

Quynh Do

**Interviewed July 28, 2007
By Holli Connell
Midway Village Museum**

Holli Connell: If you could state your first and last name.

Quynh Do: 'kay. Quynh Do.

HC: Okay, and could you spell it please?

QD: Q U Y N H and the last name is D O.

HC: Great. Okay if you could please again state your first and last name.

QD: Quynh Do.

HC: And are you married?

QD: No.

HC: Do you have any children?

QD: No.

HC: What is your educational background?

QD: Well, I came here when I was two so I started school in the US and, however, while I was learning English I, my mom also taught me Vietnamese so I'm fluent in Vietnamese and I can read and write.

HC: Wow, that's exciting. Do you work?

QD: Yea.

HC: Okay, where do you work?

QD: I work at the Great Wall restaurant? It's a Chinese restaurant and I work as a hostess.

HC: And, how long have you worked there?

QD: A little over a year.

HC: Fantastic. And where are you from?

QD: I am from Vietnam.

HC: Vietnam. And when did you come over here?

QD: '91. 1991.

HC: 1991 and, what is your birth date?

QD: January 17, 1989.

HC: okay. ...one moment... perfect. Um, let's see, what was your life like before you came over here - though you're only two years old, do you have any information maybe your parents told you about your family life before you came over?

QD: Well my dad was a dentist and my mom a seamstress so we were pretty middle-class I guess. But we lived in a small village outside of Saigon in the South.

HC: And the name of the village?

QD: Um, well like the smaller? Cuz there's a lot of, I guess, like the bigger then the smaller that you don't really know but it was called Thungheap, so...

HC: Wonderful.

QD: Yeah.

HC: That's fine. And, what made your parents decide to come here?

QD: Basically the freedoms that they know that they're gonna have because, at that time the whole like, backlash of the war and everything so it was a bit of oppressive.

HC: Okay. Can I just have you push your hair back?

QD: Oh, sorry.

HC: Oh, that's okay, you're fine. You're fine. Um, when you came here, did your parents decide on Rockford, to come to the United States?

QD: We originally came to, Dallas-Fort Worth because my parents had friends there, because we were delayed. We didn't go directly from Vietnam to the US. We went to the Philippines for seven months.

HC: Wow, and was that for a reason? Were you held up there or were you just visiting?

QD: Uh, yea...Ah, no, it was like a stop, like we were detained there for a while to maybe like. . cause they learned English and went to school there so that they understood like the language and so there was like, it wasn't just our family it was a very large group.

HC: Uh, your parents learned English in the Philippines?

QD: ...in the Philippines.

HC: ...before they came over.

QD: Yeah.

HC: That's fantastic.

QD: Yeah. To help adjust I guess.

HC: And how was that set up? Is that through immigration of the United States that...

QD: Yeah, because my mom, her dad was American from the war. And so that's how we had a chance to come over here.

HC: Okay. Fantastic. Wow. Had your parents ever been to this country before?

QD: No.

HC: Okay. Your, your grandfather then, did he stay in Vietnam?

QD: No...

HC: ...with your grandmother?

QD: No, he, he died.

HC: Oh.

QD: Yeah, he passed away.

HC: Okay. So your parents had never been to the United States before?

QD: No.

HC: They had just heard or had an understanding of what the United States was like . . .

QD: Yes.

HC: ...through media of newspapers?

QD: Um, I guess just everything. How and also they just kinda wanted to get out.

HC: Sure.

QD: ...so...

HC: Okay. How long did it, do you think, if you think you can answer this, how long did it take to make arrangements to come here?. . . Not sure?

QD: Um, I'm not sure. But it did take a while and a lot of, I remember they had to be questioned and interviewed before they could even go like, arrange their trip to the Philippines so. It was quite a bit of effort.

HC: With seven months in the Philippines added onto that . . .

QD: Yeah.

HC: ...maybe possibly over a year or something it sounds like. Wow.

QD: Yeah.

HC: Um, and again, did you stop or stay anywhere very long before coming to Rockford?

QD: The Philippines for seven months.

HC: And then to...

QD: Dallas and Fort Worth for I think three weeks.

HC: Okay, did they know anybody when they came here?

QD: Well through immigration I guess they got a few contacts that would help them adjust and help them find jobs and homes and what not, so.

HC: And is that what brought them to Rockford is those contacts?

QD: Yeah, because we had another man from the, our same village, and he went to Chicago and then he had a contacts here in Rockford and so he moved here and then he said that it was really nice here and so my parents decided to come to Rockford because, it was my parents, me and my grandmother. She lives with us.

HC: Oh. Fantastic.

QD: Yeah.

HC: Let's see. And of course the question is did you come along with friends or family members?

QD: With family.

HC: Did they, did they have any description of what the travel was like coming here? Did you fly to the Philippines?

QD: We flew.

HC: You flew.

QD: Yes.

HC: Let's see, have you met anybody here who was from your village or even country then since you've been here?

QD: Yes, there is a medium-sized Vietnamese community here so. But yeah there have been a few people in the village or in the area but a lot more people are from the city.

HC: Okay. Where did you first stay when he arrived in Rockford?

QD: Um, one of the contacts one of the, one of my parents' friends. So we stayed at his house I think for like a week or so and then we moved into an apartment

HC: Okay, and what area was that?

QD: It was by Kishwaukee, 6th St., that area.

HC: What is your current living arrangement?

QD: We live um, right, it's like the corner of Perryville and East State. Like that area. Like around here. It's like 5 minutes away from here. So, and it's a home.

HC: You own a home?

QD: Yeah. Right.

HC: Or your parents...

QD: Yeah...

HC: ...own a home, sorry. And you live with who in your home?

QD: My parents, my grandmother, and my sister. She was born here.

HC: She was born here. Okay. And is there, we already asked that question. I kind of went into it. Did your parents have a job or did they go to school when they arrived here?

QD: Um, well, they had to find a job. They went to Anderson Packaging because there was no way my dad could go back and get a dental, like an American dental degree so...

HC: Okay. Did both of them work at Anderson?

QD: Yeah, for a while and then my dad found a job at a tool factory. Elco? And my mom started working at restaurants and she works at Nippon right now.

HC: Yeah, let's see. Do, when you came over to with your family and this is specifically about you is, did you have a visa when you came over? How did you... was there paperwork involved? Did you become a citizen? How did that come about for yourself?

QD: Yeah, yeah there was paperwork but it wasn't until my parents tested and became citizens that I became a citizen as well.

HC: You automatically?

QD: I think they filled out some paperwork and then I went into Chicago and had to take like an oath and everything but I personally didn't take a test because I was 11 or 12 years old at the time.

HC: Okay. So when you came over here you weren't, were you, you weren't on a visa or anything. You were on a permanent...

QD: I think we all had green cards if that's ...

HC: Yes. And your family works outside the household. You have a job as well. Where do you see yourself in five years?

QD: Well, after Yale, I am premedical so I, plan to go to medical school.

HC: Anything specific?

QD: Well maybe continue with the Ivys. I don't really know.

HC: That's the whole reason to take the classes 'pre' so you can figure out what you want to do there I guess. Okay, how did your family first get around when they got here? Bus, car, friends?

QD: Car, but friends. So it wasn't a while until they got a car.

HC: Okay. Was it hard do you think finding your way around Rockford at first?

QD: I think because, even though Rockford's not like the biggest city it still is a shock because, well, I, like, I'm speaking for my parents but, in Vietnam the roads are still like dirt and so, coming here everything's very clean and very nice and just very big so. Much on a larger scale I guess.

HC: Great. Did it take, how long did it take before maybe your family was comfortable in Rockford, do you think?

QD: I think maybe, because also the climate, they, they wanted to see what snow was like that's why wouldn't stay in Texas. They wanted to come here because there was snow here and it was colder I guess. It's different and so and they were looking for something like that.

HC: Nice. That's fun and I'm sure now he thinks "I'm shoveling all the time..."

QD: Yeah

HC: But, yeah....

QD: They want to move to California now! So we'll see...

HC: So funny! Okay, so we determined, did you or any of your family speak English upon arrival in Rockford?

QD: Well, the little that they learned in the schools in the Philippines.

HC: How did they learn English then after? How did they continue learning English?

QD: Through working I guess. But they also took classes. I don't, I'm not sure where but it was like an ESL class and so, yeah, they learned through that.

HC: Okay. How did, how did your family integrate itself, themselves into the community? Did they join anything did they become part of groups or anything like that?

QD: Well, we were one of the, well after we got established I guess, around maybe 2, 2000 we started. . . well we always had contacts with other Vietnamese families here. It's a relatively close group I guess, and we, there was no Vietnamese Buddhist temple. And so we kind of started like an organization for it. And it used to be from like out of our house and the finally we got more and more people and, so then we started the, we were one of the main families I guess that started the temple in Rockford, so.

HC: Wonderful. I didn't realize that. Fantastic. And, the temple is again, the name of the temple and what it is?

QD: Well it's the Vietnamese Buddhist Temple of Rockford but the Vietnamese name is the [Thaplam] Temple.

HC: Okay. And the temple, would be, equivalent to like your church? Or is it more like, in layman's terms, a lodge? How is the temple used for your community?

QD: Well every Sunday there is service so, kinda like the church. Then there's also a Sunday school where, we teach the kids, the various kids now, here, that are born here, like Vietnamese and how to read and write so it's basically oh, a community place that everyone can get together, and, while learning about religion also, keeping our heritage alive.

HC: That's fabulous. Wonderful. Are there other organizations that *you* belong to in the community?

QD: Well, through school I'm I am a part of National Honor Society, Key Club, student council, I'm officers in those clubs as well and we, we just, we do a lot in the community. Last year when I was NHS vice president, we, I don't know if you know the Walk a Mile in my Shoes?

HC: Yeah,

QD: Well we raised I think about \$2800 for it. And we, and since they changed the date, cause it's originally February, but they changed it to November. And so that was kind of a struggle but like we all like organized it really well and so that was really like I was really proud of our group for that.

HC: That's fantastic. Now what high school do you go to?

QD: Guilford High School. I graduated from Guilford.

HC: You graduated from Guilford. Okay. And, let's see. How did it feel to come to a foreign country? In your own words. I know you were only two but how did it feel with your parent's perspective maybe?

QD: Well for me, I guess I was still with my family but I really didn't know anyone else and it was just totally different. Not, it was hot, but, I mean in Vietnam it's very hot and so coming here it's just everything's cleaner. So I definitely felt different even though I was only two. But from my parents and grandmother's perspective ...

HC: Were they, did they struggle with it?

QD: They were happy. Yeah, there were a lot of struggles I guess, finding, just having a stable life. Because they knew that, we came here with the clothes on our backs and nothing else. So they left quite a lot in Vietnam since he was, my dad was on like one of the main dentists in the area. So, we did leave quite a lot but coming here there, there were struggles. The language barrier, but, they've, they managed to persevere through, so.

HC: Well it seems like they've done very well. Through you, it seems like they did. Let's see. How do people treat you or maybe even your family? Were there any conversations about how people, how they were treated when they first came here?

QD: I think everyone was, extra like trying to be helpful because it wasn't just our Vietnamese connections here. There were, there was a family that would come through the immigration offices I guess, I'm not sure where, but they were American and they would try to help us. We're still in contact with one of the families and he's been very, very nice to us. Like when we first got here I remember going to parks and what not and like for my birthday he got me a cake, so. It was very nice. Everyone was very helpful trying to make the transition better.

HC: That's fantastic. Let's see... la la la... Were there any people that you *didn't* get along with or in your neighborhood or your workplace that your family, didn't, that *didn't* get along with them?

QD: Well, in the neighborhood we were living in, it wasn't the nicest of neighborhoods and so there were like gang kids, or you know, around, so I didn't play outside a lot, because, one, we were in like a totally different environment, and two it was just not a very nice neighborhood.

HC: Sure.

QD: So...

HC: Okay. Were there any places that you didn't feel or that you felt unwelcome ever?

QD: Unwelcomed? I don't think so because, I was a child and so it was probably different. But for my parents probably when they first started working, it was different. But I guess after a while you kind of get used to it, so...

HC: Okay. Again, you were only two, but what did you think about this country either before you came, which probably wasn't [for you] or maybe when you were younger what did you think about this country and what did you think about this country, actually?

QD: I think there are a lot more luxuries in the United States than in Vietnam since, even though my, my parents were I guess relatively well-off when we were in Vietnam, just the little things like for my birthday I would get like new slippers because those, I needed new slippers so. But here I got a cake and a new dress so it was very different. I definitely don't take things for granted.

HC: Got it. Have your ideas changed when you look back at your idea of when you were younger you got a cake and you got a dress. Now that you're older, you've been through school, you're moving on to new things in your life, has that idea changed little bit?

QD: I definitely appreciate the freedoms given here because, I have cousins or, basically the rest of my family is still in Vietnam and, it is better but it is still very limiting and if I had stayed in Vietnam I wouldn't have had as good of an education as I got here. And especially because the system here and, just the public school and how we can receive financial aid and everything, and so...

HC: When you had said it was better but limiting did you mean living here or living in Vietnam?

QD: In Vietnam it's more limiting, because of the government and everything so it's not; you must have a lot of money to get higher education such as going into a university, so...

HC: And when you do, do you talk to your family who live in Vietnam still? Or is it...

QD: Yeah,

HC: How do you correspond?

QD: . . . I have visited two times and my parents just went back this February so... It does take quite a lot because it's quite expensive and, yeah, but we, correspond through phone and e-mail now since in this technological age, so, yeah.

HC: Now, may I ask because we talked about you coming from a small village, does that...

QD: Oh...

HC: ...family live in the small village or the city...

QD:...my cousins...

HC: I didn't know if they moved into the city...

QD: ...yeah my cousins are in the city now. My cousin, I have on my mom's side, she has, my aunt has five children and so they all live in the city working in like offices and hospitals so. It's, they're well-off.

HC: And the city's name is again?

QD: Saigon. Yeah, I guess, yeah.

HC: And then your father, does he have siblings still in Vietnam?

QD: Yeah. He is one of 10 boys and, there's, my one uncle lives in Houston. And I have another uncle that lives in Australia but the rest are in Vietnam.

HC: Wow. Have you visited the Australian-Vietnamese uncle?

QD: No. no.

HC: Is, so he moved to Australia is he Australian then? Did he become a citizen of Australia may I ask?

QD: Yeah, so he's, he has a family there.

HC: Okay.

QD: But we haven't had a chance to go visit yet.

HC: And on your dad's side are there, you have cousins in his family too then all over?

QD: Um,

HC: In the same area of Saigon, I guess...

QD: Yeah, in that area.

HC: Okay. And so you've gone to visit them.

QD: Yes.

HC: ...and enjoyed that?

QD: Yes.

HC: Um, through conversation with your family then when you're visiting in Vietnam is there talk about your different lives and is there discussion on, better or worse as well? You know, you had just talked about it. . .

QD: Yeah there is. Amongst the kids there's definitely like comparisons. You know like, I did this at school. And I would tell them stories of I guess like American life and they would all be in awe of like all the things that I get to do. But in the same sense they, it is a lot better in Vietnam so it's, they're not like deprived, you know.

HC: When you talk about schooling in Vietnam do they go through the same system that we do in the United States where there's a grade school, junior high, and high school and then University?

QD: Yeah. There is.

HC: And then after, but usually families of higher wealth you say usually go off to university? Are any of your family members in Vietnam ever going to go to University or have some of them?

QD: They, my cousins have because its, if you go into a university and you're from a even middle-class family, all my cousins have received top marks and so from that they, they've had their schooling paid for. So but . . .

HC: Through the government?

QD: Yes. So. But only a few have the like absolute top. That's incentive to work hard.

HC: It must run in the family. It, just because it's a very interesting story, I love to hear you that you get the perspective even at your own age, as you're growing through in different countries. When you're here though, you receive financial aid as well. . .

QD: Yes.

HC: . . . To go off to school which is fantastic. Do you guys then also discussed simple things like fashion or, you know in our area the media is very big in an explosion of media right now? Of people who, I don't know what's going on with them. Which isn't really have anything to do with political views or anything like that. Do they know of these same stories or do you even discuss that kind of stuff? You know like, Lindsay Lohan? I mean that's what I'm wondering. . .

QD: Oh yeah. Oh no no, not Lindsay Lohan . . .

HC: . . . you know really bizarre things like that? Or do you guys talk about. . .

QD: They know about like Britney Spears and all that stuff and my cousin just got married in like February so we kinda consulted her and like helped her just like pick out dresses online. I would say "Oh, I like this one and just have a look," and so it's definitely not just all political. No way.

HC: Okay. That's good. And with the Internet how could it not be. And that's the question. I find it very interesting that you know I've been interviewing quite a few people who were growing up in the 50s and 60s, 50s more so, 40s as well, and so to hear how you're corresponding with your family back home is so different than them. I love because it's such a different world back then but now you have pretty much blended these worlds. Just how you live is different.

QD: yeah. And so through the media they know of the pop culture here and I know, like the modern Vietnamese artists there. And so it's, yeah, it's definitely the mixing together.

HC: Is there in their country, is it as popular to have these stars and be followed around with cameras? Do they watch TV like E! and stuff like that? I'm just curious...

QD: Not so much. There are, I guess, like TV stars and like bands and whatnot but not, not as crazy as here because of the government.

HC: Sure. Cause it's so crazy. I'm watching CNN, I'm learning about Lindsay Lohan. I thought what am I watching Lindsay Lohan on CNN for! I was watching this for real news! Anyway. Okay back to more some more fun questions. What is the best part of living here, in Rockford maybe in the United States?

QD: In Rockford, I like Rockford. It's accessible to like Chicago but it's also a smaller community and it's nicer. And there, it's very clean. I like Rockford. And the public school system, I guess there are flaws but I've received a good education, you know, so. I do like it and just the US, America in general. I do appreciate all that I have been given through, just through the government, through friends and family and through what my parents have learned and experienced. So, definitely rewarding.

HC: What has been the hardest or most disappointing part?

QD: Maybe that not many people, I mean people know the Vietnam War but they just know that it was something bad that happened. Maybe in the older generations there's more knowledge but in my generation not very much so, I definitely teach my peers about the war and my culture and a lot more. It is kind of disappointing that you don't, you see a lot of the kids in this generation without that knowledge and, which they should have.

HC: what kind of stuff do you find that they don't know about the war that you want them to know about may I ask?

QD: Well they know that it was like the Americans and then the communists but there's also a very large struggle from the, I guess like Confederate and the Republic and they don't know. They think that we were all part of the war. We were all part of the Vietcong and that's not true. So, my family were very against that. We still have dinner conversations about that so.

HC: Sure. That's an important point to make to most people. It's nice to hear that you're pushing towards that, so. Do you miss anything from your former home?

QD: Well whenever I go back, I've only been back twice, but the food's very good! The fruit I just, that's all I eat when I go there. And just the cooking. I mean my grandma and mom, they, we eat Vietnamese food every day. Rice and whatnot. We have like a garden but, it is, yeah it's different.

HC: What are some kind of the foods you like that they make there, even though your parents might make it here, that you love to go back to? Like the fruit for instance.

QD: Yeah, the fruit. Because it's a tropical climate you don't get that much fruit like those kinds of fruits here.

HC: what kind?

QD: I don't know if you know like lychees? They're, yeah, they're just like abundant. Here it's a bit harder to get really fresh ones. And I guess rambutan and just all those tropical fruits. And like the mangoes there are just amazing and here they're a bit like blander, so.

HC: yeah, that sounds yummy. What other kinds of dishes actually does your family make that are from your home? Like food, you said rice, but are there any specific dishes that are like comfort food to you?

QD: Yeah. We have, like, noodles. It's called like [Fah Ha]. It's like with like a beef like broth and like the noodles and just like everything, like all different flavors in there so that's kind of like the comfort food. We just, like a lot of pastries and that kind of stuff so, because we were really influenced by the French, so.

HC: Fabulous. Do you ever find, going back actually to just one quick question. We were talking about your friends and maybe this culture about the Vietnam War. Do you ever find your friends

or your peers also confused that Vietnam, that they're different . . . how am I going to try to phrase this. . . That you're not Chinese, . . .

QD: Yeah.

HC: . . .or that you're not Japanese, you're . . .

QD: well, ...

HC: Do you know what I'm saying? Or Laos. You know, you're not from Laos you're not... I know this community of Laotians as well here and stuff like that. Do you find that to be something like, "No". You know even geography instead of history...

QD: it does depend. My group of friends are more I guess knowledgeable.

HC: And they grew up with you maybe, you know?

QD: yeah. And, because I have friends that I made in like third grade and were still best friends. But I guess the different groups of kids in high school, because there are like, I mean I take honors AP classes, so all of the kids that I'm surrounded by our more knowledgeable, are more understanding. But there are definitely, like when I walk down the hall it's like, "oh look at that Chinese girl!" "It's like no, I'm not Chinese." So, you know...

HC: are you looking behind your back like "Where? Do we have a new student?"

QD: yeah. And so I guess I was, like the people that didn't know me were pretty stereotypical. She's smart, she get straight A's, she's Asian. So, you know.

HC: Got it. Just curious about that. Let's see... do you think you'll spend the rest of your life here? Either Rockford or United States?

QD: Yes. Because once, I've been taught the value of like an American citizenship and just the freedoms, I guess, that come with it. So like, I want to study abroad. And Yale has like so many opportunities for you to do that. But my mom says "you know you can study abroad and whatever, but just come back to the US." "Come back to the US." So. And yes, I do. But I do plan to go back to Vietnam may be like a year, for a year after Yale and before med school to maybe volunteer at like a local clinic or something. Because that way I can, basically give back from, like my community, from like, what I've learned in this community here so.

HC: That's fabulous. That's lovely to hear. What do you like to do for fun?

QD: I played volleyball in high school and that was pretty intense but I really enjoyed it. I played the violin. I'm very into, well I call it football, but it's soccer. So, I'm hard-core into that. I'm very into fashion. I, like for dances I would make like my own handbags and just alter my own dresses and stuff like that.

HC: so what do you think of the Beckham craze in the United States?

QD: He's very, just the, it shouldn't be you know, that much, like \$250 million you know for a year. That's just way too much. I liked him when he played for Real Madrid and Manchester United. So I don't know. We'll see. We'll see.

HC: That's the only thing I know about soccer!

QD: that's okay.

HC: [Unintelligible]. I wasn't going to ask you "Hey, what's that guy," I was thinking about his name while you were talking. I was like, "what's his name?" He's married to somebody, I don't know, but anyway. Are you, that is question again, we've asked this but I need to ask it this way. Are you a naturalized citizen?

QD: Like, how so?

HC: If not, do you plan on becoming a citizen?

QD: Well I am a citizen. Yeah. Through my parents.

HC: And you became a citizen...?

QD: When I was little... fifth-grade... maybe like 11? When I was 11? So maybe like 2000?

HC: And you became a citizen through your...?

QD: Through my parents. After they took the test and became citizens they, I'm not sure what they did, but I guess there's an option to have your kids be citizens as well.

HC: You know is there a difference between you and your sister than of, because your sister was born here, though you are a citizen, do you have opportunities different than your sister's, does? Just curious because. . .

QD: Oh well she makes fun of me because she says I can't ever be President because I wasn't born here and she can't even though she doesn't even want to be President so! That's the only thing I think.

HC: Good stuff. That's funny! What has been the most difficult thing to adjust to? Not disappointing or hardest, just adjustment.

QD: Just adjustment.

HC: You were so young. I can see where this might not actually be possible to answer. Is it difficult to adjust when you go back, the two times you've gone back to visit your family?

QD: It is different. Probably because I am a lot lighter skinned than everyone else there because I am not full, I have European blood. But also because you're, you're the one from America. So it is different. And like, I wasn't, although I was born there, I didn't grow up there, so I'm basically American to them. So it is different but because I can read and write and speak that, it's not that different so. Yeah. But you definitely get treated more special I guess, you know. Since you're like, you know, the...

HC: The American coming to town?

QD: Yeah. So.

HC: Interesting. That has actually been set in most of my interviews when they've gone back to visit. The, you're treated differently because you're American. It's good and bad.

QD: yeah.

HC: Let's see. One question and again, if you're comfortable answering it great. If not, if you don't feel like you want to, you don't have to. I hope I'm asking you okay questions here. How do you feel about the current debate in this country about immigration and immigrants?

QD: Well, I haven't I guess like, been too involved in that because I've been offsetting biology and whatnot. But I do think that we are a bit crowded here but it's like, because it took my family a really long process to do it that if someone else were to want to become a citizen or want to come here that they should have to go through at least some sort of the process. That they can't just, you know like, cross the border and then become like a resident here. Maybe. Since you know like through my own experience, it was a difficult, like, way of getting here so.

HC: Okay. Well is there anything else you want to add on reflection, of anything you'd like to save in your interview of either a story of your family you wanted to share or just something that you want to put as a notation in here?

QD: Well we're, we are a very close family because that's just how my parents raised us. And because my grandma lives at home and so part of the reason why I am still like fluent in Vietnamese is because I talk to her. And so we are very close and that's, I think that is more like the Asian culture. Some of my friends they come you know they hardly talk to their parents. And I talk, like my mom's like my best friend. So I think, I do keep up a lot of my culture alive and my heritage. And I'm not like so-called like "whitewashed" or anything. I, I mean I excel in you know like just my life here but also I am very Vietnamese.

HC: okay. That's lovely. Your grandmother when you mention her, if you don't mind me asking the very end here, how old is she?

QD: She is 72, he out.

HC: And so when you came over here she also learned English with your parents. Did she work outside of the house?

QD: No she's...

HC: So her English is more through you guys then?

QD: Yeah.

HC: Does she speak it a lot?

QD: Not really. Yeah. She is not, she knows like I guess the main stuff. Like hi, how are you, and just like, she would understand stuff but you couldn't really have a conversation with her in English.

HC: Sure. But both of your parents probably at this point are English-speaking.

QD: Yeah. They are efficient I guess but they have like little slip ups were they say something like backwards I guess because how Vietnamese grammar is organized it is backwards. Like you say the adjective afterwards and so sometimes they would say that and my sister and I would correct them and make fun of them.

HC: Like Yoda, a little bit? I guess the Star Wars term...

QD: Well it's like, what, oh, like one time we were talking about like stuffed animals or whatever and my dad's like, "Oh where's that? Like animals stuffed?" And I was like "what are you talking about?" So we, but they learned through us and they're happy to learn from us you know.

HC: That's nice. Well this was fabulous. It was so great to talk with you.