



# The journey

How a group of child refugees from

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## In 2002,

a group of the Lost Boys of Sudan living in Tucson spoke at the UA. They said they had dreams of someday wearing the university "A." Fourteen of them now do, and they have each walked thousands of miles to get here.

### — The Journey —

Their journey began about 17 years ago, when the Lost Boys of Sudan fled from a war that has killed at least 2 million, by conservative estimates. They all left the largest country in Africa between 1987 and 1989 because they were scared.

They were also targets.

The young boys (the youngest in Tucson was five when he left his family) were expected by cultural and tribal standards to defend their people.

The Sudanese govern-

ment, by killing young boys, tried to protect itself against the threat of an army of strong young men years later.

With the knowledge they gain in the United States they will help others in their tribe, the Dinka, who have suffered through the civil war in Sudan for 21 years.

But they will have to wait to do so.

The Lost Boys are refugees. They fled Sudan for protection from the war, and some say they think they will be killed if they return before the religious and political war ends.

The war is between the Sudanese government, the National Islamic Front and rebels in the south, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement.

The NIF has tried for years to convert or kill Animists and Christians in the southern part of Sudan. In response, the Southern

People's Liberation Army formed in an effort to defend the religious freedom of southern Sudan.

The boys who ran are called the Lost Boys of Sudan, but they say they are not lost. They are displaced from their homes and families in Sudan, but they know where they are and who they are.

They are not boys either. They left their country as boys and quickly grew into men.

Now they are trying to absorb as much education as possible in America, and working hard to accomplish that goal.

Peter Ayuen, 25, a political science junior, estimates he spends 20 hours a week on homework, then works at least 20 hours each weekend at Desert Life nursing home.

John Majok, 23, a public management and policy and health and human services

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