

## Foster City 50 Essay

I have been one of the scores of people that have grown up in the nurturing arms of Foster City. I spent my first 14 years of my life in Foster City, and I still visit it every week. Even though I don't live there any more, I still feel that it is my home. I know the city inside out, and yet there is something so refreshing about Foster City, with its beautiful lagoons and welcoming parks, with its hospitable community members and its adorable animals. 50 years have passed for this city, but the core principles and fond memories of this city will always be instilled in my mind, and my heart. You can take the kid out of Foster City, but you sure can't take Foster City out of the kid.

I remember the walks as a young 5-year old with my grandpa at Leo J. Ryan Park. I could see the bees floating around me and the birds chirping their melodious rhythms. I happily remember feeling the rough yet soothing touch of the green grass surrounding the lake, and I recall with bliss the memories of bouncing up each step in the amphitheatre in which I played in the mornings every day as a young toddler. I sift through my memories now, and I see kind walkers greeting me with a "Hello!" every morning. I remember sprinting, my heart pounding faster than a hummingbird's wings, to knock on the doors of all of my friends' houses at 8 AM, restless to frolic and play at the "Sandy Park," as we would affectionately call it, an area in which we would slide on the play structures and play tag everyday. There, I could vividly smell the aroma of the fresh red cement paint on the "No Parking" curbs, and for that reason, I still associate red cement paint with those memories. I remember the basketball games I played with police officers, and the police officer that took time out of his busy day at the start of the

coronavirus pandemic to throw a football to kids that were simmering with boredom. Foster City has become a state of the heart, for the people who reside in the community.

Their generosity, compassion, and empathy for others has allowed for so many interactions to occur that would not otherwise be possible.

Next, I would like to remark on Foster City's greatest gift to its community, its crown jewel. This treasure not only is a gift to the Foster City community, but is a gift that gives back to help develop and make Foster City full of thoughtful and kind residents. The Foster City Library is invaluable in that it allows the members of Foster City to learn, yet also allows them to contribute to the development of the city. The resources of the Foster City library kindled the fire of learning in me, and for that, I will be forever indebted to the city. My success was primarily sparked in this safe haven. I recall running from isle to isle looking for my favorite books with friends. As we look on at the problems of society, only by being educated can we search for logical solutions. Finding areas that emphasize learning have become more priceless as the years go by, and the Foster City library has always been a priceless oasis of learning.

Lastly, the pristine parks of Foster City have always allowed the members of Foster City to rid themselves of negative emotions and channel their inner-youth. I fondly recall having picnics under the safeguarding branches of trees at Erckenbrack Park, and smiling as I viewed beautiful sunsets there. Playing basketball, football, and cricket at Catamaran and Ketch Parks are where I learned skills of community building, leadership, and the core strengths of friendships. These are where I was able to reduce my restlessness and find inner peace and calm. As obesity and depression rates skyrocket across the country, Foster City's commitment to maintaining our parks has been of the utmost importance when concerning the happiness of myself and many of my fellow Foster City community members.

Foster City has been a safe haven that has allowed children such as myself to develop into contributing citizens to society by allowing us to frolick, build relationships, and gain knowledge, and every time I associate myself with Foster City, I think of the pride I feel, and the gratitude I feel for this city that has molded me into who I am today. Pride, knowledge, and responsibility have been instilled in countless of Foster City citizens, and so it is essential that we maintain these principles to stay true to our unique identity and charming 50-year old city. Additionally, Foster City has transformed my outlook on memories. When youth reflect with happiness and nostalgia on memories, adults tend to frown upon them, and discourage them. There is a deep-rooted belief in society that remembrance and nostalgia are only for the old. However, Foster City has taught me otherwise. It has taught me to always cherish my joyful memories and keep them at the center of my focus. These experiences of joy are not materialistic, but rather more inner-bliss and a deep feeling of the soul. By cherishing these memories of happiness that are everlasting, when I encounter challenges and tumult, sorrow and fear, these experiences of joy will drive me to always see the light at the end of the tunnel. This is what this heavenly city has instilled in me, and for countless others, and I encourage that you carry this spirit on with you, so that you can find joy in more, and obtain joy from less.