

Merry Ellefson
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Education:

M.A. in English/Drama from University of Minnesota, 1987.
B.A. in English from St. Olaf College, 1984.

Continuing Education:

Writing workshops with national writers Paula Vogel, Darrah Cloud, Thalia Field, Bridget Carpenter, Deborah Brevort.
Sociology of America, University of AK-Southeast, 2005.
Anthropology of Northern Peoples, University of AK-Southeast, 1994.
Literary Internship with Great North American History Theatre, 1986.
Literary Internship with Mark Bly, Guthrie Theatre, 1985.

Work-related experience:

*Interim Managing Director/Associate Managing Director, Perseverance Theatre, 2007-2009.

*Development Director, Perseverance Theatre, 1990-97: Perseverance is a professional theatre rooted in the diverse Alaskan community. In addition to my work as a fundraiser, I also served as assistant lighting designer, stage manager, education supervisor and writing instructor. I provided artistic and administrative support on many projects including statewide tours of IN TWO WORLDS (toured to Bethel, Chevak, Fairbanks, and Anchorage) and DANCING A CIRCLE (a residency piece developed for Mount Edgecombe students).

*Teen X-Press Theatre, 1993-98: This dramatic group was created by SEARHC and Perseverance in effort to give youth-at-risk an opportunity to share their stories with the public. I served as playwright for three separate projects as artists/counselors collaborated with diverse youth in developing and producing plays which revealed their issues. The plays (TIP OF THE TONGUE, CIRCLING THE DREAM-co-written with Tom Linklater, and EVERYDAY ANGELS) toured to area youth centers, community gatherings, and schools.

Video productions:

Journey to Safety: Assembling the Pieces (for the Alaskan Network on Domestic Violence), Produced by KTOO Television.
Building a Happy, Healthy Child (for the Alaska Child Support Enforcement Division), Produced by KTOO Television.

Dramatic Productions-World Premieres:

XATAK'AAN: The Land Behind the Little Island, inspired by Paula Savviko's second grade class, Reader's Theatre performances at Perseverance Theatre, 2009
KOOSHDA'KAA: Stories of the Land Otter, Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous, Perseverance Theatre, 2009
VOYAGE, Perseverance Theatre, 2005.
SEA OF STRENGTH, Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous, Perseverance Theatre, 2006.
WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE BEAR, advised by Ernestine Hays, Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous, Perseverance Theatre, 2005.
LOST IN KUBLA KHAN, Perseverance Theatre, 2002.
BEAR TALES FROM THE GREAT LAND, Perseverance and Mount Roberts Tram, 1998.
OUT OF THE BLUE: An Alaskan Adventure (co-written with Tom Linklater), Perseverance Theatre, 1995.
FISHMAS: An Alaskan Christmas Tale, Perseverance Theatre, 1992.

Other related work:

Plays: CHILD'S PLAY was featured in Perseverance's annual Playreading Festival, 1997.

LATTER DAY SAINTS received Honorable Mention in Nakai Theatre's (Whitehorse) playwriting competition, 1995.

Media: Writer, Assistant Producer for KTOO/State of AK Education Campaign, 2002.

Technical Writer: Haight and McLaughlin, Juneau.

Columnist: The Paper, Juneau, (no longer published).

Poet: Readings at The Observatory Bookstore, the Fiddlehead Restaurant, Juneau.

Mentor: ROPES mentor, DZ Middle School; Phoenix students involved in writing and drama, Juneau Douglas High School.

Instructor/Coach: Developed and led summer day camp for girls titled "Exploring the World Through Running and Writing," Juneau Racquet Club.