

Topic: The struggle my parents overcame

Abstract: My parents came to the United States to better their lives but as immigrants struggled. They lived through deportation, poverty and at the same time the best experiences in life. Although life here as newcomers was not easy for them they never gave up. Because of their courage we deeply appreciate everything they went through and it is now our time to work for their future.

Keywords: Poverty, Deportation, The power of Family

At the age of sixteen my father took on the hardest challenge of his life. He decided to come work in the United States as an illegal immigrant and help his struggling family. Not only was he skipping his adolescence and becoming an adult but he would have to adapt to a culture that was not his. He would come on his own and leave everything behind and all for the best of his family and the bettering of his future.

The day he decided to leave he remembered being scared to death but he never thought about it twice. He had saved enough money to pay a Coyote to cross him across the border. On his mission through the border my father remembers it as the worse experience in his life. It was day and night of hunger, fear, thirst, and anxiety. He made friends with men who were on the same mission as him and they ended up in Hollister, Ca. In Hollister they were going to find any job possible with any pay as long as they could make ends meet and help their ones at homes.

Once in Hollister my father met a farmer who helped him find a job and would later become his father-in-law. My grandfather lived in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua but had land in Hollister. He would come every other month and check on his land. He then introduced my father to some land owners who needed farmers, my father was then offered a job. He was not paid well but he was offered a small trailer to live in as well. My father did not miss this

opportunity. A couple months later my grandfather came back from Cd. Juarez with his daughter, who is my mom, and introduced her to my father. He told my mother that he knew an intelligent hard working man that would possibly interest her. Although hesitant my mother agreed to meet him. They have now been together for 30 years.

But those thirty years were not an easy ride for them. When I speak to my mom of her first years with my father her eyes water. She said they were filled with struggle and hardship but God doesn't send you something you can't handle. After a couple of years of dating and getting to know each other my parents decided to get married and move in with each other. They both were aware that their financial situation was not the best but would work out because they had each other. This was my mom's toughest decision to agree with. She was used to a life where money was not a problem. They never had to worry about not making ends meet. But she said yes to my father because she loved him. When they agreed to marry my father made my mother promise that they would never ask her dad for money since it was his obligation to provide for her and the family they would soon start.

About two years later in 1982 their first child was born. My parents describe this moment as the best thing that ever happened to them. To them their child was a gift sent from God and were grateful they were able to conceive. But the responsibility of this child became more than a hardship. My father was still working in the fields and making minimum wage and my mom had to stay home from work since she had had a c-section. Unfortunately one day my father left to work and never made it back home. Immigration services came in search of illegal workers and took my father. My mom became desperate and did not know what to do. Her husband, her income, the father of her child had been deported and she had no financial source. She was devastated, she had horrible images of

her child starving and her having to leave him for work running through her head. Luckily, the farmer my father worked for offered to financially support my mother and the baby until my father was able to return. This amazing man even offered to pay for my fathers Coyote. Since that day on my parents have adored this man and remain friends with him. Two months later my dad crossed the border again and returned to his family and work. He says that from that day on he worked even harder for the man who had helped him return.

In 1985 their second child was born. And not only did they receive another joy in the family but in that year they were also able to become residents. Since my parents were legally able to work, my father remained working in the fields but not without the fear of being deported and my mom had to join him. They needed to bring more income into the household. They were able to get the governments help with daycare and worked countless hours for the benefit of their children. Like any other people my parents detested field work but had no choice they did not know English and definitely did not have time in their hands to learn it.

Later on in 1986 and in 1990 my parents had two more children. This is when times got rougher for them. They now had four children and lived in a two bedroom trailer probably a third of the size of our classroom. They needed to provide for four children and needed to be able to send them all to school. But my parents never gave up. They had the courage none of us probably will ever endure. And for that we are grateful. My siblings and I survived countless years being a family of six with an incoming income of less than 50,000 a year. If you divide that, that is less than ten grand each but we made it through. Now my parents are citizens and do not have to work in the fields. They have learned English, although half broken but you can understand them. And they have done the best job

they could have possibly done.

My parents taught us that overcoming obstacles is part of life and that for family you do even what seems impossible. We are now responsible to ensure their future and we will never forget their effort. My parents succeeded in life, in work and most definitely as parents. Because of them we plan to become the successful children they expect us to be. They have two children who opted out of education but have well paying jobs. They have a son who attended a private university-University of the Pacific and has received a Bachelor of Science in the Management of Sports, and is working on his Educational Administration Masters. And they have me. Who is trying her best to make it through a better education and becoming something successful. I know my parents are proud of us and are grateful to god that he let us get this far even if we struggled through poverty. There was weeks we only have potatoes and beans in our plates, but those potatoes and beans were more than the kids in Africa have ever gotten.