

## California Stories

by Andrew Dawson

“Whaaaah!” I shouted as I arrived in this world, so small, so cute, and so adorable. My name is Andrew Dawson, and my parents chose the name Andrew because they liked it, and they thought it would sound good with the middle name they had chosen. My middle name, Douglas, is after my grandpa. At first my mom wanted to name me Andre, but not everyone liked it. My mom and dad argued about it and finally chose Andrew. Andre Douglas Dawson would have been alright with me – I sort of like that name. For awhile, they just called me “Bud or “Baby D.” At last a decision was made, and Andrew Douglas Dawson stuck. It really fits me.

I was born at 4:22 P.M. on October 9, 1994 at Saddleback Women’s Hospital in Aliso Viejo, California. I had a squeaky little cry, but boy was I strong! When I was born, some of my relatives were there. There was my mom, of course, and my dad and grandma. At first the doctors thought I was going to be a girl, but they were surprised when I turned out to be a boy! My parents had the name, Mandy, all picked out. Now they would have to go back to Andrew. When I was born, I was really small. I weighed just 6.8 pounds and measured only 19 3/4 inches. The first words out of my dad’s mouth when he saw me were, “Hi Bud.” That was pretty funny, and the nickname stuck to this day.

I am older now, 10, and go to one of the best schools in the state of California—Lowell Bayside Academy. I know that because we are a California Distinguished School and a Blue Ribbon School. The best teachers in Long Beach teach at Lowell. I am proud to live in Long Beach where the schools and lifestyle are the best! California has its own unique lifestyle. Where else can you go to the beach, the mountains, the desert, and another country all in one day? I love that I live near the beach, near parks with lots of trees, near a big school and right next to a big lagoon.

One of the things that I love best about living in California is the people. They are generous and very happy people. Californians are good citizens because they know and obey their civil rights. My second favorite thing about living in California is the scenery. California has the most breathtaking sights, such as the Pacific Ocean, the majestic mountains, Highway 1, and the Redwood Forest. There is Hollywood, San Francisco and Long Beach, with all of their tourist attractions and natural beauty. Everywhere I look, I see green palm trees, and above me, the clear blue sky. The third thing I love about California is the weather. It is never too hot or too cold and usually gets just enough rain.

I love living in California where I have so many choices. I can swim or skateboard almost every day of the year. I am especially glad to live in California because it is such a diverse state. That is especially evident in my city, Long Beach. I meet people from all different cultures and backgrounds all of the time. All these different people, and all of their traditions, help make up this great state in which I live, California! I am proud to be a Californian!

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