Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: DANH NHAT QUACH
Interviewer: Michelle Le Pham
Date: May 6, 2012
Location: Huntington Beach, CA
Sub-collection: Community Interviewers
Length: 01:17:28

Time Log

Track 01

00:00:23 Danh Nhat Quach states his name, date of birth, and career title
00:00:37 He states his place of birth in Soc Trang, Vietnam
00:01:17 Describes a his childhood during and after the French occupation of
Vietnam
00:03:25 Quach briefly describes members of his household and neighborhood
00:04:30 States that he received his pharmaceutical training via French education
00:05:18 Compares and contrasts French pharmaceutical education versus American
pharmaceutical training
00:07:20 Describes how he met and courted his wife in pharmacy school
00:08:20 States that he has three children, two of which were born in Vietnam and
one born in the United States
00:09:07 He often tells his children about the traditions and culture of Vietnam
00:10:00 Describes how important it is to keep the Vietnamese tradition to pass onto future
generations
00:12:40 Discusses his religious beliefs, his altar at home, and the importance of revering
the ancestors
Quach states that as a young man he either had to serve in the military or the government.

Describes his role in the war as the head of the Healthcare cabinet in the Vietnamese delta near Mekong River.

Trained in medical logistics in Okinawa, Japan because after the French occupation their pharmaceutical system became obsolete.

Briefly describe how he implemented a new system of medical logistics in Vietnam with the help of Americans and Koreans.

Explains how he managed the language barrier in Okinawa, Japan while in training.

Describes his family livelihood during the Vietnam War.

Quach describes the details of the war and how his family was able to stay out of harm’s way.

Describes what his friends and acquaintances said about the aftermath of the war.

He describes his dilemma about leaving Vietnam.

Discusses why he wanted to leave Vietnam and how he felt about it in retrospect.

Describes his experience in the Philippine refugee camp.

Quach states his main concern was about his family and doesn’t have an opinion on the war.

Describes what he was able to carry with him out of Vietnam.

States that he went from Vietnam to the Philippines to the Wake Islands, and finally to Fort Schaffe.

Recalls his experience in the various refugee camps and being exposed to
American culture

States that his sister who was already studying in the United States sponsor him and his family

First settled in Connecticut and then moved to Nebraska to attend pharmacy school

Describes how his wife worked at a candy store to support the family while he went to school and did work study

Went to find ephemera/Break

Track 02

Discusses why his family moved to Southern California and assess American healthcare

Discusses why he thinks Vietnamese congregate in Southern California

Quach discusses why he began his pharmacy and shipping business

Describes how he had to reinvent the pharmaceutical labeling system to serve Vietnamese community

States why he specifically chose the area to be Little Saigon

Describes the landscape of Little Saigon before large influx of Vietnamese businesses

Describes how he began the process of investing into a new community

Briefly describes his business relationship with Frank Jao

Discusses his experience with racism in Southern California in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s
00:15:05 Describes his hardships raising a family and starting over again in the United States.

00:16:05 Quach states how he was able to afford his first home in Southern California.

00:17:00 Discusses issues with identity and citizenship as a Vietnamese American.

00:18:37 States that he earned his citizenship in the mid-1980s.

00:19:00 Briefly discusses his views and role in politics in the United States.

00:19:30 States that he still keeps in contact with family in Vietnam.

00:20:00 Gives his opinion about the second and third generation of Vietnamese Americans and the future of Vietnamese culture.

00:21:45 Describes his involvement in the Vietnamese community today.

00:24:10 Discusses why it is so important to keep the Vietnamese identity and culture relevant.

00:28:45 Describes photographs documenting the early years of his business.