

My Aunt's Immigration Story

By Leighton Moore

Hi my name is Leighton (laytin) and I love dinosaurs and for this project we had to interview an immigrant. I go to HTeNC and my teacher is Mr. Manger. The main character in the story is my aunt, Naoko. This is her story about how she came to the US.

My aunt's name is Naoko. My aunt lived in Naha city, Okinawa, Japan. It's beautiful there because there are so many palm trees, beaches and the water is pure blue and not green and blue like the ones we have in the US and it's warm there and so much more! By the time she was ready she moved to the U.S. because she married a U.S. citizen (my uncle).

There she had to retake the drivers license exam because they don't allow immigrants to drive without an American driver's license and that was a little hard for her because she didn't really know the language. "Living in the US is not much different from where I come from," she said. Her family is doing well in Okinawa and plans to visit some time not to move. Sometimes she felt unwelcome: just a few times but not emotionally hurt. Sometimes she felt welcomed: Trent's mom was very nice. Trent is my uncle. She said she is very proud of her two beautiful American kids.

Her daughters have shortish/longish blackish/brownish and kinda wavy hair. I asked her if people she knew were coming to the US, what would you tell them to expect? And her answer was "a great place to live but be careful when you're driving!" If you already knew what it would be like in the US what advice would you give yourself? "I would give myself the advice to do not worry so much and to try harder to speak up a lot more. I

was too quiet and afraid of what people thought.” It took her six months to decide to move! Now that's a long time.

As I said before she didn't think it was much different from when she lived in Japan. She raised two beautiful daughters named River (the oldest one), and Meadow (the youngest one); they are my cousins. The hardest part for her was leaving her family and friends (and maybe pets) in Okinawa. She still loves them so very much.

Even though she did speak a little bit of English it was still really hard for her. Some things that surprised her was how big everything was! Like the buildings and probably how big the cheeseburgers from McDonalds and stuff like that are. I bet she was so surprised that she would probably faint! She really misses her family back in Okinawa but she is still happy here in the US. She thinks the migration has changed her by being more aware of herself and paying a lot more attention. Now she has a family in the US AND a family in Okinawa. She wanted to fit in with us Americans and she is raising two daughters and she has two cats and a husband.

I want everyone to know that if you put your mind to something you can do it. What surprised ME is that she has such a big family and keeps track of it. I am left with one question...what if they move back to Okinawa? (My cousins were born here in the US.)