

Peter Garang

Age: 23

Region: Upper Nile

I used to live in a city called Bor. My big brother was taking care of me. I was twelve years old when I left my village because in 1987, we were told we needed to leave our village and go to school in Ethiopia. I traveled with 1000 people from Bor to Ethiopia. It took almost a month. It was raining and then a drought later. We didn't have food or water. My brother helped me get food and water. We were selling our clothes for food.

When we had to cross rivers it was hard because my brother and I didn't know how to swim. I remember one day he said to hold a container and I will be pushing you. In the middle of the river, I lost the container and he pushed me to the side. He saved my life. The most difficult thing I experienced while traveling was sleeping. We traveled for 24 hours. I was afraid to sleep because of wild animals.

I stayed in Panyido until 1991. Panyido was bad in the beginning, but later, we had food and doctors. It was bad in 1987 when we first got there. We were the first group to go to Panyido. I went to school in Panyido. It was horrible. It was difficult to learn my ABC's and my 123's.

My mother, other brother, and sister are still in Bor. My other brother James Garang is here and we live together. My brother is 28 years old.

I came to the U.S. on December 21, 2000. I was with the first Lost Boys to come to Phoenix. I was with my cousin and he was killed in a car accident.

This is a great country. The things I like best about living in the U.S. is the education and the freedom of speech we have. You can say anything you want. You can't do that in Sudan.

I want to be a nurse. I am working at John C. Lincoln Hospital doing housekeeping. The hospital will eventually help me pay for some of my education. I finished two years of ESL and I attend Phoenix College. This summer, I will be taking humanities and basic mathematics.

I am on the Lost Boys Center's soccer team. I play defense and we practice three days a week. At the end of June, we are going to a soccer tournament for the Lost Boys in Virginia.