



Isothermal Broadcasting Student accepted into prestigious School of Filmmaking

Clint Buckner is college's first broadcasting student admitted at NC School of the Arts

*Scott Scheer, Public Information Officer
828-286-3636, Ext. 206 sscheer@isothermal.edu
April 26, 2005*

Isothermal Community College broadcasting student, 21-year old Clint Buckner, has been accepted into the prestigious School of Filmmaking at the North Carolina School of Arts. While Buckner's pride is evident and deservedly so, Isothermal Broadcasting Production Technology instructor, Jay Coomes appears to be equally as excited these days on the Spindale campus. Buckner it seems is the first from the Isothermal broadcasting curriculum to be accepted into the school.

Established in 1993, the School of Filmmaking is a unique arts conservatory that combines rigorous professional training with reportedly some of the country's top facilities, equipment and resources. The program is advertised as being young enough to be flexible and forward-looking, but still maintains a strong emphasis in all the film crafts, using both traditional and new digital media.

Buckner, a 2002 RS Central High graduate, said his acceptance into the School of filmmaking is '*a dream come true.*' The Spindale native is one of only two percent of applicants accepted into the school annually. Enrollment is held to around sixty students in the program annually. Currently sporting a 3.65 Grade Point Average at Isothermal, Buckner will march with the class of 2005 later next month, before turning his sites on the Winston-Salem-based School of the Arts.

The first two years at the NC School of the Arts will stress fundamentals of the filmmaking process and visual storytelling. Buckner and others will be required to become familiar with every aspect of creating, developing, making, finishing and exhibiting their cinematic work. During the third and fourth years, students train within disciplines in a mentor/student relationship with professional faculty, staff and guest artists. Only students who are successful in meeting the rigorous requirements of conservatory training in the first two years are invited to continue into the advanced levels of the program.

Students write, direct, photograph, edit, design and produce a variety of film and digital video exercises, short film and digital video productions, and numerous school-sponsored productions during their four-year course of study. All creative works are prepared at a professional conservatory level, and shown in the school's state-of-the-art theatres.

Buckner says his two years at Isothermal have prepared him well for his exciting next chapter. In between production projects this week, Buckner admitted to having a '*lifelong passion for movies, writing and music. I write a lot and I read a lot. I am a big fan of all forms of art.*' He first got the filmmaking bug when he worked in production on *A Tale about Bootlegging*, which is still in production and set in and around Saluda, NC. Buckner has also worked as an Assistant Director on *Leftovers*; a film shot in Raleigh and has produced promotional videos and other materials for several musical acts and other clients. He is currently working on a documentary with fellow broadcasting student Chris Riddle (who will also graduate in May with an AAS degree in Broadcast Production Technology), titled *Coffee Shop Guys*. Jason Keever, another local who has begun to make his mark in the Hollywood circles, working on the hit NBC drama series, *West Wing* and several credits under his belt, is also working closely with Buckner.



While he says he is aware of the toughness of Hollywood screenwriting and the filmmaking business in general and how it spits countless more names out that it accepts, Buckner appears poised and ready to try and make his mark. He is currently working with WSPA-TV 7 in Spartanburg, SC as a production technician and has a career in television news photography as a back-up plan if screenwriting and film production plans fall short. In order, Clint Buckner lists his top career aspirations in the hectic world of television and movie-making as being, *'screenwriting, cinematography and film music composition. Pretty much in that order,'* he said smiling. Buckner plays multiple instruments, such as guitar, bass guitar, drums, piano and a little mandolin.

Instructor Jay Coomes says Buckner has been his *'most improved student.'* Coomes, sitting with Buckner inside the state-of-the-art Isothermal television broadcasting set, looked at his student and added, *'Something clicked for Clint. He has even made the Dean's List the past four semesters.'* Buckner said it was a combination of *'finding myself and realizing that a career in retail sales is not exactly what I want as a career path.'* Coomes said, *'We have had other students try to get into the film school at the NC School of the Arts, but Clint is the first one accepted.'* Both say the school is ranked alongside other prestigious schools in New York and at UCLA. Coomes told Buckner, with over 16,000 applications reviewed every year, being one of only sixty admitted annually is quite a testament to his hard work and abilities.



Clint Buckner (pictured in foreground) gets on-air instruction in Radio Broadcasting from Broadcasting Production Technology instructor Jay Coomes (top right), while fellow students look on.

During an extensive interview session, Buckner said one of the interviewers admitted to being a *'huge fan of WNCW radio'* the public radio station on the Isothermal campus. Buckner said that helped put him at ease and the fact that he has been producing segments and hosting the *'ARC Over Night'* programs for the station which airs to listeners in five area states, also seemed to be an added bonus during his interview and on his application for admission. That opportunity presented itself in recent months when a new partnership between the Isothermal Broadcasting Production Technology program and WNCW 88.7 FM was formalized. The program is giving students in the Radio Broadcast Performance classes the chance to host Alternative Radio Coalition (ARC) Overnights from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Fridays.

One of the top lessons Buckner says he has learned from Coomes and the Broadcasting Production Technology program at Isothermal is *'the importance of teamwork and working closely with all members of the crew to get the best quality, the best job done.'* Admitting to being somewhat of a *'rebel without a cause,'* when he first arrived on the Isothermal campus, Buckner says *'I learned really quickly that I had to extensively study the processes. I also learned that I needed to sometimes rely on others and vice versa. While the illusion of filmmaking and screenwriting, even music composition may seem lonely and isolated, these days it's about teaming with others with the same visions, even the same dreams. I have learned that and will take that with me always.'*

Clint Buckner looked over at his instructor Jay Coomes and without being provoked, stated, *'I recommend your program to people all the time now. We have great equipment here. All the learning resources are right here. We can produce television and radio programs and can even work on the great public radio station, WNCW right here beside where I take my classes and in the same building we do set work, lighting, sound and editing. Help is always there when you need it and just look at all the others who have come through the program and built careers in both radio and television.'*

Coomes responded, *'Clint in many ways has put us on a new map in a new way. It feels good to know that the interview committee got to see and hear just how much the video, production and lighting techniques he's learned here will help him in filmmaking there. We are proud of all our students, not just those who get accepted into the NC School of the Arts following their time and work here. I am proud and happy for both Clint and his family as well as for our college here, Isothermal Community College. It is a proud day for all of us!'*

-end-