

My father had moved us, when I was four, to the United States to continue his studies overseas for a year. I had travelled across the Pacific Ocean. However, I was not dismayed by that. In fact, I was very excited as I saw this as a chance to make new friends, especially when we were so far away from home.

My father did not want me to miss out on education for a whole year, so he had enrolled me in enrichment classes to tighten the gap between my education compared to my peer's in Singapore. Thus, I had to go to lessons daily.

While the stay was rather pleasant, I missed Singapore. Fortunately, I had friendly neighbors and classmates that made the stay more enjoyable.

Sadly, I witnessed an incident that I wished never happened in the United States.

During my class, while playing with my friends, I had seen one of the American classmates make fun of a classmate, because of their skin tone! I was shocked. Due to my young age, I knew not much about that, but I felt awful and disgusted by his unkind words. However, I knew that it was a good idea to report to the teacher.

After reporting to the teacher, and with the American classmate getting reprimanded by the teacher, I approached the boy and asked him if he was okay.

"I'm fine, I'm fine, it happens," he said in between sad laughs.

"Well, still, that was no way to treat a fellow classmate," I frowned. I soon found out that his name was Ahmir and befriended him shortly after that incident.

Although that happened years ago, and I had lost contact with Ahmir, those words that the American classmate called Ahmir could never leave my mind. I found it awful, that at such a young age, people were already ostracizing each other.

Moving back to Singapore, I was in a class where there were different students from different races. I was expecting something like that incident to happen, I was pleasantly

surprised to find out that no one was judging each other. In fact, we were friends with one another, and got along well.

I felt very blessed to be able to live in this multiracial country, where everyone from different races come together and learn and respect each other. The importance of racial harmony is the foundation of the peace and prosperity that our country is founded, and I want to continue to make more friends and from all cultures and races.