

Peter Deng

Region: Upper Nile

Age: 20

I am from Bor in the Upper Nile Region. I lived with my parents, my four brothers, and four sister. When I was five years old I left home. People were running and sister grabbed me and ran with me.

It took about a month to reach Panyido camp in Ethiopia. People used to walk at night and sleep in the day. The most difficult thing about traveling was getting food and being too tired to walk. I was okay, but some people stepped on thorns. I saw a lot of people suffer foot injuries. We ate corn, bean, and sometimes, if people hunted, we had antelope or gazelle.

After I left Panyido, I went to Pocahlla, Narus, Lockichokio, and then Kakuma. In Kakuma there was a shortage of water. I stayed with friends and it was kind of like a boarding school. I had a lot of friends and was in a lot of activities. I played soccer, volleyball and sang in the church choir on Sunday mornings. I had choir practice on Saturdays and Wednesdays and it was fantastic and fun. I really miss it. In Kenya I took eight years of Swahili, which shares some words with Arabic. It is a fantastic language and I was good at writing it but it is hard to communicate in Swahili.

I was not afraid to come to the United States. I was looking for somewhere to go to school. I would have an opportunity to do my best and be a better man and have an education. I was looking for a home. Everyone here is free and quiet.

Nothing is really hard about living in the U.S. America does not seem to have that many customs. I hope someday that I can go back home.

The thing I like best about living here is the security. I like having opportunities to become a resident and/or a citizen. I have opportunities to go to school, have a job, and go back home. I like everything here. I live here, but I have no family. If my family lived here, I would be fine.

I graduated from Camelback High School. In the summer of 2003 I was chosen to attend EVIT in Mesa to learn welding and machinery. I didn't go because I didn't have a green card. Right now I am studying business and accounting at Paradise Valley Community College. I'd like to go home and run a business. My people need help.