

If I could, I would like to continue a higher education to further my future career. I am proud of the successes in my education that I have achieved. My parents never got the education they wanted. There was no opportunity for generations to have a dream. At the age of six, being a girl, walking alone to school for approximately 30 minutes was scary. School supplies weren't free. All I could afford was a composition notebook and a pencil.

In 2009, there was an opportunity to apply for resettlement. My parents decided to apply. My family and I moved from a refugee camp to the United States when I was eight years old. As time went on, things got a little better. I had healthy foods to eat, a comfy bed to sleep on, and a nice little apartment for me and my family to live.

School, however, was troublesome. The children heard my name for the first time, they stated "her name sounds so different, she must be from somewhere in Asia. At lunch, nobody wanted to sit with me. Things started to get better in middle school. I met some great people who helped me get through the day. I also took ESOL (English as a Second Language) classes for years. My English started to get better day by day. Mary's Place had helped my family with our needs. I will never forget their care for us. Someday, I would like to give back to this organization with my time.

I had to overcome so many hardships. I got bullied my freshman year for being different. They laughed at the way I dressed, gossiped about what I ate and humiliated me for not knowing how to pronounce a word correctly. At that point, I thought my life was pointless. Freshman year was one of the worst years of my life. I thought leaving the camp was the best thing that had happened to me, but it didn't seem to be turning out that way.

When I came to Bishop Kearney, my life finally began to turn out the way I wanted it to be. I got involved in activities, the National Honor Society and in the Work Study program. I had a lot of support from the International Program. This program helped refugee and International students with finances and academic resources. I was able to really reach my goals and improve my grades. I am blessed to be where I am today. I want to take advantage of the opportunity given to me because my parents didn't have that chance. I want to show everyone that I can do something big. Education is the key to giving my family a future and if I can attain that, I will give it my all to make it happen. My future hopes would be to return to my birthplace, to help build a school. I would like many children to have the opportunity that I did in their own town.

-Pray Meh