

## **Bol Riiny**

Bol was born in the Wau region in 1983, just as the Second Civil War broke out. He and his family evaded the army attacking from the north – from 1983 – 1991 –until one night militia men converged on Bol’s village, causing the residents to scatter. Bol ran and ran until he came across a large group heading east towards Ethiopia. The group traveled for months, sleeping during the day and walking at night, remaining out of sight to humans, but vulnerable to attack by wild animal. Bol witnessed too many of his friends fall prey to lions, and often had to run from them himself.



Finally, the group reached Ethiopia. But Ethiopia was experiencing its own civil war, which forced the refugees to flee back across the river that divided Ethiopia and Sudan. This return was made all the more difficult as the rainy season had made the river hard and fast, and Bol lost many friends in that river. Back in southern Sudan war raged on and the Arab militias kept the returning refugees running from battles that waged every two hours. Bol ran and eventually made it to Kenya where he joined many of his countrymen in Kakuma refugee camp.

Although life in Ethiopia was not easy, it paled in comparison to life in Kenya. Bol remembers being so hungry in Kakuma that it made sleeping and concentrating in school difficult. But, an opportunity to leave Kakuma presented itself, and Bol traveled from Kakuma to Winchester Massachusetts where he moved in with the Trabeline family. He attended Winchester high school where he was a star of the cross-country team. He went on to Concordia College, earning a degree in business administration with a minor in finance, and, since graduation, has served as the Office Manager at both the Sudanese Community Center and the Sudanese Education Fund.