





# A Resident Student . . .

## To Be Or Not To Be?

**T**alk about major change, you can't just roll out of bed at 8:20 A.M. for an 8:30 lab and say to yourself you'll get washed and change out of your pajamas later when you get back to your dorm. It would be "grunge city" till I get home as a commuter to do that.

My life as a commuter did have some advantages over being a resident. First of all, my sheets fit my bed! You residents know what I am talking about. At home, I could leave my toothbrush in the bathroom. The heat was regular at home, and was turned on not in November, but earlier when it actually got cold, and put on so that I was not sitting in shorts when it was 5 degrees outside, and was turned off before it hit 75 degrees in May. Also, at home the food was more plentiful and usually better even though I did have pizza a lot there too. But since I stayed in the dorm for two years of my four at Stony Brook, the second year I could not really complain, since both my roommate and I were off the meal plan and cooked for ourselves. I wanted to feel like I was more on my own and that I had somewhat more control of

my life, and commuting helped that. It was all up to me to make sure my car was running right in the morning or that I remembered to take everything I needed for the day because I couldn't run back real quick after my first class to get whatever I had forgotten.

The drive to school was approximately thirty five minutes door-to-door from my dad's house in Huntington where I stayed during the week, to the parking lot at school. The thirty-five minutes wasn't too bad in the morning because it gave me time to wake up. I never had any traffic because it was always going in the opposite direction, sometimes I'd grab a cup of commuter coffee at The Loop and bite off a piece of the plastic top in the traditional shape of a triangle so as not to spill the coffee as I walked. At night when I'd come home, the drive gave me time to wind down and relax so that if anything was bothering me I'd have a chance to sort it out before I pulled into my driveway, preventing me from dumping all the days problems on my dad. However, I couldn't allow myself to get too relaxed because I do have to admit that there were times when I was so tired my eyelids felt like ten pounds of weight,

ready to drop. While studying, especially during finals week in the spring, I could sack out on my front lawn among the flowers and the trees without having to worry about what might have been on the ground the night before.

But commuting was not all eternal bliss. The weather was a major factor. After finding out that when the highway is a sheet of ice my car likes to show me how it can fly. I sometimes had to miss class. And the last thing I wanted to do was hop on the diesel cattle car which smelled like an old, wet towel. I compromised my social life, not that I really planned or wanted to, but it just sort of slid. The last thing I wanted to do was to go to a show, concert, or attend a club meeting at night because in the back of my mind after walking out, I knew I still had to drive home.

But really, all complaints aside, my dual Stony Brook life allowed me to experience all the luxuries and downfalls of the different home lives as a Stony Brook student, one living as a resident in the dorm, the other living at home and commuting to school.

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