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## INDIA

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**Name:** Rosendo Pierre Da Costa  
**Program:** Bachelor of Science, Biology (Degree)



Joining Vancouver Island University (VIU) in Sept 2003 was the best thing that could happen to me. In the beginning everything seemed different; the people, the climate the surroundings and even the instructors at the college. But as time passed I gradually got used to everything, even the style of teaching and the different ways of catching up on topics in different classes.

Having joined the Peer- Helper program at VIU too was a big advantage for me. I made a lot of friends, who like me had come from different parts of the world. I learned a lot about their own cultures, their people and a

little of their language too. Whenever I was bored, all I had to do was pick up the phone and see who was free. And together we would hang out at the Malls and even sometimes go for movies.

The small class sizes at VIU are one of the most important things that helped me get through all of my classes. In other universities, each class consists of about 200- 250 students, whereas at VIU, the maximum number of students that I had in my classes was 40. With this to my advantage, it was easy for me to meet up with my instructors during their office hours and get the necessary help I needed. Above all, my instructors knew my name and would wish me wherever we met---- something which might not be possible in other universities. Being an International Student, I wasn't allowed to work off campus. Therefore getting an On- Campus job was a big bonus to my 'Pocket'. Being a 'Student Gymnasium Attendant' at the VIU Gym, for the last one year helped boost my confidence a lot. The best part about my job was that I made friends with many students who came to work out. And if the same students were in any of my classes, they would recognize me as 'the guy who works at the gym'. Besides that, participating in various out- door recreational activities and sports helped me get over a lot of my fears of heights and the water.

Therefore, VIU has helped me portray my leadership skills, and has played a very important part in making me a confident person, when dealing with strangers, friends, and even my peers.

First of all, coming from a big country like India, there were many factors that I had to deal with, if I wanted to settle in Nanaimo. The biggest of them all was the climate. Coming from a country where the Min temperature is 20 deg C in the winters, - 3 and -5 deg C, was something that I had to force myself to get used to. Secondly, when I arrived in Nanaimo, all the people seemed to be very friendly and polite, which is something that I found difficult to adjust to, as I wasn't used to greeting strangers on the buses and the streets.

Whether it was the bank or just some one passing bye, some sort of greeting was always there. But eventually, I got used to it and today, I am the first one to greet any stranger. Dealing with local people at my work place, the Gym, or whether it was at college, helped me understand the different ways of conversing with people.

Even though I came from a big city, everything in Nanaimo seemed perfect to me. The roads, the rush hour traffic etc. Even though we receive a 'Variety' when it comes to climate, we do not have any severe snow falls or heavy rains, like parts of Toronto. Even if it does rain, it is always very light. Therefore living in Nanaimo has taught me a lot of things when it comes to people, food and the climate.

I am currently enrolled in, Bachelor of Science, Biology Major Program at VIU. This is a four year program and it involves a variety of courses that one has to take including Physics, Chemistry and Math.

Even though the first two initial years are a little challenging, the third year seems a lot easier. This program is designed specifically for those students with an interest towards teaching, graduate school or seeking admission in to professional schools such as Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine or employment as Scientists in the Biological and Environmental Sciences. Here at VIU, a Major and a Minor in Biology is offered. A Minor will be of particular interest to students proceeding towards a career in Primary and Secondary education with plans for teaching a science curriculum.

With plans of going in to Med School after the completion of my degree at VIU, the Biology program is preparing me for the challenges yet to come. With super friendly instructors to guide me, I know I will be able to accomplish my main goal of getting in to Med School.

**International Education Department**  
**900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada V9R 5S5**  
**Telephone: (250) 740-6316 Fax: (250) 740-6471 E-mail: [study@viu.ca](mailto:study@viu.ca)**  
**Website: [www.viu.ca/international](http://www.viu.ca/international)**