

My Story in the Fields: Growing My Dreams



In today's society, migrants are often confused with immigrants from other countries, but our reality as migrant farmworkers is very different. As children of migrant farmworkers, many students have to move throughout the year to different states, changing schools which makes them have trouble with their grades. As farmworkers, parents work very hard outside in the sun all day long. Being part of this type of family is not easy and comes with many challenges, but there are also many good things that we can get out of this way of life.

As the second youngest daughter in a family that has migrated for over twenty years, I have had to leave my home and move across the country when my dad is laid off for the winter. My dad works at a farm that grows many crops including sweet corn, alfalfa hay, wheat, and safflower. Since these crops do not grow during the winter, there is nothing for my dad to do and we have to move to find another job. When moving, it is very difficult because we have to pack up everything in our house into our truck and travel for many days until we reach our next stop. When we arrive, my dad has to find a new temporary job while my mom enrolls my siblings and I into a new school. Being the new girl in a class where I do not know anyone is very difficult, but it is even harder to try to catch up to what the teacher is teaching since I was at another school not even a week before.

Since I am still young, I have never officially "worked" alongside my dad, but I have gone with him many times to help. My family usually leaves to work before six in the morning and they do not come back until late in the afternoon. Because I cannot really help in the fields, my job is to help my older brother to take care of our little brother while my parents and older siblings are at work all day. Once they arrive, I have to be extra careful so that I do not wake them up since they are very tired from working all day in the sun. Because I see how hard they work so that we can have everything we need, my wish for my family is for them to reach their life goals and stop working as migrant farmworkers.

Living as a migrant student has taught me many things, especially that I cannot give up when things seem difficult. Being part of this farmworker community has taught me to dream big and work hard for that dream. Seeing my two older siblings overcome the difficulties of being migrant students and go to college motivates me to finish school and get a degree so that one day I can make a difference not only for my family, but for other migrant students and families that struggle every day.

