



EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT
an initiative of Education at Illinois



info@educationjustice.net
217.300.5150

1001 S. Wright Street
Champaign, IL 61820
www.educationjustice.net

Resources @ EJP

How We Became the EJP Universe

Dear EJP Universe,

My name is Edmund Buck and I am a new student. I attended the EJP's Fall Convocation on August 23rd held in the chapel of D.C.C; and if you will bear with me for a few moments, I would like to share with you my experience of the occasion.

I sat in a room today, during the Convocation for the beginning of the EJP's fall semester, and to be honest with you, a bit overwhelming for me due to (I think) my naturally introverted personality and the antisocial behavioral traits I've adopted during the course of a very long stint of incarceration.

There was a point, during the event, where I was nearly brought to tears. I was surprised at the sudden swell of emotion within me that made my eyes well up, and as I fought back those tears I tried to figure out what caused them in the first place. I took a few deep breaths and began to gather myself. As my mind began to quiet down it dawned on me what the cause was. It was the energy in the room, emanating from everyone present, and since I already knew most of the on-site people that were there I assumed that the bulk of what I felt was coming from all of the off-site people (i.e. instructors, tutors, and guests). Then it hit me, and if I may be frank, I have never been in a space with so many people that genuinely gave a damn, and it felt GOOD.

I know that I was quite reserved and didn't interject myself into the meeting and greeting portions of the day (I had promised myself I would) and for that I apologize. That is why I offer and ask that you accept this letter as an expression of how I wished I had presented myself on the 23rd. I will attempt to be more open and forthcoming in the future.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your time, efforts, energy, and devotion to the EJP, the incarcerated men who utilize the EJP, and to me personally as I attempt to broaden my horizons. You all are truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Edmund Buck, 2012