

I was born and raised in Abbotsford, BC, Canada, a city of about 200,000. My grandfather was born in Alberta which makes me a 3rd generation Canadian on my dad's side. My mom's parents were both immigrants from the Netherlands. My first adventure to the US was to go to College at Dordt in Sioux Center, Iowa. As a CRC boy there were really 2 choices, Dordt and Calvin. Anyway during my years in college I met Tim Starkenburg (LSI IT) and became good friends with him.

Fast forward about 15 years he asked me to be in his wedding party and he was living in Willmar. I was honored. Well I met my wife in that wedding party, the problem was we lived oh 2500 miles apart and in different countries. Never one to give up I took up the challenge of moving to the US, to Minnesota of all places. This is when my immigration journey began.

Working with Tim I landed a job with Divine House as a Systems Analyst which at that time qualified for a TN work visa. This was not a lottery visa but a specific one for a specific type of work at a specific company. They sponsored me and I was on the move. I did all the paperwork myself and even went to the border once before my move to make sure I had everything in order. Glad I did too because I met someone at the border with the same visa that was denied at entry because they didn't do their due diligence.

I passed through the border with relative ease and my dad, me, and a U-Haul made the trek east on I90 and landed here October of 2005. I began the process of getting my K1 visa. Which is what you get when you want to marry a US citizen. Doing all the paperwork myself I got it done again and we were married March 2006. A trip to Canada for a Tuberculosis check, a couple trips to the cities and to Vancouver BC for interviews and I was a temporary permanent resident August of 2006. My conditions were removed in 2008 and I was a full-blown resident with a 10-year green card.

Last Fall I looked at my card and thought to myself, it expires in 2018. USCIS processing times are 18 months or something crazy. Do I want to do the paperwork again every 10 years? No. Should I vote? Probably a good idea in these crazy days.

I decided to start the citizenship process as after you are a resident for 5 years or married and a resident for 3 years you qualify. Filled the app out, forked over more cash, and started studying for my test.

What's the test like? They ask you 10 questions out of a predefined list of 100, you need to get 6 right, and they are not multiple choice as the sample test is laid out. You also need to be able to read a sentence in English and write a sentence in English. I didn't study for that part. What to take a sample test? <https://my.uscis.gov/en/prep/test/civics/view> I spent a lot of time at that site.

Anyways I passed!

May 30<sup>th</sup> I participated in a Naturalization Ceremony with 828 other people representing 92 countries. It was quite inspiring an honor to be a part of. And did I lose my Canadian citizenship? Nope. I'm a dual citizen. They never even asked about that. Although the oath you swear does state that you relinquish ties to other nations.

Proud to be an American.

Dave