

A Second Life

Christian Ambouyac, 18

Born and raised in the Philippines, Christian had no idea what was in store for him. Growing up in his neighborhood there was “rough,” he says. The economy was messed up in all sorts of ways. Despite these flaws, he still loved his country.

Christian attended school in the Philippines and described it as a really bad environment. He went to a public school with 3,000 other students. The school provided little to no freedom and was organized in a very obscure way. “Classrooms were sectioned off by how smart you were,” he explains. As if that wasn’t bad enough, bullying was an issue in school.

At the age of 10, Christian and his siblings packed up what they could and traveled to the States, leaving their father behind. They were to reunite with their mother, who had come to the US earlier and, whom they hadn’t seen in 10 years. He found his trip amazing. He flew on an airplane for the first time and, although he wasn’t in first class he said he felt like he was due to the welcoming hospitality he received from the flight attendant.

Christian was on his way to a foreign country that he only knew two basic facts about. “There’s a lot of whites and it’s really cold, and that’s about it.” Once he arrived he indeed was quite shaken. “I did not expect it to be that cold,” he says.

Christian faced some challenges once he was enrolled in school. He worked to overcome these challenges so as not to fall into a category badly known unfavorably at home. “In the Philippines, if you’re 22 and have no job, you have no chance in life.”

He had to repeat the fifth grade and had lots of trouble making friends because he couldn’t speak English. He felt alone due to not having the ability to respond when others would approach him. “I had to learn through watching Spongebob,” he says.

Now, Christian is a senior attending Sunset High School. He’s happy for his nice teachers and great friends. Throughout all his four years he has done football, wrestling, track and rugby. He is also currently working two jobs.

Christian is thankful for his mother’s decision of giving him the opportunity to have a better lifestyle in a household of just his primary family.

After high school, he plans to join the army for 20 years and retire to become a police officer to protect his new community. But for now he is enjoying high school with all the senioritis that comes with it.