

A Nation of Immigrants

America, one of the first words that comes to mind is, diverse. America was founded by immigrants. From the Mayflower, to Ellis Island, to immigration today, people have always been coming to America. In 2005, about 35 million foreign- born people were living in the US.

With them, immigrants bring their unique ways and cultures. They help the economy and make the country a more special place. Each immigrant has his/her own story or reason for coming to America.

The first settlers or pilgrims arrived on the Mayflower in 1620. They came to America to escape religious persecution. Since then, people have continued to come to America to escape persecution and have a better life. Now, the people who come to escape persecution are called asylees or refugees. In 2006, the most refugees came from Somalia, Russia, Vietnam, and Iran. In the same year, the most asylees came from China, Haiti, Columbia, and Venezuela.

Other people come, looking for better job opportunities. Immigrants accounted for more than 15% of the US's work force in 2006. Immigrants accounted for more than 40% of farm workers, a third of building and grounds cleaning and maintenance workers, and a quarter of physicians, engineers, and computer scientists. They filled both high skilled and low skilled jobs.

Our country would be nothing like it is now without immigrants. Imagine if Alexander Graham Bell and his family hadn't come from Scotland, we wouldn't have

telephones today. Also, imagine if Einstein hadn't come from Germany. We wouldn't know all the science we know today without Einstein's help. People, like Zubin Mehta, Conductor (India), Enrico Fermi, Scientist (Italy), and Isabella Allende, Author (Chile), are just a few famous immigrants. Even the sports field includes immigrants. Tony Parker, Point Guard (Belgium), Manu Ginobili, Shooting Guard (Argentina), and Yao Ming, Center (China) are just a few immigrant sports stars.

Immigrant cultures can be seen all over America. San Francisco's Chinatown, Jackson Heights in New York, San Antonio's Mexican Market are examples of how immigrants have integrated their culture into our everyday lives. We also enjoy food from all over. Pizza, pasta, chicken tikka masala, enchilada, falafel and kung pao chicken have become part of our everyday cuisine.

In 2005, the states with the most immigrants were California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Nevada. Immigrants are settled in the north, south, east, and western parts of America.

America has been called a melting pot, a salad bowl, and a quilt. All these names show that America is a country of diversity. Immigrants make the country special, unique, and different. The most important reason I am glad that we are a nation of immigrants, is because my parents are first generation immigrants and I am glad they came to America.

References

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