

In Dreams Begin Responsibilities

The American dream was and always will be an important element to what makes America such a great nation—all one needs is a dream and the motivation to carry it out. Ambition is the driving force behind the American dream. It allows anyone with a goal, a desire, or a passion to carry out their individual dream. It knows no bounds of race, creed, gender, or religion. It stands for something great, something that everyone can strive toward. To live this dream is to succeed. It allows anyone, rich or poor, to have the opportunity to thrive. It is the ability to come from nothing and become something. To succeed at anything you do, you must have patience and persistence. It requires hard work and a desire for something better. To have these qualities and the drive and ambition to carry them out is living the American dream.

"Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people."

— Harry Emerson Fosdick

My own delving into this abstract subject showed me that I was a member of the first generation to think their dreams could become realities. In my father's generation, generally you were expected to "earn a living" and your education was geared to that end. After the Second World War, the idea began to take shape that everyone could and should have a dream, that we all had some kind of inner potential that wasn't being expressed. The most important thing in the entire world is that a child like yours will grow up in a home where there are no limits put on them. Each generation plans to improve the future of their children. We do not want our children to have to work as hard or as long to achieve their goals. We want them to use their God-given abilities to make use of our strong educational system, become professionals, and eventually serve their fellow man better.

"That which we obtain too easily, we esteem too lightly."

— Thomas Paine

Ability involves responsibility. America, since its beginning, has been a place where anyone can succeed if they put their mind, heart, and soul to their purpose. But we have to use our abilities to secure our

future. Many of our fellow Americans are suffering under the recession that has befallen our nation, but that does not mean we should rely on the government. As long as the government will pay to extend unemployment and pension benefits, no one will want to work or look to improve their lives. We need to get out of the welfare lines and put our backs to the grind—find a new job, start a new company, design a new future, seek an education. Do not let our future be dependent on a government that will eventually fail unless we change our ways.

"Struggle is a never ending process. Freedom is never really won you earn it and win it in every generation."

— Coretta Scott King

By burdening our economy with bigger government, we are dangerously creating an economic environment where opportunity and mobility get obstructed. The traditional American faith in upward economic mobility—understood to be the American dream—seems more elusive now than ever. As President Reagan reminded us, "Government can and must provide opportunity, not smother it; foster productivity, not stifle it." This perception is the solution to sustaining a healthy, growing economy that expands the prosperity for our coming generations.

"Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people. Those who have known freedom and then lost it have never known it again."

— Ronald Reagan

Our region has been blessed with an extraordinarily large building project. We have a great opportunity before us and we must embrace it and plan for our future success. The future is ours to behold. Show our area's prowess and be that new creator of the next generation of American dreams.

The challenge for each individual is not what we would do if we had the funds, educational advantages, time or sway; the challenge is what we will do with what we are blessed with. Will we cease to dream, and regret our lack of opportunities? We need to face our situation resolutely, formulate a plan to attack our dream, and bring about an honorable success.

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."

— Henry David Thoreau

