

Becoming a Citizen

My name is Long Bach. I was born in Orlando, Florida. That makes me an American citizen. Today is a special day at our house. This morning my parents were not American citizens, but this afternoon they are. How could that happen? Let me explain.

My mom was born in Saigon, Vietnam. When she was a teenager, her family moved to the United States. Her mom was a dentist and her dad was an airplane pilot. My dad's family had moved here from a small village outside Saigon when my dad was a young boy. Because my parents were born in Vietnam, they were Vietnamese citizens living in the United States. They were not American citizens. When my parents married, they decided to stay in the United States. They got permission from the government to work and live here.

One day my dad told me that he and my mom had chosen to become American citizens. They read and studied the book, *Guide to United States Citizenship*. They had to learn about US laws and government, take a test, and take an oath to become American citizens. "Then, we will be Americans like you," my dad told me.

Today we went to the courthouse at 134 Main Street, Tallahassee, Florida so my parents could take their test. My grandparents did not come with us. After the test, we met with Judge William Hunt. He helped my parents take the oath of citizenship. "Congratulations!" exclaimed Judge Hunt. "As of today, October 20, 2003, you are American citizens."

All the hard work paid off, and my parents are proud to be American citizens. My parents hugged each other. Then, they hugged me. My mom smiled and said, "We are American citizens now, just like you."