Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: THOMAS QUACH
Interviewer: Michelle Le Pham
Date: March 17, 2013
Location: Huntington Beach, CA
Sub-collection: Community Interviewers
Length: 01:53:50

Time Log

Track 01

00:00:16 Dr. Thomas Quach introduces himself, date of birth, and place of origin.
00:00:40 Narrator describes his parents and their careers
00:03:20 Describes his childhood memories of escaping Vietnam via airplane
00:04:50 Describes his experiences at a refugee camp in the Philippines
00:06:30 Quach describes the days leading up the fall of Vietnam while he was still in his childhood home
00:09:00 Returns to his experiences in the refugee camps in the Philippines.
00:11:30 From Vietnam to the Philippines Quach and his family were transferred to the Wake Islands
00:13:30 Finally, he and his family ended up in the United States at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas
00:14:00 Describes his experiences transferring from the Wake Islands to Fort Chaffee
00:17:30 Describes how he and his family began settling in to the United States
00:19:00 Narrator describes fond childhood memories of driving across state for vacation with family
00:20:00 Talks about how his father and mother used to study for his pharmacy degree shortly after arriving in the US
00:22:10 Describes his childhood living with his parents on the university campus
Discusses his experiences as a Vietnamese American child in the United States
Narrator talks about his experience at Fountain Valley High School in California
Quach discusses the difficulties he had learning Vietnamese
Narrator muses about what his life would be like if he never left Vietnam and describes the lives of friends who weren’t able.

Track 02
Discusses the origins of his early career plans
Describes his final years of high school and applications to college
Talks about why he eventually chose La Sierra, a Seventh Day Adventist school, for his undergraduate career
Quach talks about his first love interest and personal ideals impacted his decisions
Describes his experiences at La Sierra college being a Vietnamese American
Narrator briefly talks about “parachute kids” and their origins
States that he didn’t feel different at his college because of his ethnicity rather that he felt different because of his religion
Discusses why he never converted from Buddhism to Seventh Day Adventist
Talks about his ultimate decision to pursue a career in medicine
Narrator describes his process applying to medical school
Describes his early experiences at Loma Linda Medical School
States he met his wife the third year of medical school in ‘91
Describes how and why he made OBGYN his career choice
Gives an anecdote about his experiences in oncology/internal medicine
00:52:30  Talks about his stroke of luck landing a residency in OB/GYN

00:56:10  Describes his experiences starting his own clinic in the Little Saigon area and serving the Vietnamese community

01:00:00  Narrator discusses how he began his involvement in the community and charity work

01:03:10  Quach discusses how he shares his family history to his children and reservations about going to Vietnam

01:06:05  Narrator gives his closing statement and message to future generations