

Topic: My father's search of a better life for his family.

Abstract: My father was an immigrant from Mexico who was in search of a better life for his family in the U.S. Even though he did not have proper documents to be able to work here legally, he still found ways to sustain our family. Because he had worked hard his whole life, when the opportunity came along, he was able to obtain a better job. Thanks to his hard work and dedication, he can now spend more time with his family and know that we are extremely proud of him.

Key Words: American Dream, Immigrants, Work, Family, Field Work, Perseverance, Inspiration, Pride, Hope

My Father's Journey in Hope of the American Dream

My father is the hardest working person I have ever met in my life. It's not because I'm talking about my father because every can say that about their own dad. I say it because I know that it is true on behalf of all his struggles. This story starts with my father, an immigrant from Mexico, coming to the United States in search of the American Dream. It had all began when my older sister was born and my parents knew that life in Mexico wasn't going to be good enough place to raise a family. Four months after my sister was born, my parents decided that it was time to come to the U.S. in order to make true opportunities for our family. My father had already come to the U.S. once before to get things started while my mother was pregnant. When he heard the news that she was getting close to giving birth, he immediately left the country to be with her for the delivery. It was very tough for my parents to cross over to the other side because they had to find a *coyote* that would not only cross them for a low price, but who was also trust worthy. Many *coyotes* during that time would often charge an incredibly high price for crossing people over the border and after getting paid, they would just leave the poor people stranded. The good

news for my parents at that time was that they had a friend who could help them cross the border for a reasonable price.

Once my parents crossed the border along with my older sister, they settled in a small town called Madera, near Fresno, where my father's brother lived. While living in Madera, my father worked in the vine yards picking grapes for a living. He tended to work six days a week on average, while having to work Sundays on some occasions. I guess this was good for him because he made enough to put food on the table and keep a roof over his family's head. But times were getting tough and the money that he was making didn't seem to be enough. This is why my father decided to pick up another job during the time after picking grapes. My father found some side jobs painting houses, landscaping, paving drive ways and doing some construction work. My dad has always been a person who doesn't like to be sitting down all day. The reason why is because when he was younger, his father would always have him be doing hard work like herding the cows, carrying heavy bags and taking care of the animals on their ranch.

After a while, my mother noticed that doing all that work was going to tire him out, so she told him that she heard about other jobs in a different town. This is what led my parents to starting their new life in Hollister. The move from Madera was quite different from what my parents were used to. The climate in Madera was very hot during the summer and really cold during the winter. They liked the weather in Hollister because it was nice, not too hot and not too cold. Once they arrived, my father immediately started looking for any job that was available to him. Since my father didn't have legal documents to be here at the time, he went under a different name and used a fake social security number when he found a job. The job was like most jobs for immigrants at the time, field work. Since there wasn't anything else a person

without documents could do, this job sufficed. While working at this job, my father worked six days a week, 10-14 hour shifts a day; he did this for over twenty years. This is exactly what I mean by hard working. It's just unbelievable.

When I was born, my father didn't get to spend as much time with me as he would have wanted to. I never blamed him; he was always thinking about us and doing everything he could to give us the life he didn't have. I remember him coming home around 8 at night, taking off his muddy boots and dirty clothes, drenched in sweat from picking up heavy pipes and moving them across hundreds of yards of lettuce fields all day. I remember him groaning in pain and cracking his back, knowing that leaning over to pick vegetables for several years could be bad for his back. But not once did he ever complain. He'd wake up at 4 a.m. every morning, go to work at 5, and not come back until around 8 o'clock at night. My father worked hard every day knowing that his hard work would one day pay off to create a better life for his family. And without much thought, that day did come.

After working such a long time in the fields, my father was going older and tired. We knew it, he knew it, and his friends knew it, and this is where his hard work paid off. A friend of his had heard a rumor that the company for which my dad worked for was going to close, and he told him that they were hiring at Ridgemark. My dad, many times a non-believer of what many people said, wanted to know if this was true. So he started asking around, and he soon realized that it was true. Not wanting to take any chances, he went to go ask for a job at Ridgemark. The owners there saw that he was experienced and very hard working, thanks to my dad's friend, and he got the job. That was the moment where he realized that all those years of hard work finally paid off. He had finally gotten a job where he no longer had to be in pain or getting all dirty. Soon after, he finally bought us our own house and a truck for us to be able to get around. All

that pain he had been through was finally a thing of the past. As my life has gone on through the years, my father has taught me many valuable lessons, but the most important one has always been to be a hard working person. Although I know that I could never be as hard working as him, he knows that I will always try my best to make him proud.