The Rainbow of Immigration

America is like a rainbow.

Made up of different shades of red, blue, and yellow.

There are different cultures and different races.

This diversity in America you can't find in other places.

America is the land of opportunity.

Where immigrants come to fulfill their dreams.

They come from war as refugees.

They come to live with family.

Everyone in America is given a chance.

You don't get judged at first glance.

You can come from a family that is poor.

You can get a job or become an entrepreneur.

How we innovate in America is by disagreeing.

The ideas come together in a way that is pleasing.

The different perspectives are all unique.

To make it perfect we critique.

Immigrants brought their beliefs to share.

Spreading their culture everywhere.

Christmas, Chinese New Year, and other holidays they brought too.

I would miss the presents and lucky money, wouldn't you?

And look at all these different foods.

There are so many to choose!

We have a variety of foods today.

Thanks to immigrants coming to stay.

Immigration has helped us in many ways.

Teaching everyone to love each other in the USA.

With only a few colors, America would be dull.

But every single person makes America beautiful.

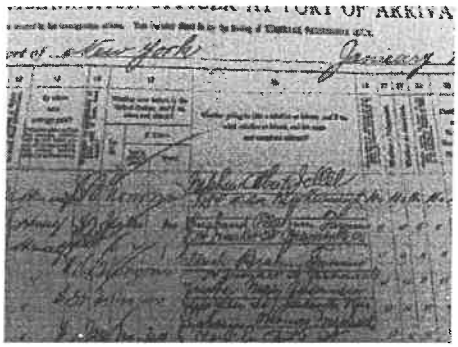
Those are my reasons, just to name a few.

Why immigration is good, for me and for you.

BAKA'S STORY

by

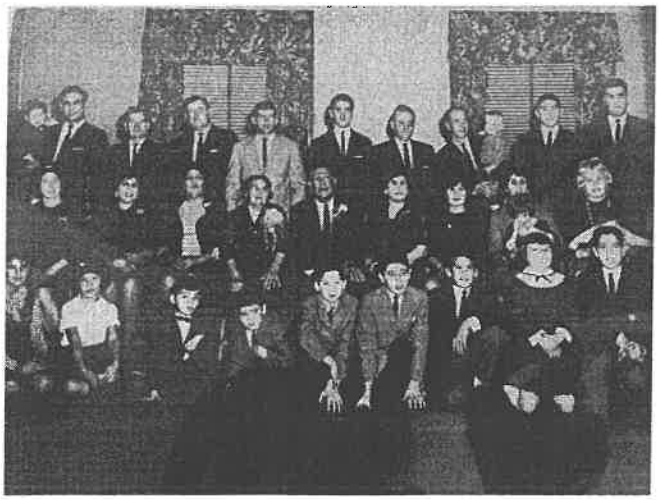
In 1896 there was the birth of a beautiful baby named Mary Abraham in Wadi al-Uyun, Syria. She was born into a very poor family who lived and worked on an olive farm. When Mary was a little girl her father moved to America to earn money and search for a better life. Years later their father had saved enough money for the family to join him in Pittsburgh. Mary, her mother, and her two brothers were excited to move to America. They packed up their few belongings at once and set off by donkey to Tripoli. Then for the first time, they took a train to Marseilles, France. From there they journeyed for three weeks on the Roma to Ellis Island, NY. Mary and her family were so excited to enter America and see their father for the first time in over four years, they almost didn't hear the doctor at Ellis Island say, " I'm sorry but your daughter Mary cannot come into the country because of pink eye."



What to do? With no money, Mary's family can't ***all*** go back to France. Her mother begged and pleaded, then burst into tears but they still would not let Mary into America. Luckily they met a French family on the boat who offered to take care of Mary back in Marseilles until she got better. So her family decided they would enter America and Mary would return on the boat to Marseilles. Can you imagine that, being separated from your family and sent back ***alone***? She was only 11 (just like I am) and she couldn't speak English or French. She lived with that nice French family and worked in their bakery where she made her traditional Syrian bread and was given the nick-name "Baka" because it was so delicious.

Meanwhile, Mary's family had been saving money for her return to America. Finally after two years her family had saved enough money and she was able to set off again to America. This time she was healthy and free to enter into America where her father met her as she got off the boat. She was so happy to see him after six long years that she cried happy tears. When she was fifteen she met who was also from Syria, and she married him that same year. Years later she had seven kids and one was a war hero at Pearl Harbour. They lived happily ever after.

This would not have been possible if it weren't for immigration. Immigration brings people together and is an opportunity for a better life. One of those immigrants was Mary and when she came she brought her culture and her food and everyone in her town loved her food. To this day even I like Syrian food (a little). I'm proud to say that Mary is my Great Grandmother and I was born and raised in America because of her and her bravery.



Why I Am Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants

by

"May the road rise up to meet you.." an Irish blessing.

My grandfather died last month. It was hard for us to process, but then I started thinking about the great things he has accomplished. My grandfather, Michael , was from Ireland. He was fluent in Irish(Gaelic). He had several younger sisters, and left on a plane to go to the United States when he was young. With one small suitcase, he began his new life, nervously waving out the window at his family. He was excited, but also must have been a little frightened.

When I interviewed my grandfather last year, for an assignment called "First Person to America", he told me in his, soft, merry voice all about coming over to America and becoming interested in mathematics. He was a dean at Rice University. He also taught engineering in Berkeley at Cal. He accomplished so many things in America, and if he hadn't come to America, I wouldn't even exist. My middle name is "Roisin", which means "little rose" in Irish. If I was Michael's little rose, he certainly helped me bloom.

In ways my grandfather was special because he was from somewhere else; Ireland. He knew another language, Irish music, their culture. And he shared it with me. Immigrants change America. They each have a different story to tell. A different bridge to build. A different child to inspire. That's why America is so interesting. But, also, America changes immigrants. Once you're here, you aren't the same. America becomes a special part of you.

I miss my grandfather. I miss his bubbly laugh, his sweet, reassuring smile, and his wild sense of humor. We couldn't decide where to bury him. Where was his home? We finally decided to cremate him, so we could spread his ashes all over. When my grandfather was dying, he was reaching for a pen. He wasn't able to write what he wanted to say. So now I'm writing this for him, in case he wanted to say thank you to America. It makes me sad, but it's not all about me.

Somewhere there's a Chinese girl thinking about her grandmother who came here and how she started a new family. Somewhere there's a Mexican boy thinking about his grandfather's journey to the U.S. And somewhere, a little girl is taking a journey with her father right now, into a new, unknown land, waiting anxiously to arrive. *Welcome! Welcome to your new home!*

My Great Grandmother-The Immigrant

I have heard my parents and grandmother talk about my great grandmother on many occasions. Her name was Josephine Arce-Ceballos. Although Josephine died one year before I was born and I never knew her, she sounded like an amazing woman.

I interviewed my grandmother (Josephine's daughter) about my great grandmother. I learned Josephine was born in 1915 in Mazatlán, Mexico. Her mother died at childbirth and her father abandoned her. She was raised by her two aunts and grandfather.

As a little girl in Mazatlán, Josephine lived during the Mexican Revolution. This was a period in Mexico when there was civil war. It was a very dangerous time to be a Mexican citizen. During this war, Josephine's house was burned down. Josephine's birth certificate was burned in the fire. No one ever knew Josephine's true birthday. Her aunts made up a date they felt was the most correct and that was her birthday for the rest of her life.

When Josephine was five years old, her family decided to apply for temporary permits, called visas, to come to the United States and escape Mexico. Their visas were granted.

Josephine and her family came into the United States and lived in Tucson, Arizona for several years. She went to elementary school, but only completed grades first through sixth. After sixth grade, she was forced to go to work to help support her family. When she was 17 years old, her family decided to move to San Francisco because she had other family members living there.

Josephine never attended high school or college. She worked many hours in a laundromat and as a seamstress. She saved all of the money she earned in the hopes of one day buying her own house.

In 1941 at the age of 26, she married Marciano Ceballos. Josephine and Marciano started a family and had four children. Marciano died in 1953 and Josephine was forced to raise their children on her own. Because she could not afford to live in San Francisco as a single mother, she moved her family to Daly City and bought a smaller house. Josephine lived in the same house until her death in 2004 at the age of 88.

Even though she had lots of hardships in her life, Josephine also had many successes. All of her children got a high school diploma and jobs. Her children had families of their own and Josephine had eight grandchildren. She loved working every day until she retired at 65 years old. Every holiday was at her house and the entire family gathered and ate her delicious tamales. Another highlight of her life was when she officially became a United States citizen at the age of 75. Everyone was very proud of her.

Josephine was a Mexican immigrant who became a United States citizen. Although she faced many hardships in her life, she is a great example that if you work hard, you can accomplish anything.

Life Changing Move

July 27,2014

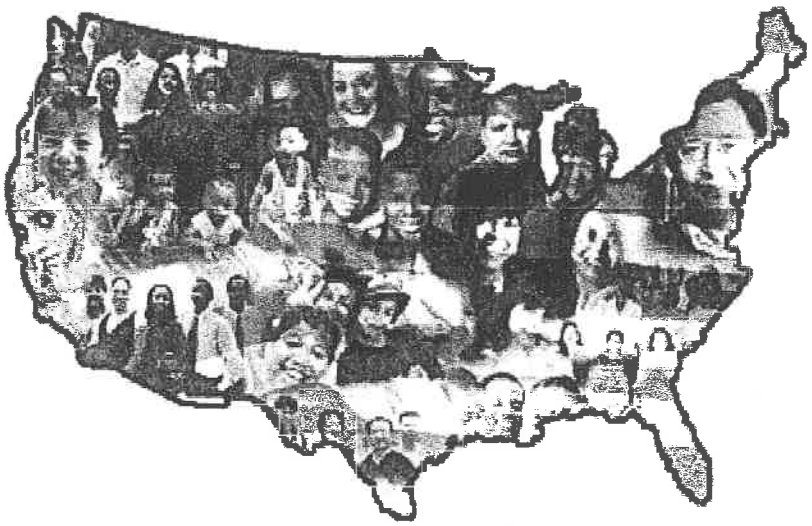
Dear Diary,

My name is Zeina Hallem. I am 10 years old and from Palestine, Gaza. I have a brother, Adam, who is 3 years old. I have a mom and had a dad. My dad died from a bomb. When I found out my dad died I was very scared. My mom was devastated. We had no one to support us in Gaza, but we had an uncle in America who would take care of us. We applied to immigrate to America with my uncle's help. I was sad to leave, but happy to not see anymore shooting or bombing. Unfortunately, I had to leave my grandparents behind because they were too old to move to another country. Before coming to America people investigated us.

I was nervous about coming to America. When I first saw my uncle, I had no clue on what to say. His daughter, Yasmine, who was 12, looked at us for awhile before she spoke. Yasmine was very nice and showed me where I could sleep, sharing a room with Yasmine. My mom slept on the couch with my brother. The city was cleaner and I didn't worry about getting bombed. I felt relieved.

When school started, I was worried that everyone would make fun of me. when I went to class, everyone stared at me. My teacher was really nice and introduced my to the class. She told everyone how I live in a war-torn town, and how I lost my dad. She also said,"Even though she is a muslim, she is just like u guys." Everyone understood what she meant. I was surprised to see people of different ethnicity. Some people were Asian, Hispanic, and Black. Diversity makes me happy that America is a nation of immigrants.

Collage



I am a mini melting pot
inside the U.S.A.
My family comes from all around
here's what I have to say.

I'm like a siu mai dumpling
with schnitzel on the side
all topped off with soda bread
and British draught to wash it down.

I've walked the path of mailman,
philosopher, artist and cook,
of engineer and seamstress,
and many others more.

And I am not the only one
not by any means.
Each of us
are our own collage
of family history.

Our ancestors have traveled
from near and far
and in between,
but one thing in common they all had:
a quest for freedom and liberty.

Our ancestors have traveled
from near and far
and in between,
to get to *here*
our home sweet home
our dear America.

America

In the beginning it was in need

there was sadness slavery and greed

Then our heroes came black and white

and they were here to stop the fight

Let freedom ring they chanted

in hopes that their wish will be granted

Let freedom ring they shouted

which was something few people doubted

They said speeches and sang songs

to show that people do belong

They told their beliefs to the crowd

even if they weren't aloud

Now America is a new place

every day we always see a different face

I think immigration is the best thing ever

because now different people are all together

Why I'm Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants

The land of America, filled with glory,
with immigrant families coming to make a new story.

Some immigrants came to America to escape fear.
Upon arriving to America, those immigrants felt more freedom here

Some immigrants fled their country,
and came to America for a better opportunity.

And some immigrants sought a new beginning,
sharing new cultures; such as languages, dancing, and singing.

My grandparents escaped and fled their country, Laos, because of war.
Or else they would have suffered more!

When my grandparents arrived to America,
they felt more free because America offered them a life of opportunity

To my grandparents,
America was a land of foreign languages, cultures, and a different scene

But America provided my grandparents with a life of fulfilling their "American Dream"

Why I'm Glad America is A Nation of Immigrants

A Story by

"Okay everyone! Our new history unit is all about… Immigration! Your history homework this month is writing an entry about immigration for a competition. You can do a poem, a story, an interview, or an essay. The word limit is 500 words. Good luck!"

I plunged into thought. *What's so good about immigration?! People who can't handle what's going on in their country come to ours to take advantage of our hospitality. Poor immigrants who come need so much help. The kid immigrants in our class don't speak English, making them hard for the teachers to teach, and they drain all the attention away from other students. America being a nation of immigrants is a problem.*

I remembered that I was going to talk to my teacher about the party I was planning. We waited until everyone was gone. "So, what do you need ideas for?" she asked.

"I don't know how I should decorate for the party, and I don't really have anyone to help me."

"You should ask Sari, it would be cool to have some of her culture at the dance. Or maybe Katara, she knows a lot about parties. Try to get people from very different parts of the world. Every petal of the flower is different and rare, but when you put them together they are more beautiful than before."

After walking home, I discovered that no one was home yet. I heard sobs through my neighbor's open window. "Why are you crying, Mr. Horchester?" I asked.

"I just found out that my family has to wait years before they can immigrate here," he said as I climbed through his window. "Why do they need to immigrate here?" I wondered.

"They are stuck in Afghanistan, my mother's country. If they can't come here soon, it might be too late. They want to start over, so we can be together, and safe."

"I'm very sorry." *I guess immigrating is really important for some people.*

"I believe your mother is back from the grocery store."

"Okay. Bye!" I sprinted to my room. I unzipped my backpack, grabbed my book, and plopped down on my bed. I had done a little reading in the car, but I still needed to finish my book. I flipped the page.

The sails of the foreign ships glowed in the light of thunder, as my people, my tribe cowered behind me. The man called Columbus led the vessel and claimed this land as theirs, though this would never be true. The only true natives of America are the Native Americans, not these white skinned men.

"Whoa." Suddenly, everything made sense. What Ms. Hix said, what Mr. Horchester said, and now what the author wrote. I transitioned from reading to writing as I sat down to write my essay,

not knowing where to start. A nation of immigrants is a beautiful thing, we gain diversity, we give second chances to people in need, and we too are immigrants unless you're 100% Native American.

A New Beginning

by

Estela Lopez was a 10-year old Latina girl who had immigrated to the U.S. over the past summer. She was hurrying to Misty Heights Elementary to try out for the part of Miss Misty Heights. Miss Misty Heights got to sing a solo in the Misty Heights Elementary concert.

Estela ran into a tall building. She ducked into the auditorium to hear Ms. Leonard say, "Penelope Walker." Penelope was a meanie who had won Miss Misty Heights every year. Putting her hand over her heart Penelope started to sing "Amazing Grace."

"How precious did that Grace appear, the hour I first believed," Penelope sang.

Ms. Leonard wiped her eyes with the back of her hand.

"Beautiful," said Ms. Leonard. "OK, Abigail Jones." The next 10 people were terrible.

Finally, Ms. Leonard said, "Estela Lopez." When she said Estela's name, it seemed to Estela that Ms. Leonard didn't think she, the only Latina, was capable of winning.

Estela wanted to hide, but instead, she took a deep breath, and walked up to the stage.

Words started flowing out of her mouth. Everyone was mesmerized by her voice. People were puzzled at why they recognized the tune yet the words were unfamiliar. She was singing the American national anthem--in Spanish.

When Estela was done, she hurried off the stage. A thunderous applause greeted her. Penelope was the only one who didn't clap.

"Thanks for trying out. We'll announce the winner of Miss Misty Heights tomorrow morning, at 8:30." Briskly, Ms. Leonard grabbed her purse and hurried out of the room. As Estela left, she heard kids laughing and joking around with each other.

She wished she had a friend.

The next day, Estela got to school before anyone-- except Penelope.

"Hey, Estela. You're like me, we both wanted to get here early 'cause we're anxious. Unlike me, you have no friends and you're untalented." She smirked and left.

Estela rolled her eyes. She knew that Penelope was just worried.

At 8:30 exactly, a voice crackled over the loudspeaker.

"Announcing the winner of Miss Misty Heights... ." Everyone held their breath.

"Estela Lopez!" The whole school broke into applause-- except for Penelope, who ran to the bathroom.

"Great job beating the meanie!" said a girl Estela didn't know. All the kids celebrated for a few minutes before the cheering died down.

Before lunch, Ms. Leonard pulled Estela aside. "I..." she said, "I didn't think you would win. But when you started singing our national anthem in Spanish... I can't tell you how amazing it was." Ms. Leonard paused. "I owe you an apology, Estela, for underestimating you. You shared part of your past with us while showing you belong here--and did it in a creative way. You bridged our two cultures. Thank you."

After school, everything went back to normal. But one thing wasn't normal. Now, Estela was surrounded by tons of kids, all eager to learn Estela's culture and hear about her journey to the U.S. Estela had *friends*.