

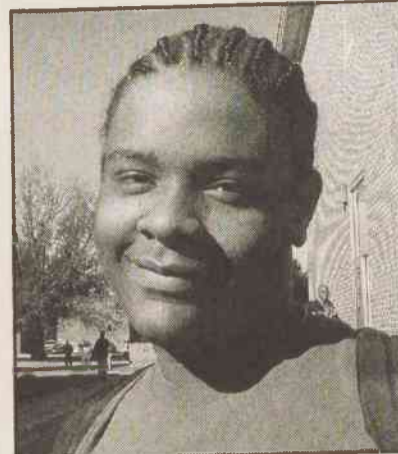
Talk of ECSU

By: Robin Reese

What was your most memorable Christmas moment?



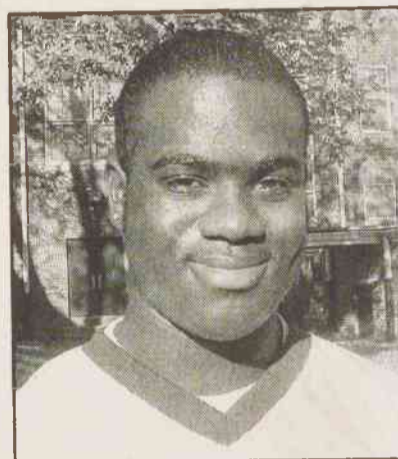
Lashonda McClary:
Freshman
"My most memorable Christmas would have to be last Christmas when I spent two weeks in Miami, Florida with my cousins going shopping."



Joseph Bizzell:
Sophomore
"My most memorable Christmas would have to be the first Christmas I spent with my grandmother in New York."



Natasha Ellis:
Senior
"My most memorable Christmas is sneaking into the living room on Christmas Eve to see what Santa brought me. Watching the flashing lights move along each branch. That was always so amazing to me."



Cedric Booth:
Junior
"When all nine of my aunts and uncles stayed Christmas Eve at my grandmother's and we all got up the next morning and had breakfast and opened presents and had Christmas dinner later that day."

Photos by Inger Parker

A Driven 2001 Grad Takes An Untraditional Route

By Dan Ruff

NEW YORK—(COLLEGIATE PRESSWIRE)—Oct. 23, 2001—The summer before my senior year at Cornell, I worked at a bulge-bracket investment bank and entered my final year of school in the enviable position of having a job all lined up when I graduated. By May, I was looking forward to the challenging world I was about to enter as an entry-level banker in New York City.

Then came the call. Due to the downturn of the economy I was asked to consider pushing back my start date at the investment bank for a year, in exchange for a lump sum of money and a guaranteed job with the analyst class of 2002.

At first, I had the normal type-A response — I thought it was crazy to give up the security of a high-paying, prestigious job for the insecurity of being jobless in a terrible job market. I could travel for a year, but what would business schools think? I could try to find work at another investment bank, but my friends were having no success in similar job hunts. I was going to have to turn down the offer.

Then, after talking with friends who had been out of school for a few years (and had the perspective that most college seniors lack) I was convinced to rethink my reaction. Never again, they told me, would I be paid to try whatever I wanted for a year. With that truth in mind, I signed the deferral papers, grabbed the money, and went looking for some-

thing interesting to do in my "year off."

I focused my search on opportunities that would offer me experiences I was not going to get at a large firm. I wanted to work in a small, entrepreneurial company where I would be surrounded by mentors and have the opportunity to do work that would help drive the business. After weighing my options, I did the unthinkable: I accepted a job at a dot-com start-up.

With Internet companies dropping like flies, leaving thousands of employees out of work, clutching worthless stock options that were supposed to make them millionaires by the time they were 30, everyone thought I was crazy. Why in the world would I waste my time and energy on another dot-com disaster?

The answer was simple: Marketboy.com was not your typical dot-com and the founders were not your typical twenty-something hotshots of the late 90's. After talking to the founders, May Lee and Casimir Wierzynski, I learned that, unlike all the fallen dot-coms, they didn't look at their business as something different from all other businesses simply because it was located on the Internet. This was a new concept.

There was another draw: May and Cas are former Goldman Sachs traders who had left the world I was planning on entering to take their careers in a whole new direction. I

found this intriguing. I wanted to know why two incredibly successful, 30-something, Wall Street executives would leave the security of investment banking to launch a dot-com at a time when the industry had just imploded.

Marketboy.com is an e-commerce site that applies the principles used in modern securities markets to online consumer electronics (like MP3 players and DVD players) shopping. May and Cas have designed software that replicates Wall Street's "continuous double auctions," the only tried and true method of electronic commerce allowing customers to instantly compare prices, buy or bid on any product from any merchant. And it works. Consumers have the ability to search for the lowest price on a product and, if the price isn't low enough to enter his own bid.

As a member of this 6-person team I spend my days working alongside both May and Cas and get to see how they build the business day by day. I watch how they develop partnerships with over 60 merchant vendors and build trust with loyal consumers. And I am part of this process. I have responsibilities I would never have in another environment and am learning so much about what it takes to make a business successful.

I had never considered working at a dot-com, and now I'm in a position where I research different plans for my company, discuss the options

with May and Cas and implement the plan. This responsibility of both development and implementation allows me to see a project from start to finish and gives me a real sense of accomplishment and leadership. I am able to provide real value to my company.

I have learned that there are many more options than the ones we believe exist when we graduate college. I look at May and Cas who have fused their secure, traditional backgrounds with the uncertainty of an Internet future and see that it works because they were able to take the knowledge gleaned from both the distant and recent past to determine this new model and this new future. Most importantly, they were flexible enough with their careers and the principles of different businesses to build something new for both the industry and themselves.

I look forward to starting my job with the analyst class of 2002, but I think about what I would have missed had I declined the offer of the year off. Oh sure, I'd be staying at great hotels and lunching at trendy restaurants, but I'm not sure if I would have learned how many options I really have and how many different directions I can ultimately take my career.

Dan Ruff is a recent graduate of Cornell University. He currently works for Marketboy, the only ecommerce site that allows consumers the ability to compare prices, buy or bid on consumer electronics all in one place.

Source:
Marketboy.com