



E A S T T E N N E S S E E S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

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September 24, 2012

To whom it may concern:

In light of recent events, I felt it both necessary and my great privilege to express my gratitude for the work and ministry of Dr. Christopher A. Rollston.

As an incoming seminarian back in 2003, one of the first courses in which I was enrolled at Emmanuel was Old Testament Introduction with Dr. Rollston. The course was, by design, a shock to my system and world-view; one that challenged my faith and put my assumptions about a great many things to the test. In subsequent courses and other experiences outside the classroom, Dr. Rollston continued to uphold and embody the high academic and personal integrity necessary to live a critically engaged biblical life which is the heart of Emmanuel's ethos. He taught me that understanding truth is rarely as easy as reading words on a page, but instead takes great effort looking through shades of gray and layers of perspective to gain a greater perspective of a subject or object of study; a lesson that can and should be applied to everyday situations as well, and is especially essential for engaged ministry.

As I continue my work as the International Student Advisor at East Tennessee State University and ministry on this campus and in the Johnson City area, I look back on my education and experience at Emmanuel with a grateful heart; an experience that would not even come close to being complete without the amazing influence of Dr. Rollston. I know for a fact that this is true for a great number of other students as well, and so, also, for the lives that are touched by those former students as they obey their call to ministry and service throughout the world.

I proudly stand by my former teacher as he urges others to consider with new and fresh eyes the words of scripture, to ponder anew how their point-of-view might be enlightened by new perspectives, and to contemplate how this enlightenment might be applied and lived as Christ's disciples in the world.

Gratefully and sincerely,

RJ Powell

Emmanuel Class of 2007