

Joseph Dau

Age: 27

Region: Upper Nile

I was eight years old when I left my home in Bor because people were fighting. A lot of people died near me. When the war came, the government separated me from my parents. The SPLA found me in the forest and gathered me with others. They took me to Ethiopia, and then back Sudan, and then Kenya, and then here.

When I was walking I saw elephants, tigers, and giraffes. I traveled with my cousin, Andrew. The most difficult thing I experienced was hunger. I was thirsty. People had a war all the time.

The refugee camps didn't have enough food. Some days I spent a day without food. They gave us beans, maize, and wheat flour. In Panyido, I ate fish and sometimes meat from a cow.

The school was good in Kakuma. I learned plumbing in Kakuma and I have plumbing license. I don't have to go to school any more, I want to continue with plumbing.

I came to Phoenix on August 28, 2001 with my cousin Andrew. When I came over here, I got a lot of food and I ate a lot all the time. I didn't hear war when I was here.

Because I'm grown up here I need to marry. When you talk to an American lady, they say they have a boyfriend or married. I would like to get married and have a family. If I get married here, I would stay here forever. I would only go back to Sudan to visit.

When I first arrived in Phoenix, I worked in the PetSmart Warehouse. In April 2005, I went to Fargo, North Dakota to visit my cousin, Jacob. I worked at Smuckers and I laid the bread down so a machine could put the jelly on the bread. I saw a lot of snow in North Dakota. I don't like the snow. I came back to Phoenix in October 2006 because the snow was too cold for me. In November I filled out an application to get a job at PetSmart, but I haven't heard anything yet.

I am happy here. America is good to us.