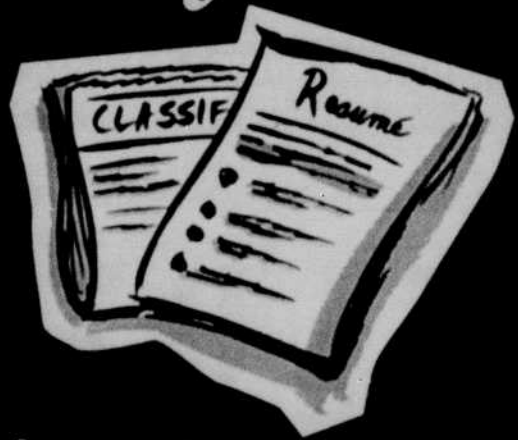


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CLASS OF 1995

Mainland education worth every cent

For the past three years I have labored and learned at the University both in and out of the classroom, and the Eugene experience has been one I will not soon forget.

It might have been the Corvallis experience for me, but a carpenter I worked with a few summers ago set me straight. Buzz Bays got a journalism degree from the University in the '70s and assured me that being a Duck was the only way to go.

I applied to both Oregon State and Oregon after my freshman year at the University of Hawaii. During the summer, while I hoped two acceptance letters would arrive, I worked on a house with Buzz.

Buzz said Eugene was an unbeatable town and the Ducks had a great school. I had no idea what I wanted to study; I just wanted to see what the rest of the world had to offer.

To make a long story short, I decided against Oregon State and headed for Eugene. I had never even been to the school or seen the town. I had only left Hawaii once before, so this trip was quite an undertaking.

Coming to a school in the mainland after being born and raised in Hawaii was tough sometimes, but I did it. In fact, the decision to come to the University was one of the best I've ever made.

Oregon's winters and Eugene's infamous rains, though a headache for some, were a



PATRICK MINFORD

treat for me. My entire life I wanted to play in snow and the University made it possible for the first time.

A good portion of kids from Hawaii that come to the mainland for college end up back home before they get their degree. A mainland culture shock sends many Hawaii students back home to attend a school in Hawaii.

The mainland culture shock got me for a little while, but the many new sights and sounds Oregon offered turned the shock into fascination. There are not too many trains or lakes in Hawaii, and the seasons aren't quite so pronounced. I know I'll return to the people and places that have made Oregon special for me as often as possible. Although Oregon doesn't have as high a place in my heart as my home state, it is in there. Both places have special meaning to me.

I decided to major in journalism at the University for no particular reason except I figured that being able to write well would be a skill I could use no matter what I decided to do in life.

Working at the *Emerald* showed me that reporting the news is something I'd like to do for a living. It has been stressful at times, but overall it's been a pretty rewarding job. I've met a lot of good people and learned more than I ever thought possible about student government.

Sure, being so far from my friends, family and home was difficult, but I knew I'd go home soon enough. These years at school have actually gone by pretty quickly.

Being 2,000 miles from the places and people I hold closest to my heart was tough, but the mainland college experience was well worth it. Being exposed to such a different culture was an education in itself.

I've made some really good friends, seen a beautiful part of the world and obtained a fine education. Those are things that no one can take away from me.

Now, as I face graduation and the real world, I almost wish I could do it all again. For the first time in my life I do not have school looming three months in the future, which is kind of scary.

Instead I'm a reporter with no job yet and nearly \$15,000 in loans to repay. Maybe I'll look Buzz up and see if there is room for another carpenter with writing skills on his crew.

Patrick Minford is a student activities reporter for the Emerald.

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