



NAME

NOAH AL HADIDI

FROM

OMAN

TO

FORT COLLINS, CO

PROGRAM

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY –  
COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS



# Access to All Fields of Study

Blind international students from certain world regions have less access to math learning beyond primary school because their teachers often did not have the tools, such as alternative teaching methods, assistive technology, and/or tactile graphics. People who are blind often are funneled to certain fields of study, such as the arts, while the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields are frequently seen as not viable options. This was the reality that Noah Al Hadidi was not going to accept.

“When I was a little kid, I used to play with electronic devices and I loved how they helped people. Later I moved to computers, and that’s how it all started.”

Noah grew up in Oman, but entered high school in Saudi Arabia because he found that Oman did not have the resources he needed and there was a school for the blind in Saudi Arabia he could attend. He had a passion for computer science and stayed focused on achieving his goals. This motivated him to attend Colorado State University to complete his Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science and minor in Business and to continue on with his Master’s degree in Computer Information Systems.

Others who know Noah also recognized his academic talent and dedication. While in high school in Saudi Arabia, he worked for a company that distributes new technology and software for the blind community. His manager encouraged him to apply for admission to universities in the United States. So he did.

**“Coming to the United States made me a different person, where I wanted to be challenged.”**

He enjoyed the opportunities to participate in activities that weren’t possible for him back home, such as biking, camping, canoeing, hiking, kayaking, running, skiing, and more.

Back home, Noah found limited public transportation or services available for him. People with disabilities depended heavily on community support from family members or friends to get around. When Noah arrived to the United States, he enjoyed his independence by having access to public transportation and, when needed, paratransit services, which provides additional routes and door-to-door services for people with disabilities.



“In the United States I’m living independently. Most people back home are not gaining life skills, such as cooking and cleaning.”

Noah also started playing Goalball in the United States, a team sport designed specifically for blind athletes, with some American friends. He noticed that many of them had guide dogs. It wasn’t something Noah ever thought about having back home because it is not common at all. He asked his friends some questions about the benefits and process. He started to get excited about the idea to have a guide dog and become more independent. He contacted Guide Dogs for the Blind to get more information and went to their office for an initial assessment.

After a one year process, Noah soon met his companion and guide dog Amiga. Having Amiga has given Noah the opportunity to become more independent, accomplish things faster than before, navigate winters in Colorado more easily, meet more people, and most importantly enjoy having his companion by his side.

Noah could not be happier with his decision to apply and come to the United States, not only for his academics, but also for what he discovered about himself. When he returns home, Noah plans to start an organization to educate people who are blind about assistive technology, life skills, and access in the STEM fields.



## Noah's Top Accessibility Tools for Blind Students:

- 1** For browsing the internet, reading books, and handouts, Noah uses a screenreader, such as Jaws.
- 2** To take notes, Noah uses a Braille Display.
- 3** To keep track in class, Noah makes sure to bring a voice recording device.
- 4** Noah uses a braille embosser to write math braille, also known as Nemeth code.
- 5** When listening to audiobooks, Noah prefers “Daisy books” and also uses VR stream and his iPhone.
- 6** For living independently, Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training can be found through blind organizations in your community or through your disability services office on campus.
- 7** To check the temperature when cooking meat, a talking thermometer helped Noah.
- 8** When shopping, Noah uses DigitEyes to scan the bar codes and a Money Reader to scan his currency, both available as iPhone apps.
- 9** Noah finds BlindSquare app on his iPhone useful so he know the places around him.
- 10** When on the road, Noah uses the National Federation of the Blind “NFB Newsline” to read the newspaper.



### More Tips for Blind and Low Vision Students Studying Abroad

[miosa.org/resource/tipsheet/blindtips](https://miosa.org/resource/tipsheet/blindtips)