

# Confessions from a Reformed Momma's Boy

*By: David Carvalho, Hilo High School, 2006 graduate*

As a child, I was what most refer to as a “momma’s boy.” You know the type- socially inept little boys that can’t go anywhere without holding their mother’s hand. Whenever I needed something, my mother was the first person I’d go to. If something didn’t go my way, I’d tell my mom. If I was in an environment where I didn’t know a lot of people, I made sure my mom came along with me. If there was paperwork or forms I needed to fill out, I made sure my mom was on top of it. Most teenagers spent Friday nights hanging out with their friends at sleepovers and causing innocent mischief. In my pre-Upward Bound days, I spent my Friday nights hanging out with my parents.

Before I entered high school, I was unmotivated, completely dependent on others, and just plain lazy. I did what I needed to get by, anything else I felt was unnecessary. I felt college was for over achievers, you know, the kids you secretly hated for getting the gold stars next to their names in 3rd grade. My logic at the time was, “why do I need to go to college when I can just live with my Mom for the rest of my life?”

Well it turns out that my Mom was not so keen on me living in her basement for the rest of my life. Fortunately for her (and for me), she discovered the Upward Bound program.

Upward Bound introduced me to a whole new world. It opened my eyes to opportunities I never knew were possible. I was introduced to colleges, being independent, and the motivation to want to do my best. Upward Bound gave me the skill and tools I needed to become an independent and productive individual.

After graduating from high school, I left Hilo (and my Mom) to attend college at Chaminade University of Honolulu with over \$12,000 in scholarships. Upward Bound had prepared me for my life in the dorms, studying, and financial planning. Now I’m back in Hilo, entering my junior year of college at the University of Hawaii at Hilo majoring in Chemistry with an emphasis in Health Sciences.

So if I had learned so much from being an Upward Bound student, what am I doing back in Upward Bound!?

I want to take this opportunity to give back to the program that has given so much to me. I want to teach students in Upward Bound all of the skills and traits I was taught when I was a student. I want to be a mentor and a role model for students.

And the funny thing is, even though I’m no longer a student, Upward Bound is still a learning experience. Being a Residential Advisor this past 2008 Summer Academy, the students of Upward Bound have taught me many valuable lessons in leadership, responsibility, and accountability. I look forward to continuing my time with Upward Bound and helping students this coming academic year.