

## Early College of Arvada Spotlight: Dr. Dana Green

At the Early College of Arvada, we are excited to kick off our monthly teacher spotlight by focusing on Dr. Dana Green. Dr. Green began her teaching career at the University of Massachusetts and later continued at the University of Denver. More recently, Dr. Green has found her calling teaching college to high school students at the Early College of Arvada. She is beginning her fourth year teaching at the Early College of Arvada, primarily focusing on English and Literature courses. Dana Green is also a published author; her first collection of short stories, *Sometimes the Air in the Room Goes Missing*, was the co-winner of the Tarpaulin Sky book prize in 2016; her first novel, *How to Carry Scars*, was published in 2018 by KERNPUNKT press. Her writing can be found both on the web and in print from journals like *Scissors and Spackle* and *Diagram*.

Dr. Green notes that her main objective when teaching is “to develop my student as a cohesive creative and intellectual being; who my students are outside of the classroom is just as impactful as who they are in the classroom. Engaging students on a human level is necessary if we ever hope to engage them on an academic level.” ECA Executive Director Todd Cordrey agrees with this assessment, adding that “Dr. Green truly embodies ECA’s commitment to teaching the whole child.” At ECA, Dr. Green leads participation centered classes that encourage failure as a form of advanced critical thinking. “I believe that we are never able to feel comfortable investigating new ideas unless we are comfortable with the possibility that they may be off point,” adds Dr. Green. “I emphatically take to heart Samuel Beckett’s advice, ‘Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Fail harder. Fail better.’ Failure breeds risk taking, which encourages deeper creative and academic work, because students learn how to avoid taking the easy route.”

Taking intellectual risks is a key facet of school culture at ECA, where students not only graduate with 60 college credit hours (representing \$30,000+ in savings), but are also challenged to develop their abilities as well-rounded thinkers and learners. Teachers at ECA prepare students for today’s interdisciplinary college coursework, starting in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy where each teacher covers multiple subjects. After preparing in grades 6-10, students begin taking college courses in 11<sup>th</sup> grade – without having to leave ECA’s secure and welcoming campus. Our teachers are all dedicated to meeting the needs of every student. With a staff that has 7 professors with Ph.D.’s including the talented Dr. Green, we ensure that all students have the ability to take challenging college courses in a wide variety of subject levels.