nov. 30, 2010
- No experience needed
- Travel/hotel not paid for if chosen
- Short online application

## Student travels to UK to conduct research in community activism

Elizabeth Nerich  
Reporter

Maggie Castor, a junior at Elon University, has done things some students only dream about.

Recently, Castor traveled abroad to the United Kingdom, visiting Liverpool, England and the University of Glasgow to present research. A philosophy major, Castor's research focused on community activism and democracy in the classroom.

She also centered her work around a particular philosopher, Iris Marjan Young. Young is most known for her research in theories of justice, democratic theory and feminist theory, making her extremely applicable to Castor's project.

"Philosophy is not a major that's really common in undergraduate research; usually it's science based," Castor said.

She said this is mostly because of funding issues. People typically want to fund science projects.

"There is normally a more concrete result, whereas in philosophy, you have to do a lot more work to make it applicable, not that it can't be," she said.

Paul Miller, director of undergraduate research, said he sees a bright future for the university as far as undergraduate research and stressed the fact that great research projects are happening in every discipline.

"The university is set up to undergo different research and is looking for ways to support more and more," he said. "Opportunities are abundant. I can't think of

a single negative to doing undergraduate research."

Currently, administration at the university is striving to add participants to its program, while also working to maintain a quality experience for all involved.

According to Castor, while Elon has an optimistic viewpoint about its future and puts a lot of focus on growing and developing, it should also focus on the basics before continuing growth.

"There is a lot of change going on in Elon, they have this goal of having engaged students and they have this idea of the type of education they want to have, and I had this wonderful absolutely amazing and privileged opportunity to go to the U.K.," she said. "But there's not always the funding for all this. When it comes down to the logistics or practicalities, I don't think Elon is prepared for the student that they want to have."

Elon has an allotment of money set aside for teachers going to conferences domestically and internationally, but the same is not true for students going to similar conferences.

Though undergraduate research can take a lot of money and time, Castor said the only negative she encountered was being academically challenged in the classroom.

"It's very difficult for me to go into some classes, and I'm not as challenged as I'd liked to be," she said. "It's definitely time consuming... and requires a lot of patience. It's a long process, but something that is definitely worth it."

## New program's location undecided

PA PROGRAM from Page 1

campus.

He said students in the program will be required to spend time in professional medicine settings, such as family and emergency medicine and psychiatric situations. But for now, the academics involved are vague and will be decided by the program director.

"There's a model curriculum that the physician's assistant profession has put out, but we won't hold our program to that," Andrews said.

The committee was formed in December 2008, he said, while current Executive Vice President Gerry Francis was provost. The group made visits to different physician's assistant programs and talked to a local physician's assistant group to try to gauge the necessity of a program at Elon.

Then, in May 2009, the group submitted its feasibility report to Provost Steven House, who then relayed the findings to various campus groups, most recently the Board of Trustees, which voted to establish the program on campus. During that time, Andrews said the program was also looking for start up grants, about \$1.3 million before the renovations on whichever building the program moves into.

For Andrews, the idea of being located in the same building as the Doctor of Physical Therapy program is a useful one because he said it would breed collaboration among the different graduate programs. "Just based on the proximity, there would be some collaboration and synergy."

"It would be much harder to collaborate if they're in Greensboro," Andrews said.

Jenny Hammond, assistant director of graduate admissions, said it would be nice to have both programs in one location and close to Elon's campus, but a Greensboro location wouldn't be too challenging. Unlike the law school, which has its own admissions team, Fadde said their office will be working to recruit and market the Physician's Assistant program.

"I think what's so brand new about it is we only have one existing health professional program," Fadde said. "So when you add a second, it will be intriguing to see the opportunities."

The program is the first of many graduate programs that will be introduced at Elon during the next ten years, Fadde said, in line with the strategic plan, The Elon Commitment.

"We are primarily working on the Physician's Assistant program as phase one of that," he said.

## Pfleger's mother plans to sue contraceptive company Yaz

Jack Dodson  
News Editor

Joan Cummins, the mother of Michelle Pfleger, the Elon University freshman who died at Elon University Sept. 24, has been talking to a lawyer and plans to sue Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals Inc. on the grounds that its oral contraceptive Yaz caused the blood clots that led to her death.

Cummins started talking to the lawyer Oct. 29, after friends told her about cases they'd heard of people who had died because of using Yaz, which Pfleger had been taking for acne. She said at first, she needed to take a few weeks to grieve, but after a while, the idea became hard to ignore.

"Immediately after she died, everybody started talking," Cummins said. "I kind of had to talk a couple weeks and let it sink in."

Part of what surprised her when she

started to research were Yaz's links to blood clots, which were the cause of Pfleger's death.

"She was completely healthy," Cummins said. The day before she died, Pfleger had been treated with an analgesic by a physician due to a knee injury. Cummins said it was a normal injury, which raised questions about where the clots came from.

This isn't the first time the company is being sued for blood clots allegedly caused by Yaz, according to BNET, a business news site affiliating with CBS. Attorneys in Ohio are gathering plaintiffs to sue the company for the same reason as Cummins.

Cummins said the legal process will be a long one, and her lawyer wants her to take it slow, but she wants something to focus on.

"She wants me to just kind of slow down a little bit, but I need something to put my energy into," Cummins said.