

The Power of Optimism

[Photo: Dr. Farmer.jpg] **9/18/20** — American Five-Star General Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote, “Pessimism never won any battle.” We live in a divided world filled with negative voices and cynicism. The sustained pessimism can infect both our collective and individual thinking unless we stand prepared to identify and eradicate. Negativity is like a cancer that can grow and ultimately debilitate individuals, organizations, and even whole societies. Fortunately, we have the antidote for this malady in the power of optimism.

Optimism is a truly powerful force. It gives hope that tomorrow can be even brighter than today. Our great nation was built on positive thinking. Our founding fathers believed that a new form of government could form “a more perfect union.” The American Dream historically was, and currently remains, the optimistic hope of opportunity and upward mobility that drove wave after wave of immigrants to American shores. Many of our ancestors believed they could shape a better life in the New World for themselves and their families. And while it is not perfect, they collectively shaped the greatest nation the world has ever known.

The optimistic outlook is a mindset predisposed toward forward progress and achievement. Helen Keller stated, “Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”

Texans are known for their optimism and “can-do” attitude. No other state in the union has as many citizens who so proudly identify themselves with their state. We are Texans! We overcome adversity, we get the job done, and we take care of our neighbors. The booming economic development and quality of life that we collectively enjoy can in part be attributed to our optimistic culture and business friendly environment.

The Optimist Creed begins with, “Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.” We at Weatherford College have not allowed any of the recent societal challenges to detract us from our mission. We are changing lives like never before! Our generous donors have enabled us to award a record number of life-changing student scholarships. Our faculty and staff have banded together in the effort to leverage technology to enhance student success. We are adding new bachelor’s degrees, establishing new academic and athletic programs, building new facilities, facilitating economic and business development, and expanding students’ educational opportunities on a variety of fronts . . . all simultaneously.

We are optimistically marching forward to the benefit of our students and the businesses and communities we serve. Our collective optimism has spread throughout our service area and through the various communities we serve. A powerful momentum has now been unleashed that is creating self-fulfilling achievements. The snowball is now racing down the mountain and continues to gain steam. We have a rich, distinguished institutional history, but our best days unquestionably lie ahead. Optimism is alive and well at Weatherford College!

Optimism is a shield that can effectively deflect the barrage of daily negative pessimism that is hurled our way. Whether you are talking about individual, organizational, or societal achievement, our mindsets and cultural norms shape both our behaviors and our achievements. Perhaps world travel guide Rick Steves said it best when he stated, “Be fanatically positive and militantly optimistic.”

Tod Allen Farmer

President, Weatherford College