

To Whom It May Concern:

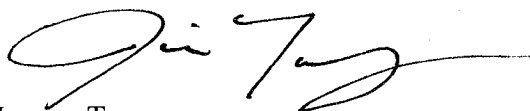
I came to the University of Alabama in the Fall of 2005 and knew exactly what I wanted to do with my life: Theatre. Even still, I could not have been more uncertain about how to make that happen or more terrified the day I stepped into my first acting class at the University. I can honestly say that I would not still be at the University of Alabama, about to graduate happily, if it were not for the enormous amount of support given from Mr. Seth Panitch.

Mr. Panitch's first year of teaching was my first year as a student and I have gotten to watch his work as a teacher become even more helpful and valuable to everyone around him over the past four years. My first year with Mr. Panitch was amazing. However shy and scared I was in that first acting class was taken away immediately with his stern and passionate methods. I knew immediately that he was a teacher I wanted to do my very best for. He single-handedly turned every person in that classroom not only into better actors, but into professionals. Even four years later, I am sure that he has not taught a single class where the students have not been jumping out of their seats to participate: an feat many teachers have failed to EVER make happen. By being the most perfect leader he can be, he sets the bar for the rest of his students. In class he is prompt, well prepared, serious, eager, and enthused about teaching and learning. He is determined to get the most out of each student he has and is known to keep working with a student until they feel completely happy about whatever they were working on. He demands excellence in a way that still feels reachable, never letting us settle even when we take giants steps forward.

The most important time I have gotten with Mr. Panitch would be in our Senior Showcase class this last fall. Each year the theatre department takes the graduating seniors to a showcase in New York City where we perform in front of many casting directors, agents and managers. This showcase has become the pivotal moment for seniors, providing us with a way to take control of our future by using everything we have learned in college. This year, Mr. Panitch decided to try something new. He created a class that would help us all figure out what about ourselves we wanted to show and what made each of us special. Each week we were required to have a performance prepared. After presenting it to the class we would then have a group discussion on ONLY the positive things each person liked about the scene. The class came together in front of our eyes. We found ourselves more confident in our abilities and more certain of our decisions than ever before. We strove for excellence, not just in ourselves, but in our peers as well. Mr. Panitch's innovative teaching techniques turned each of us into excited, dedicated, and mature actors who finally felt ready to grow up and move into the real world. It was invigorating.

Outside of class Mr. Panitch continues his leadership role in the department by serving as a mentor for most acting majors and minors. He gives advice, a helping hand, and keeps an open door for his students at all times. Mr. Panitch knows how to turn his young, directionless students into mature professional adults and he does so with grace, agility and excitement.

Sincerely,



Jessica Towey