

Building Dreams: Reflections on the 250th Anniversary of the United States

When I heard that the university was organizing activities to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States, it seemed like more than just a historical celebration. Personally, there was a much deeper and more profound impact on the celebration. I am an immigrant and have been living in this country for three years. My story here is still fresh, however, my connection to the idea of freedom began long before I arrived.

The 250th anniversary goes beyond numerical value. It's a reminder that this nation was born from a dissent to stand up for independence, to provide the people with what many came searching for: the search for freedom. There is such an essential value in this fight for freedom. Freedom is the possibility to start over. Freedom is the space to think outside-of-the-box. Freedom is the creativity to try, fail, and repeat again with no boundaries.

As an immigrant, I have seen that the United States is not just a territory; it is a constant work in progress, built by people from all over the world. People with different accents, different stories, and dreams that sometimes seem impossible. And yet, here they find a place where those dreams can take shape. This country is the result of generations who chose to believe in the opportunities that came behind that ideal of freedom.

Helping my university celebrate this anniversary is giving homage to those who took the first step. To give thanks for the opportunities to have education provided for all ages, to have the creativity to build my own projects. To have the opportunity to build a future that is bright, carried out with the continued ideals that this nation has to offer. It's not always easy. It isn't. But freedom does not mean the absence of challenges; it means having the possibility to choose, to move forward, and to transform your own story.

The true impact of this anniversary is solely reflecting but asking ourselves what we will do with that freedom today. How can we use these freedoms to continue creating? What needs to be done to be considerate and have more compassion for our communities? How can we be innovative and provide that inclusivity to others to create something with a greater impact than ourselves for a future where we want others to carry on the legacy? Something I have learned in these three years is that freedom flourishes when it is shared. Celebrating 250 years of this country is also celebrating the diversity of its people who keep building it every day. And I want to be part of that ongoing construction.

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