

A move to a better life

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



A Move to a Better Life I always ask the question to myself, what would come of me if I would have stayed and lived in my "hometown", the city of Long Beach for the entirety of my juvenile life. The populated city is north of San Diego and about twenty miles south of the city of Los Angeles. Common in most towns or cities anywhere in the world, there is what's known as a friendly side of town and a bad, sketchy, or ghetto side of town. In Long Beach it is no different with it having a well-known crime populated area. Where my family and I used to reside was on the more hazardous areas to live in Long Beach because of not having the most amount of money I'm sure my parents would have liked. The neighborhood was majority Mexican and African-American populated throughout and I had a lot of Mexican friends growing up playing with them or having them over to my house for a little play date. I used to converse in Spanish a little bit with them and their parents and English as well but not fluently. It was a very multi-cultural way of living because most of the family's that lived there including ours were very traditional and family oriented. On the down side it was also a very gang populated town around where we lived and at the local High school around us. It was not the safest place to grow up as a toddler but it was where my sister and I were born. In the summer on 2002 my father got a job opportunity to work in San Francisco and move from his hometown and family; he chose for my family and I to move north 45 minutes of San Francisco to a small town of Petaluma and I believe that was the greatest thing that could have happened to me and still is to this date. My father could be one of the strongest men that I know in my life. He isn't the most fit or healthy eating peoples either but excels in the strength of the mind and

spirit. When me and my family moved up north 450 miles to start a life of our own I didn't quite understand until the past few years how difficult it was for my father to do so. We lived in Long Beach for the first ten years of my life because of my father had a job for a company called Boeing and we didn't want to have him commute. We were only a twenty minute drive from the whole rest of my dad's family who lived in Santa Monica and we practically went to have dinner or see them every other day. It was generally all of our family and they had all been born and raised around Southern California and stayed and started their own families there. Thus it would be almost impossible to think of that my father and mother would move us away from something so foreign, to a quite country life that is a complete 180 degrees from a busy muggy city life of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Though after talking with my dad he told me of one story of one night he was up late watching TV and he heard a crash; a drunk driver had swerved onto our lawn but went past and drove into the side of our next door neighbor's house. Also later that week my cousin, 18 at the time, had been jumped on his way home from school and my dad could only imagine if that happened to me. These two things were the breaking point for him and did not want that kind of childhood for his own kids. If you have seen the movie Freedom Writers, it is based from Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California and that was the local high school I lived around and would have attended when I grew to the appropriate age. It is not as gang oriented as much as it was back when they made the movie and book but still is a whole different world than the simple, safe, country Casa Grande High School in Petaluma. I do love that I went there and made all the great friends that I have to today but

compared to Woodrow, it was a cake walk of living. I used to not like sports when I was smaller because my friends didn't like to do it and didn't start playing until I was in Petaluma because most all the kids I met did. I was only nine or ten but I'm sure my parents wouldn't have pressured me into playing if I didn't want and what else would I have been doing through junior high and high school with all that free time with friends not being occupied by academics or athletics. I don't talk or see any of my old young friends that I used to live by and go to Elementary School with, but I am friends with a few of them on Facebook and other social websites. A few of them are gang oriented or just look like they have been through a rough life and just makes me think about what life would be like if that were me or if I still lived there. I'm not saying they don't enjoy their lives or they have not appreciated it but it is easy to tell life is more dangerous and complicated there with crime, poverty around where they live and hang out. Living in Long Beach until the age nine and below I don't recall most of the time that I had living there. I can recollect a certain moment in every Christmas, birthday, or maybe a big family event, but other than that I don't have the best memory of how life aspired. We lived in small to medium size two bedroom house that my sister and I slept in the same room. I wasn't allowed to be out in the front yard ever if I wasn't with my mom or dad. Once we moved to Petaluma it was a transition for all of us. At first I wasn't able to sleep for the first few weeks because it was too quite at night until I got fully adapted to the scenery. Also my father and I found out that we had a lot more allergies than we thought as we became reacted to wherever we went it had seemed like. I shortly after began signing up into baseball, basketball, and soccer and I continue

playing baseball until this day. But after the first few months we became adapted to the weather, made friends, and fell in love with our new hometown. It's weird to think that one of the biggest decisions in my young short life has been made for me and affected what I would have been and what I am today. I am extremely grateful for the courage my father and mother had to take us and move us away from the city to the country. To give us a chance at an independent, simple life that we wouldn't have to worry about anything but just being kids, going to school, and living our lives the way we wanted. They just wanted to give us the life that they were never able to have when they were our age. As Jon Krakauer said in his novel *Into the Wild*, "...make a radical change in your lifestyle and begin to boldly do things which you may previously never have thought of doing, or been too hesitant to attempt. So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservation, all of which may appear to give one peace of mind, but in reality nothing is more damaging to the adventurous spirit within a man than a secure future".