



Robert Scuba, 18, CLEVELAND

Most of Robert Scuba's friends went away to four-year colleges this fall. Scuba didn't. And he has two confessions.

First: "I don't hate my parents."

Second: "I didn't really want to go away from home for the first year."

Scuba wasn't driven to have the residential college experience right away. He knows he'll have it eventually, and in the meantime the St. Edward High School graduate is getting — along with 13 other students — a Tri-C Honors Program Fellowship. The award covers tuition, fees and books as Scuba works toward his associate degree. That sets him up nicely to transfer to a four-year university to further his studies in either biochemistry or mathematics — he hasn't yet decided which.

Scuba is confident in himself academically, though he suspects he'll find more challenges when taking required courses that lie outside his areas of interest.

But the goal he has set for himself during the first semester is social, not academic. "I'm going to Tri-C not knowing anyone, so I have to rebuild a friend base," he said.

Asked whether he has a plan for meeting people, Scuba replied, "They have clubs here, right?" (Tri-C's Western Campus, Scuba's home base, has more than 20 clubs as well as sports teams to join.)

Beyond that, he said, "There are people you meet in classes that you want to hang out with."

Scuba's long-range goal is to land a career that engages him on a day-to-day basis. "The perfect job is the one you want to go to when you wake up every day."