

From the end of the war in Vietnam my mom(Ying Thao) and dad(Xa Vang/Vaj) came to the U.S. afraid of what would happen if they stayed. Thousands of other Hmong's fled afraid of persecution but many were left behind and had to flee into the jungle. My parents were refugees and went into refugee camps in Thailand. After my dad and mom's family came to the U.S. they lived with many relatives and finally having enough money to rent a two-story house, they lived in the house with my older siblings and the family grew bigger so my parents rented a bigger house and lived there for more than 20 years, in a town of Fresno, California.

They felt sad that they were leaving their own village but knew it was for the best, in hopes of raising a family. Their lives were different because the language was alien to them, they eventually learned bits and pieces but were still learning because when I was born, they still had trouble speaking English.

When I was born I already had 11 siblings older than me and I knew it would be tough but my family was always working together especially when other people came over, thanks to the number of my family, cleaning was faster. But due to the big house it would still be difficult. A few years later when it nears night we would clean because my younger siblings would fight and make a mess and we especially cleaned after eating because my siblings leave piles of mess on the ground.

Those who already had jobs were staying in Fresno, and I was left with 8 younger siblings 2 older siblings, my mom and her boyfriend. Then after a couple of months I went to Como Park Senior High with my sister while my other sister went to another school. After the third quarter of the school year my family moved again to Ham Lake and my two older siblings then came with me to Andover High School, and now I'm almost finished with my Sophomore year.