

## **Traveling man**

*Chris Comerford ('04) goes viral with his vlog, DMV Adventures*

By Lillian Johns ('26)

As New Year's resolutions go, Chris Comerford ('04) set the bar high in 2025. He made a goal to attend every Washington Commanders football game, home and away. It was an 18-week commitment, which took him to every corner of the U.S. and even abroad to Madrid, Spain. Along the way, he tracked his journey on his longtime food and travel vlog, *DMV Adventures*.

Seven years ago, Comerford quit his job to start his own video production business. But outside of his professional life, he picked up, as he dubs it, a new "hobby." It began by simply recording himself visiting a local restaurant or two, and from there, he launched *DMV Adventures*.

Leveraging his degree in Marketing, Comerford's production team consists of him and his trusty GoPro camera, with the occasional cell phone or drone. Over the years, he has found that traveling and filming content with excessive equipment just isn't his style.

Comerford's day job demands professional, polished content, and he enjoys being able to show a more authentic approach in his videos. "I want [the camera] to be in my hand. ... People really connect to that."

In deciding which locations or businesses to cover, Comerford pulls from multiple sources. "I don't like to go somewhere that people aren't interested in. So, it's a lot of going online and researching." The most efficient route, he says, is going straight to the source — the local restaurants or people who can give him real recommendations. Comerford also leans into convenience, exploring local haunts and searching for the cheapest flights.

*DMV Adventures* practices a positive approach to coverage and reviews. "I don't want to be negative in my videos. I learned that a long time ago. ... I'm a small-business owner. I don't want to hurt other small-business owners."

Though he could opt for any means of travel, Comerford is loyal to Amtrak. From the opportunity to meet other passengers to the convenience of train stations located in city centers, Comerford preaches a wealth of train-travel benefits.

"When I quit my job and had no clients, right before I started going really hardcore, I took my first train trip from D.C. to San Francisco. ... You grow up and see old movies of people sleeping on a train, and to me, once I actually did it, I was like, 'This is incredible.'"

This brings us back to that lofty New Year's resolution, and to a major turning point in his *DMV Adventures* legacy. In week 14 of the 2025-26 NFL season, Comerford found himself in Minnesota to watch the Commanders face the Vikings. But it was another football game happening more than 1,000 miles away in Charlotte, North Carolina, that piqued his interest.

On Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> Duke would beat UVA in a nail-biter in the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship Game, which secured a spot for JMU in the College Football Playoff as a top-5-ranked conference champion. He recalls not quite believing what he was seeing — his alma mater made the CFP. The Dukes had a date with No. 5 Oregon in Eugene on Dec. 20, which coincided with a Commanders game. But for Comerford, it was an easy choice to skip out on his resolution and “ruin the whole 18-week thing.”

His trek to Eugene began in New York on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, one week before the game. First was an overnight train to Chicago, Illinois, and then came the three-night train ride to Seattle, Washington. Snow started to fall on the second leg of his trip. Thankfully, Comerford's No. 1 travel tip is to “have no expectations and be ready for anything.”

The train trip ended up getting canceled halfway through due to the snow storm, taking him only as far as Spokane, Washington. It was around this time that Comerford took to the social media platform X to share that *DMV Adventures* might not make it to the game. Then, to add to the drama, he lost cell service for several hours.

Once back on the grid, he was shocked to find that Oregon fans had taken an immense interest in his trip. Upon disembarking in Eugene, he was met with people waiting in the parking lot, honking their horns and calling out to “train guy.” The fateful video would go on to garner more than 2 million views.

Trekking through the two teams' tailgates, Comerford felt like a celebrity, getting pulled this way and that by fans in both green and purple for pictures and tales from his journey. He couldn't believe the warm reception. “The Oregon fans were great, and the JMU fans were great, so that was really the highlight of my life, that trip.”

This past year alone, Comerford traveled to 25 U.S. cities and one new country. He is guided by his four-part doctrine: Be welcoming, be positive, smile and have fun. As for his plans for the future? Keep exploring. “In the last couple of years, when I amped up the traveling, I mean, the amount of new food I've tried, the cities that I have gone to ... I just want to travel to fun places and meet fun people, and do things that I would have never thought to do on my own.”

*DMV Adventures* can be found on YouTube, Facebook, TikTok and X.