

**start  
where  
you are**  
Go where you want.

A magazine  
for high school  
students in  
Vermont

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University of Vermont, photo: Mario Morgado

**Cody Paiva was no stranger to change, having moved 13 times by the time he entered Blue Mountain Union School as a sophomore. Perhaps that's why the transition to college didn't pose unusual challenges for him, even though he was the first in his family to attend.**

**Cody's college notes:**

**Try new things.** Cody threw himself into college life during his first year on campus. As a biology major, he was busy with schoolwork, but he made time to join the residence hall council, which plans events and works to make life enjoyable for dorm residents. He also joined the concert band (he plays clarinet and nine other instruments) and the racquetball team. "I've never played racquetball in my life, but it looked like fun," Cody recalls.

**Don't hide out.** Before coming to college, Cody had already had the advantage of living on his own, so homesickness wasn't an adjustment for him the way it was for some students in his dorm. Even so, he remembers that it was quite common for kids simply to walk around the halls and knock on doors to introduce themselves. The second night on campus, he and his roommate joined seven other people in someone's room to play cards. "You come to college to meet new people, so just do it," Cody advises without hesitation.

**Open up to new people and experiences.** "You're going to be living with people you've never met before, but you learn to be more independent and more responsible," Cody observes. "College provides you with the chance to mature."

Cody's road to higher education certainly wasn't typical for a rural Vermont teen. When his parents informed him that they were preparing for yet another move before his junior year in high school, Cody decided he'd had enough. He looked into his options and decided to become an "emancipated minor" so he could continue to live in the school

auto insurance, and transportation. He remained at Blue Mountain, where he'd been working with a VSAC outreach counselor to plan for his education after graduation.

The summer after his sophomore year, Cody chose to aim for a career in medicine. After looking at three colleges in the Northeast and one in Canada, he chose the University of Vermont because he liked the feel of the school.

It didn't hurt that the university offered him a four-year academic scholarship. Perhaps that's because in spite of having moved so often, Cody graduated from high school with 35 credits — 13 more than the required 22 (noting that he was never a fan of study hall, he always chose courses instead). All the moving around taught Cody to adapt quickly to the expectations of different school districts and teachers. "It taught me how to play catch-up if I had to," he recalls.

district and attend Blue Mountain through his graduation. With his parents' full backing, and with help from his school principal, Cody was able to stay with a classmate's family; and his income from a part-time job after school and on weekends enabled him to pay for his own gas, cell phone,

**A very different move**

For Cody, the move to UVM was quite a different transition from previous moves. What surprised him most was the level of openness he found there. "People here are really accepting," Cody notes. "It doesn't matter who you are; you're going to find people who accept you and are open to you. It's really different from high school."

Cody knows the challenges of beginning over again in a new place, but he also knows the rewards of learning that you can do it. That's why he doesn't hesitate to encourage younger students to continue their education after high school.

"Look at people you know who haven't gone to college. Ask yourself if that's what you want to be doing after high school," Cody advises. "If you don't know about college from someone who's experienced it, you may be scared of what to expect. Talk to people you know who go to college. Most of them will tell you it's actually a lot of fun."

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