Vietnamese American Oral History Project, UC Irvine

Narrator: TAM THANH NGUYEN
Interviewer: Sadegh Iranmanesh
Date: February 19, 2012
Location: Fountain Valley, California
Sub-Collection: Vietnamese American Experience Winter 2012
Length of Interview: 01:39:01

Time Log

00:01:12  Dr. Tam Thanh Nguyen discusses how he and his family moved from Saigon, Vietnam to the U.S.

00:03:10  He talks about why he and his family modified their names to include “Tam”

00:05:56  He discusses ways that he obtained memories of what Vietnam was like when he was there up until 1.5 years of age

00:08:12  Tam discusses how he really feels about coming to America at such an early age

00:12:56  He talks about what his first trip back to Vietnam in 1991

00:18:29  Tam discusses his high status in Vietnam as an only son in the family as well as his grandma’s importance in his life

00:28:49  He analyzes the differences in lifestyle between America and Vietnam during the early 90s

00:35:08  He goes on to talk about the progress of Vietnam over the years since 1991

00:39:09  Tam talks about the work paths of his immediate family members
He discusses his experience in UC Irvine as an undergrad from 1991-1995, particularly the Vietnamese relations

Tam talks about how much his grandma inspired him

Tam talks about his name “Tam” meaning “heart” and its significance

Tam discusses his own career path and why he was not interested in becoming a doctor after obtaining his M.D.

He discusses the challenges he faced with fitting in to work in a beauty college

He talks about how he became president of the beauty college

Tam discusses how unique his work situation is in a beauty college

Tam talks about how he humbly accepts praise for his work

He talks about the media’s suggestion for him to get involved politically and the possibilities of it happening

He talks about how his typical work schedule, leadership style, and what he attributes his success to

Tam finishes by talking about how he has lived his dream and what he thinks of the future for the Vietnamese American community