

# Colby



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## Dispatches

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*Colby College*

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From the Editor's Desk



So many students; so little time and space. That's been the feeling around here of late as it seems that every day brings to our attention a student with a story. Here's an example: We asked seniors if they'd be interested in being interviewed about planning for life after Colby. There were quite a few responses, including an e-mail from Peter Rice '04. Rice was willing, the note said. And it ended with the tag line he'd created for all his e-mail messages: *Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall, but those who hope in the Lord, will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

It said it was from the Book of Isaiah. I thought perhaps it was an inspirational message for students buried with reading and papers. And then Rice showed up in Eustis with the rest of the story. Rice is a tall, soft-spoken mathematical sciences major in the Colby-Dartmouth engineering program. He has his next couple of years mapped out, so he didn't really fit into the seniors-planning-where-to-go feature. He said he returns to Dartmouth next year for his fifth year of study and expects to enter a master's program there in mechanical engineering.

But of course that was only part of Rice's story. He said he lived most of his life in San Jose, Costa Rica, where his parents are missionaries. His dad helps Costa Ricans establish churches; his mom works with a program that helps retrain ex-prostitutes for lives outside the sex trade.

When Rice was 16, he went to live with his grandparents on Martha's Vineyard so he could attend high school there. From the Vineyard, Rice came to Colby, plunged into his studies and joined the Colby Christian Fellowship. Last year he studied with other program participants at Dartmouth. In the lab, he was on an award-winning team that designed and built a boat that sprouted wheels.

Almost as an aside, Rice mentioned that he was in a car accident last winter near Dartmouth. The crash left him with badly broken ankles.

Rice went through recovery and rehab, moved to an accessible dorm room on the ground floor and continued his studies. Nine months later, back at Colby, he still is feeling the effects of his injuries. "I can't run or jump," he said. "If I do a lot of walking during the day [my ankles] start to bother."

Suddenly there was context. The young man in the Book of Isaiah who "will walk and not be faint" made a new kind of sense. The e-mail tag line may inspire Rice's classmates as they look forward to the challenges of life after Colby. But for Rice it's a reflection on finishing this leg of the race.

Rice doesn't stumble and fall but he does have other reminders of his accident. He is a harbinger of changes in the weather, a phenomenon he attributes to the screws in his ankles. "I guess the titanium changes at a different rate than my bones," he said cheerily.

His equanimity may come from his faith. His matter-of-factness may be informed by his academic pursuits. The president of the Colby Christian Fellowship will be away this month to investigate further the interface of man and machine. Rice, partly because of his bionic ankles, is doing a Jan Plan with an engineer who is studying a new prosthetic knee. "They told me it's like a CV joint in a car," he said, confident it won't be a problem getting up to speed—"if the math is the same . . ."

Gerry Boyle '78, P '06  
Managing Editor

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