

“The American Dream is that any man or woman, despite of his or her background, can change their circumstances and rise as high as they are willing to work.” [-Fabrizio Moreira]

Due to economic and political issues, Candice Dea was forced to migrate to the United States from China at the tender age of 15. Her parents wanted a better life for their children and wanted to ensure that they would be afforded opportunities that would not be offered to them in China. I met Candice through my Aunt and I have known her for years. Every time that I was around her she was always so kind and respectful. It just so happens that Candice is now my 4 year old brother's pre-school teacher. I approached her about telling her story and she was happy to do so. She explained to me that she is very grateful to be where she is today in life. She has a loving husband and a beautiful family of her own which is something that she always dreamed of having. Although she has always wanted a family, her biggest dream was to get an education.

Candice is from the countryside of China which is extremely rural. There were limited opportunities for education and to make a living there. The only thing that Candice would have been able to do was get married and raise a family. Her family saw a different vision for their children and they came to America with only two hundred dollars in their pockets. It took over 10 years for Candice and her family to legally migrate into America. When Candice's family left China, they left several family members behind, and to this day, there are several family members who still live in China. Upon leaving China, Candice's family settled in Oakland, California. When Candice arrived to the United States, she could not speak English. She says that she was very scared and it took a while for her family to get on their feet financially. On top of struggling financially at home Candice had to learn how to read and write all over again, starting with learning the alphabet in English.

She had a very hard time adjusting in America and making friends. Candice eventually got used to living in America and was the first person in her family to go to college. She attended the University of Hawaii. Candice's parents were very hard on her as a child, especially her mother. Candice's mother wanted her to do better than she did. Her parents wanted her to become a lawyer or a doctor but Candice always dreamed of being a teacher. She says she loves children and loves to help people so becoming a teacher was a good fit for her life. She remembers how her teachers took their time in helping her when she couldn't speak English. Candice has been working as a teacher for over 15 years. Candice now has a beautiful family of her own and is grateful for all the opportunities that her kids will be afforded in the future. Candice often visits China and wonders what her life would be like if she never left, she says that China is completely different now and there are more opportunities to make a living and technology has changed things but people still have limited

rights. Although her family struggled, Candice is grateful for the fresh start that America offered her family and the rights that American people are fortunate to have. Candice is proud to be Chinese American.