

# ***Dr. Kelly Aremburg***

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***Upward bound hasn't impacted my life.***

***Upward Bound has changed my life.***



Going to college was always considered to be “the plan” for me. However neither of my parents went to college, so the whole process was something foreign. All of the choices you make in high school affect your application to college. When I began participation in the Upward Bound program as a rising sophomore thinking seriously about the college process began.

I had an idea of what I wanted to go to college for, but getting through college to a profession isn't always what it seems. With Upward Bound I spent summers volunteering in different disciplines that I was interested in. One summer was spent in the birthing center of a hospital and another was spent in a physical therapy office. This time not only gave me exposure to the areas of study I was interested in, but also added to my sense of how important volunteering in your community is.

The support Upward Bound provided me in applying, getting to, and getting through college is invaluable. I went to college for physical therapy in a program in which my undergraduate major was completed in three years and my graduate program started in my fourth year of college. This required careful planning and hard work, but I always had the support of Upward Bound.

When I narrowed my choice to physical therapy and began focusing only on colleges that offered this as a major, the summer before my senior year of high school, Upward Bound introduced me to Carolyn Donahue at the University of Vermont's TRiO Student Support Services program. UVM was one of my top choices of schools and meeting Carolyn before I started made a major impact on me that lasted throughout college. In the careful undergraduate planning in preparation for the physical therapy program I would often contact my directors from the Lyndon State College Upward Bound program and Carolyn to advise me with class choices, schedules, and other decisions.

During summer breaks in college I worked as a tutor counselor then head resident for the LSC Upward Bound program. Being on the Upward Bound staff puts you in the position to show the high school students that succeeding is possible and makes you think about your own actions while you are in college. I took the opportunity the summers of 2004—2008 to share my experiences with the students there to show them that it is possible to be successful when you come from a low to moderate income, first college generation background. It was during the program this summer that I found out I had passed the National Physical Therapy Examination and became a licensed physical therapist. I was able to share this “top ten life moment” *at the time it happened* with the 50 students there; this was more than just telling them about this experience, but it made it real as they experienced it with me.

It is not solely due to Upward Bound that I went to UVM, however I cannot ever separate Upward Bound from that decision as the cumulative effect of the program had so much to do with my choice. Now, I am a full time physical therapist in Vail, CO area. I independently chose my location to start my career and worked hard to get here. In addition to this I have donated almost \$800 and a used computer to students of the Lyndon State College Upward Bound program to continue to support the program that provided so much for me. Upward Bound changed my life and I would not be where I am today had I not been in this program.