

Yol Muk

Age: 42

Region: Bahr al Ghazal

I was born in Lagowa. When I was fifteen, I went to Abyei. When I was I was seventeen years old, I went to Khartoum. I worked as a driver for Alamo Associates for twelve years.

I want to leave Khartoum because I saw people from South Sudan being put into jail. In 1999, I took a train from Khartoum to Halfa and then took a boat to Egypt. The trip was long and I had my pregnant wife and six year old son with me. I went to Asuan in southern Egypt, and then took a train to Cairo. I stayed with my sister in Cairo for a year. I didn't have a job. My wife delivered a baby boy, but it died the same day.

I filled out paperwork to come to the U.S. I was interviewed three weeks later. Four weeks later, my family and I were told we were going to the U.S.

My family and I stayed in an apartment in Phoenix for three months. The IRC gave me food stamps, \$370 cash assistance, and paid for my apartment for one month. They told me I needed to get a job. I told them I couldn't speak English. I worked at the Doubletree Resort Hotel in Scottsdale. I drove a golf cart, picked up blankets and towels from the pool, and mopped the lobby. I worked with someone from Iraq named Jabba, who taught me English. I then worked at Land Beef for one months because I wanted to send money back to Sudan and I thought the job would pay better. It was a hard job and it was cold, so I got a job cleaning airplanes for two and a half years.

I wanted to learn English, so I quit my job to go to Maricopa Community College. My wife and I weren't working and be without a job is not good. I left school to work at Budget Rental Car and then at the PetSmart Warehouse. I have been looking for a job for about a year. I have filled our applications but no one has called me back. My wife works at the Arizona Biltmore.

I like living in the U.S. It is a very good place. Your kids can go to school. I have five children. There is nothing I don't like about living here. I feel like this is my country. If you have trouble, people come to help you.