

Foster City holds a special place in my heart as it contains my hardships, successes, failures, and most importantly, my vivid experiences. Growing up in a community that welcomed me with open arms, I couldn't resist but fall into their lap. Yes, we as a community do have some flaws, which we still need to work on, but that doesn't take away from how close-knit we are.

One simple "Hello" leads into a full-length conversation as that is how fond we are of each other. We do not care what background or ethnicity that specific someone is from. All we know is that he is part of our community so we have to welcome him the way we would want ourselves to be embraced.

"Hello, how are you doing today?"

"I am doing great, how about you?"

During my 12-year adventure in Foster City, I have come across many memorable moments but the most notable of them all was the game with a police officer.

About 4 years ago, a police officer chose to play a basketball game in the local basketball courts.

"Can I play with y'all too?" he asked.

"We only have 4 players so why don't you hop in?" I replied.

I vividly remember that after the game that day, the police officer handed me a police badge as a sticker and said, "If you wear this, you will feel like a real police officer."

For the rest of the day, I didn't want to take the badge off as I felt like a proud officer. These are the moments that make Foster City special for me; it is a place where everyone makes friends with anyone in a short 5-minute conversation.

Living in an apartment complex for almost the entirety of my life, I have been exposed to creating new friends and learning to be bold and brash. It has also helped me be friendly and gentle when I need to be. Friendship can be made with anybody, with any background.

Another experience that I cherish was when my friends and I visited Catamaran Park as we played with random adults who we didn't even know. We began talking and playing and before I knew it, we became friends.

"Can we play a basketball game with you?" I would ask.

"Oh yes, wait around 5 minutes. We just need to finish this game but after that, it is all yours."

As a person, I have grown so much as a person in my short 12-year career. This is a testament to the friends I have grown throughout my journey and the advice I have learned from them.

Each citizen of Foster City can relate to one thing; the Bay Area sports teams. No matter what political beliefs or ethnicity a person has, they can all relate to sports as it brings the community together.

If I saw a friend who didn't have the same political beliefs as me, that doesn't shelter our relationship as each person can relate to one another and in Foster City, it is sports.

I have a friend who has different political beliefs but in no way does it tangle with our relationship as a friend. We can connect through our mutual love for football. This shows that in Foster City, we can each have different perspectives on things but, we can push those away and only look at one's characteristics.

Friends which I made more than half a decade ago, still keep in touch with me as we know who leaves the community and moves into our city. It is a value that should be learned by other cities as we are very close together.

In 2016, I became friends with a boy who was visiting from Turkey. We were very excited to meet him and we built an unbreakable friendship. But sadly, about 3 months after we first met him, he had to return to Turkey. My friends and I were shattered as we had built a bond with him and wished he had stayed. The exciting part was, after he went back to Turkey, a few years later, he came back to Foster City, and instantly, we knew it was our old friend. We were shocked to see our old buddy again as we believed we would never see him again.

"Is that who I think it is? I haven't seen you in forever!! How are you doing?!" I said as I was in disbelief. This shows how tight of a district we are as each one of us keeps in touch for a friendship worth a lifetime.

Foster City has been a sacred place to many but we have to preserve our home. Many people litter across the sidewalk thinking it doesn't affect our ecosystem but no, it affects society.

"Let's stop littering our plastic and other materials. We do not know what toxic minerals are hidden inside this so try to recycle everything instead of making the city into a landfill." I would say to my friends as we see trash flooding across the pavement.

I have been an advocate of recycling and how our decisions on trash impact the ecosystem. It is not possible to have volunteers tidying up trash each day as the people need to contribute to the plan and work to solve this pressing issue.

If we improve this blemish as a society, we can help the ecosystem and our environment thrive to their fullest abilities.

Foster City is a community that is inclusive of every individual's differences. That is what makes this city so glorious. The town is diverse with people who have ancestors from each side of the globe.

Even Jack Foster couldn't have envisioned a better future for the Brewer Island that he purchased in 1958 which turned into the future settlement of the VISA Global HQ.

This community has arisen to any challenges it has faced including the pandemic. We were all sorrowful and forlorn with the future uncertain. That, though, did not deject our goal to prosper once again.

We found ways to build friendships, forge alliances, and strengthen camaraderie. Our resilience grew through the year we were independent. Many of our citizens got vaccinated to keep each other safe.

In the years ahead, milestones will be achieved with the help of our residents. The 50th anniversary of Foster City is just the beginning of what Foster City will become.