

# **BRANDON SICKBERT**

## From Alaskan Fishing Decks to Backpacking in Scotland: The Fascinating Adventures of Brandon Sickbert

Graduate: Class of 2001    Occupation: Ontologist / Community Support Specialist

Robert Frost once said, “Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--I took the one less traveled . . .” Brandon Sickbert, a 2001 graduate of Forest Park, has done just that--and much more.

In high school, the term “average kid” didn't describe Brandon Sickbert. Brandon helped the 2001 Destination Imagination team reach second place in the world finals! He also played the French horn in the school band. Undoubtedly, one of his most cherished memories was his role as Caiaphas in the school's musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

As a young explorer searching for new and interesting places, Brandon savored his college experiences. Brandon went to Indiana University and majored in psychology and minored in biology and neuroscience. Some of his best memories emerge from what he calls his “hippie/punk” dorm, where he made many friends. Sickbert was also globally minded in college: he traveled to Fiji, New Zealand and studied abroad Australia! He says these rank among his best experiences since leaving high school.

A psychology major helped prepare Brandon for his adventurous lifestyle. Switching jobs as he moves, Brandon hasn't yet come across a job that really requires his major. Most recognizable is the basic art of fishing; however, fishing was a challenging task to him. Brandon helped navigate aboard five different commercial fishing trips where he sailed on numerous boats: the F/V C' Raine (a boat for salmon fishing in Alaska), the C/V Kona Kai (a boat that served as an intermediary for salmon boats in Alaska), the F/V Amadeus (crab fishing in the North Sea), the F/V N12 (where he fished two other seasons for Alaskan salmon). Brandon woke up at 4:00 a.m. every morning, ate a bowl of cereal, and went about his daily tasks aboard the ship: letting out the net, stacking the web of the net, and operating various equipment. His most recent fishing trips have left him with some minor injuries and much stress; therefore, he has chosen that he probably won't go back to fishing anytime soon--despite making “big bucks.”

Not just a sailor, Brandon has experienced other occupations. Since graduating from college, he hasn't resided in one place longer than six months, which has made for some life changing adventures. Backpacking through Scotland proved itself as one of these memorable experiences for Brandon. Also in Scotland, Brandon had the opportunity to work at as a hospitality professional all over Edinburgh. Costa Rica, where he worked the summer of 2008 on an organic farm, also became an excellent journey for him. To help rebuild homes and assist families in need, he also traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana after the traumatic events of Hurricane Katrina.

After much travel, Brandon has recently made it back to the states. Currently, he resides in Crested Butte, Colorado, where he works on the ski slopes of a mountain resort--the "last great Colorado ski town." Earning a free ski pass and a new understanding of the mountains of Colorado in winter are strong incentives of this journey. In addition to these rewards, he currently is striving to become a community support specialist where he may help disabled kids and work with a Special Olympics team.

Brandon Sickbert has "taken the road less traveled," and for him, like Frost, it "has made all the difference." Brandon has found success, stress, and happiness in his decisions. He encourages everyone that an adventurous lifestyle is possible--if you want it badly enough.