

“DEATH, TAXES & CHRIS CASSIDY FROM THE FREE THROW LINE”



Colleague Profile

The above headline appeared in the Brattleboro Reformer (2002) in an article praising the high school record of 33 consecutive free throws established by Chris Cassidy in his senior year at Brattleboro Union High School. We found this and many other articles about Mr. Cassidy’s basketball achievements as we reviewed “borrowed” family albums in preparation for this profile: Chris Cassidy, our Burlington based Trust Investment Officer.

Chris joined us full-time a bit over a year ago. As noted in our last newsletter, it is difficult to profile our younger colleagues who are still developing their work personalities. Having said this, we believe Chris is the exception. We think he was fully formed somewhere around age 5 (prior to that



he was characterized as a “demon” whose noteworthy achievement was being kicked out of the Putney Day Care).

The Chris then and the Chris now is highly analytical with a very strong work ethic. We don’t see this changing. If he is going to have a mid-life crisis, it will be soon. Described by his friends as “age 24 going on 50”, he doesn’t have much time left. It seems that Chris may be one of those fortunate few who

actually discover in college what they truly like to do. And it was basketball that was the accelerant.

Chris, who was raised in East Dummerston, started playing basketball at about age 5. Influenced by his father and his brother, he decided that the only way to develop the muscle memory necessary to excel in the sport was through con-



A point guard’s job is to create scoring opportunities for his team by passing and setting up plays on the court. Using his skills and knowledge of the game, he usually exerts a leadership role on the floor similar to that of a quarterback.

stant practice. Thus he established a self-discipline and work ethic that is now second nature to him.

Basketball was his primary focus for a number of years. He and his father ran a basketball camp in Putney during the summer. Although he excelled academically, his decision to leave Northfield Mount Hermon to go to BUHS

was based primarily on the opportunity to play for the varsity team. It also influenced his decision to go to Skidmore, which was based on the combined strength of the English and basketball programs.



At Skidmore, basketball became more like a high school friend who didn’t go on to college with you, and the analytical side, so critical to his role as a point guard, now found full academic expression instead. As an English major, he was required to take two courses in math. Although he “tested out” of one of the courses, he was required to sit for one. He reluctantly ended up in macroeconomics and then discovered that he liked it more than any of his English courses. As a result he shifted to a double major: Economics and Business. A summa cum laude student, Chris received the highest award from both departments upon graduation

We first met Chris when he applied for an internship in the summer of 2004. We only had a part-time position available. So he filled the balance of the week working at Walker Farm hefting and hauling. Now we should define

Mr. Cassidy's definition of a week: it's seven days, three with us and four with Walker Farm. In 2005, during his senior year, he returned: one day with us, one day with Sherlock Investments, one day clerking with Lawyer Thomas Costello, and four days with Walker Farm.

We were so pleased with the quality of his work, his analytical strengths, and his writing ability, that we created his position perhaps a year or two earlier than planned lest we lose him to the 'big city'. A disciple of Warren Buffett, Chris has seamlessly joined our investment committee. That's not an easy thing to do when the average experience of the group is 25 years. But then again he's almost 50.