

Theme: My father's early life

Abstract: My father is someone that since an early age has had to work for everything he has ever owned and did not get help from anyone else. His life in the U.S. has been one of work and dedication to family and to further himself through work. He has experienced life from two different countries and has come to appreciate life in the U.S. The hard work that this Mexican American man has done over the years proves that acquiring the American dream of creating a family and owning a house is possible for anyone.

Keywords: Independence, hard work, inspiration, triumph, determination of immigrant, Opportunity in America

### The Rise of a Mexican Man

My father was born in Michoacán, Mexico and lived there at a young age with his parents. Like many Mexicans at the time they were in search of more money that Mexico was just not able to provide them with. So at eight years old my father and his parents arrived in Hollister, California in search of work. His parents had heard from other friends that there was work to be had in California so they went for it. When they got to Hollister my father was enrolled in Freemont elementary school so that he would have something to do while his parents went to work. My grandfather went to work where ever there was to spare which was working in the apricot fields, as for my grandmother she went to work at the cannery in Hollister. Since all this was new and different for my father he began to feel something else within him, which was that America isn't so bad. He was very young when he first came to America so he started to take in the culture and feel like the US can be a place that he can someday call home. Also at this age he began to feel more and more part of the culture that he experienced in California and

felt that it was no longer a foreign and strange place but started to feel familiar. At age 13 the work ran out for his parents and that was the signal to go back to Mexico due to lack of work.

But soon later my dad felt like he wanted to pursue life in the states than to stay in Mexico, which began to feel more distant to him even though he was born there. This makes sense since he was very young during his time in Mexico and spent time in America absorbing US culture. So at the age of 15 he said good bye to his parents and left to America to make it on his own and work. Instead of going to Hollister first he went to the big city of Los Angeles to see what it could offer him. I'm sure that my father must have felt overwhelmed by the size of the city and different types of people that inhabit it. Not only that but he was only 15 years old when he got there and that sounds to me that he must have been very brave to do this. His first job there was working at a Korean grocery store to get cash. That's not too bad knowing that he was so young and that there wasn't much of a job selection open to him. He lived in LA for two years and decided to move back to Hollister. I'm sure that he wanted to go to a more familiar place from his younger days. This point in his life he was 17 years old and got a job at San Benito Rockery as a wash boy cleaning the big rigs. While at the rockery he was always surrounded by large, heavy equipment and 18 wheelers and began how to use all of them and advancing his working skills.

While 17, he went back to Mexico to bring back his girlfriend of eight years which later became my mother. Once back in the states my dad wanted to get married to my mom but ran into a problem in that they were too young to get married by the church, so they got married by law first. I was born soon after they were married by law in Hollister. Age 17 sounds like it was a busy year for my father and a lot of life changing events were occurring and shaping his attitude towards life. By the age of 19 my dad had been working at the rockery for a while now

and he felt like he was ready for more work and challenges professionally. So he went and got his class A driver's license to be able to drive large commercial big rigs for more money. My father has been very busy up to his point in his life and it's something that I can honestly say that I have not done. He has done much more than I have done at his age because he has always had a goal and determination to fulfill it. He has also had to do this because he did start out by himself at such a young age and needed to grow up much faster than most kids today. Since he got his class A license he began to drive long distance picking up and delivering heavy equipment in his 18 wheelers all over California and even out of state. He started working 80 to 90 hour work weeks and would go days without going home and seeing my mother and me. I was very young so I don't really remember vividly him being gone all the time but I did notice that he was gone sometimes. My mother was always home with me so I didn't feel too lonely because she was always taking care of me and playing with me. It's my mother that would be there to comfort me when my dad was gone because I was so close to my dad at that age and I thought he was the best like most little kids do. Because my father was so young he was able to work all those long hours and not feel drained and feeling sick. He says that driving and working was something that he enjoyed doing and it wasn't a hassle like someone like me might think. He compares it to how I'm able to play video games in crazy hours of the night. But to me that's something that in my head you can't compare. He says that driving 18 wheelers was the equivalent of playing video games to him, which is something that I can't begin to understand. That's just how my father thinks about his work; he doesn't hate going to work even though his work does take a toll on his body now. You would never hear him complaining about how far he had to go to deliver some huge piece of machinery to excavate the earth or something.

With all this working his doing he and my mother decided to buy a house in Hollister. He was 22 years old when he got his first house and that sounds impressive to me. Because he was so young the bank decided to investigate him further due to the fact that he was so young and buying a house and not renting it. Not only had the bank started questioning my dad's income but also my father's relatives. They believed that my father was doing some illegal activity or something because of the money he had. When heard of this I thought that was one of the funniest things that I have ever heard of. To think of my dad doing that sort of thing is just ridiculous and dumb. When my dad was just working and earning his money the right way, they didn't know that my dad was working such a high number of hours a week. Because he was working so much my parents were never short on money and never felt like they were going to miss a payment or even a meal. I never went hungry or had a lack of toys or other stuff as a kid and that's all thanks to my father's work and my mother's proper management of the money. I can say that my parents never really spent money on purely frivolous things because my parents just weren't in to them.

At 20 years old my brother was born and it was something that both me and my father were excited for. Two years later my younger sister was also born in Hollister. That was something that my mother was excited for because that meant that there would be another woman in the family. By age 26 my dad bought his second house because we were fast out growing the first and we needed more space. We were all getting comfortable with the new house and things that my father was buying to fill the bigger house with. At this time my dad was still working a lot but he did begin to slow down a bit than before because of all the new kids. By the age of 28 he bought his third and current house that we live in. Both my parents wanted to live in a bigger house and so they looked for one they liked and got it. We have

always had nice things and also taken care of the things that we do have. We are not wasteful because of the things that my parents have taught us about our belongings. My father has been working for a while and that why we are able to buy new cars, houses, clothing and other entertainment technologies. When I do look at the things that I have because of my parents I do feel like I have to repay them back for all the things that they gave me to make my life easier than the one that they had. Going to school is something that my father didn't have a chance to do for himself. His parents didn't have a big belief I schooling and didn't care too much about it. That something that my father has different than them and it's something that my dad wants me to try in. He wanted to make even more money so he also started his own concrete pumping business alongside his own regular job. That's something that my dad wasn't an expert in but he wanted to invest in so he did it. The business is something that I do help him in because I do know that he is a hard worker and I know that he would not turn down the help of a son. Our economic wellbeing has not been in question to the point where we are at risk of losing our house or cars because of my parent's determination and will to push forward.

My dad has spent most of his life in America even though he was born in Mexico. That because his parents were I search of work like most Mexican families. He spent time in America and began to like it more than Mexico because he spent time here as a boy and felt like he could be a part of it and not be called out as a dumb foreigner. He saw that there was opportunity in America so he went out and realized his own American dream through hard work and the will to keep on working through hard times knowing that it would pay off in the end and it did for him and I'm thankful for that because he deserves it.