



Hero A

This person is a pioneering engineer and entrepreneur. He grew up in a rural village in the Philippines, and his parents worked hard so he could get a good education. After moving to the U.S., he worked on many different kinds of semiconductor chips and then started three of his own technology companies. This person is the managing partner at Tallwood Venture Capital and helps build new semiconductor companies. His philanthropic work supports research and education in information technology in the interest of society.

This person admires early pioneers in semiconductors who enabled him to accomplish his technical goals. He says that engineering design is one skill that has helped him achieve his goals. He says that one important lesson he has learned from his parents is, "No giving up on goals."

Who Might This Person Be?

This Person Is Named

61 years old
Filipino
Born in Iguig, Philippines
Lives in Silicon Valley in California
Enjoys exercise and ran the New York City Marathon in 2007





Hero B

Born into a family of highly accomplished scientists and scholars, this person says he was the "academic black sheep." He said his performance in school was mediocre and that he approached much of his schoolwork as "a chore rather than an intellectual adventure." Once he discovered mathematics and physics, however, he excelled. This person's distinguished career in laboratory research includes work at AT&T Bell Laboratories and teaching for many years at Stanford University. He was also awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1997, and he is now the director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Much of his current work is focused on developing sustainable energy sources.

"There's a little bit of insecurity when I'm doing physics. I'm not smarter; my IQ has not gone up," he said. "You want to try to put something that you learn in your own language, so that it's no longer something that's merely memorized but something you transfer from your head to your gut – you simplify it and put it in your own language to the point where it seems almost obvious and intuitive. It's only when you understand in this way that you have a chance of thinking of something new."

Who Could This Person Be?

This Person Is Named

60 years old
Chinese American
Born in St. Louis, Missouri
Lives in the San Francisco Bay Area in California
Enjoys cycling, swimming and cooking





Hero C

This person is a lawyer who is best known as the first Asian American winner of the television show *Survivor*. He played varsity water polo and track in high school, and graduated valedictorian. This person is glad for the chance to be on *Survivor* and change the way people see Asian Americans. His best friend died of leukemia (cancer of the blood or bone marrow), so this person gave a portion of his *Survivor* prize money to an organization that helps Asian Americans who have leukemia and other similar diseases.

An important lesson he says he has learned is that everyone makes mistakes, but the people who succeed in life are the ones who learn from their mistakes and use them as opportunities to improve.

He admires Norman Mineta, a former mayor of San Jose and former Secretary of Transportation, because "he was able to become a leader not just within the Asian American community, but across the entire American community. At the same time, he never forgot his ethnic roots, and he worked to help other Asian Americans become political leaders as well."

Who Could This Person Be?

This Person Is Named

33 years old
Korean American
Born in Queens, New York
Lives in San Mateo, California
Enjoys politics, hiking, surfing and volunteering with kids



Hero D

This person is a writer. He is famous for writing *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found*, a book about the lives of different kinds of people in Mumbai, India. The book was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and won the 2005 Kiriyaama Prize. This person started writing in his senior year of high school to entertain his lunchtime friends, a group of students who were teased a lot by other kids. Later on, he attended the Iowa Writers' Workshop and studied fiction writing. Today, he writes creative nonfiction and teaches journalism at New York University. This person also started Maximum Child Trust in India and is donating all of the Indian royalties of his book to help street-children in his birth country.

This person said that part of his success as a writer is because he always took risks. He says that he never took the safe road, and even though this led to a great deal of personal pain, it helped him get to where he is. His two gurus are the writers James Alan McPherson and U. R. Ananthamurthy. They taught him that a life spent as a writer is "a worthwhile life, and full of great fun. They taught me to appreciate complexity in human beings, and not to judge them."

One person this person admires is Barack Obama because "he has the courage to ask Americans to think with nuance and complexity, and not just give simplistic answers to the problem of race."

Who Could This Person Be?

This Person Is Named

45 years old
Indian American
Born in Calcutta, India
Lives in Manhattan, New York
Enjoys cooking



Hero E

This person is a TV news anchor at CNN where she has reported important stories like presidential elections in Africa, the tsunami in South Asia and Hurricane Katrina. She is the first Vietnamese American to anchor a national television news broadcast.

She was born in Saigon during the end of the Vietnam War. Her family is among thousands who fled to the United States to escape communism. They were first sent to refugee camps in the Philippines, Guam and California before making their home in Texas. Growing up, this person thought of becoming a lawyer but chose a career in journalism because of her passion to tell stories and document life.

One of the many things she learned from her mother is the importance of persistence. "She taught me to be fearless. If you really believe in something, it's easier to keep trying than it is to quit. No dream is too big if you're prepared for the discipline and dedication needed to make it come true." She also says "the definition of success isn't the title on your business card or the amount of money you make – success is defined by doing something you truly enjoy."

Who Could This Person Be?

This Person Is Named

Vietnamese American
Born in Saigon, Vietnam
Lives in Atlanta, Georgia
Enjoys traveling and watching the Texas Longhorns play football

KEY:

Hero A – Dado Banatao

Hero B – Steven Chu

Hero C – Yul Kwon

Hero D – Suketu Mehta

Hero E – Betty Nguyen