



Hello, my name is Qien Feng. I immigrated from Guangzhou to San Francisco along with my family back in 2016. This migration is honestly a blessing in disguise because it shined light into my unseen major family conflicts, including toxic masculinity and domestic violence. This led to our parents filing a divorce. Thankfully, my mother won our custody so I was able to stay together with my twin sister. The pressure from the financial crisis, language barrier, and being in a foreign land really took a toll on my mother. Fortunately, we received help from my newcomer school, and stayed in a women shelter before moving into Single Room Occupancies.

Moving into the Single Room Occupancies lays out the foundation of my advocacy work and the origin of my passion. This kind of public housing is especially prominent to monolingual and low income families living in high cost cities, where it is impossible to rent even a studio apartment. Single Room Occupancies are usually located in crowded neighborhoods; a family would rent one room in the building, and share a kitchen and bathroom with the whole floor. I was super involved in supporting this community, looking for ways to decrease the social isolations they are experiencing, such as living in a tight space with zero privacy whatsoever from their families and neighbors.

I learned to be creative and adaptive from living in Single Room Occupancies, where I found my love for visual arts. This led to me auditioning and pursuing for the only arts school in

the city; this is also where I completed high school. At the same time, I invested time to preserve my language and culture while exploring others that are distinctive from mine. My journey of adjusting to the United States gave me immense interest in seeing how societies interact based on the environment they grew accustomed to. I learned Spanish, and studied abroad in Spain. This trip gave me so much joy that I realized I love the process of learning through first hand experience and witnessing the knowledge with my own eyes.

As I come into UCSB this fall with an intended major of Biology, I hope to explore the scientific field, which I am unfamiliar with, and see if this subject is the right fit for me. I envision myself to dive into the scholar path because learning is the principle motivation that drives me to move forward.