

My Family Migration Experience

By Terrell Springer

Introduction

- I don't really have a migration story since I was born and raised in America
- However, both my parents were born and raised in Barbados, so I thought it would be fitting if I interviewed them for some of their experience coming to America.



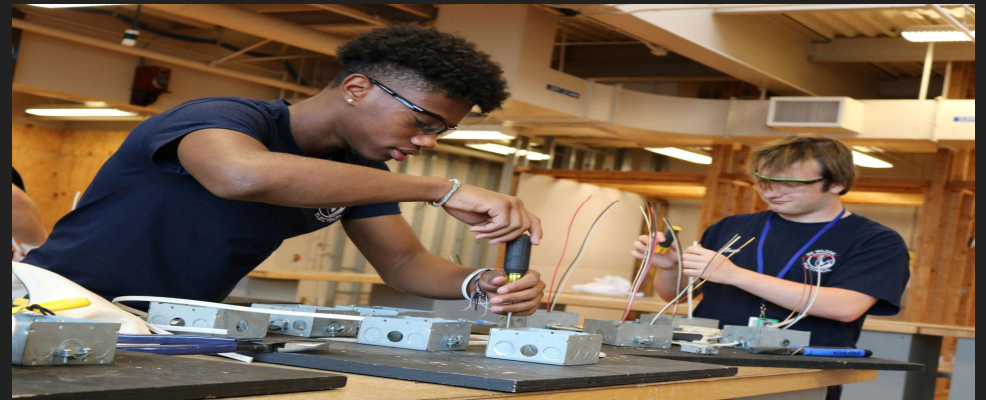
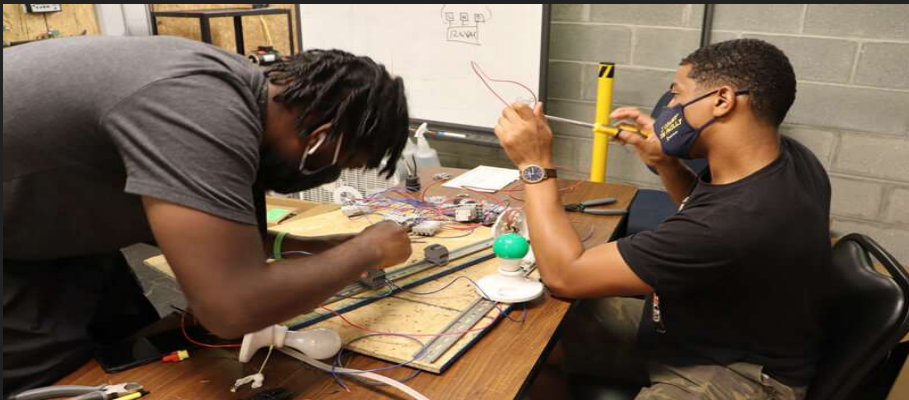
Why Did You Migrate?

- Unlike popular belief that people choose to come to America for the American dream, my parents were forced to come here
- My mother was sent to America around the age of 16 in order to pursue a better life from her mother
- She was meant to go to school to become a fashion designer, but this did not work out.



Why Did You Migrate? Part 2

- As for my father, he was told to come to America by his father who lived there and remarried.
- He was never told why his father one day decided that he would call him over.
- Unlike my mother, my father did not come over to pursue anything.
- He already finished school in Barbados learning electrical work, so he was all set to start working when he came to America

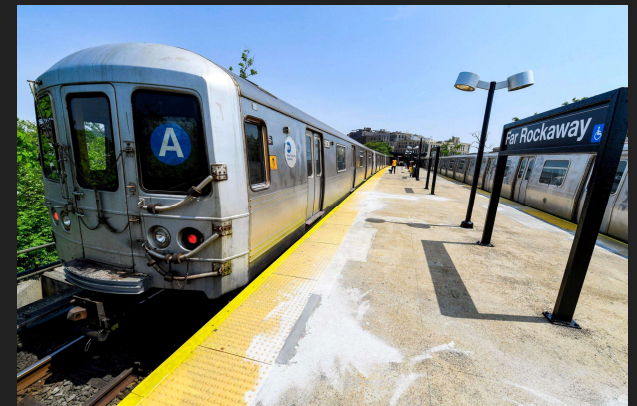


What Was Your Living Situation?

- While my mother did not want to leave Barbados, she was not alone when she got here.
- She was fortunate enough to have an older sister who was able to look out for her while she was here.
- As for my father, he was surrounded by people when he got to America, but his father was the only one he was truly related to.
- In America, my father lived in a house full of his step-siblings and his step-mother

What Was Different Coming To America?

- In America, everyone has the hustler mentality
- It's loud quite often because the city never rests
- America is Individual focused instead of community based
- The cold temperature and snow
- New forms of transportation
- Buildings look similar
- Buildings tend to be taller
- More garbage and too many rats



What Are The Cultural Differences?

- Fruits are picked from trees, and neighbors share produce with each other
- You live with extended family
- There are not as many holidays.
- You only get drought season, hurricane season, and summer break
- Clothes are similar to those in America
- As for religion, Christianity is the prominent religion
- Just like America, the people of Barbados speak english, however, they use british spelling for words

Cultural Differences Part 2

- While my mother had a world of cultural differences to get over when she came to America, my father did not have that same issue
- He lived in an area filled with other islanders.
- There was prejudice between African Americans and West Indian Blacks at the time, which made them band together with their culture.
- They brought the different islands with them to their current home in America

Pros and Cons of Migrating

For my mother, some of the pros include:

- Experiencing a different way of living
- Access to more money
- Being able to afford new technology to make living easier

The cons are:

- Taxes
- Lack of quietness
- Leaving friends and family behind



Pros and Cons of Migrating Part 2

For my father, some of the pros are:

- Meeting people and experiencing a different atmosphere
- More and better job opportunities

The cons include:

- There's more crime
- America is too fast paced
- There's no breaks
- People don't respect each other



What discrimination have you faced?

- While shopping in stores, my mother would be faced with store workers who follow her around as soon as she enters the store
- While she was going to school, you had discrimination from African Americans who told her and the other people from the Caribbean Islands to get back on the banana boat



What discrimination have you faced? Part 2

My father has faced multiple accounts of racism while here in America.

- Racist notes on his car
- Working in a racist community
- Racist drunk white man outside of his workplace
- Being questioned and pat down by the police for no reason



Comparing America to Barbados

Although I did not migrate to America, I have visited Barbados multiple times and have noticed some differences.

- The position of the driver in a car
- Jazz and other forms of Music here in America is not as popular as Reggae and pop songs from the radio
- People climbing trees for fruit and selling fruit using fruit stands
- True silence at night