

CELEBRATE FREEDOM



On this Independence Day, I find interest in the story of a woman named Sojourner Truth. Born as a slave in New York State, Isabella Baumfree ran away in 1826 with the intention of buying her children back. Her son Peter is sold to a buyer in the South, which was against New York law. With the help of some Quakers, she goes to court against the white owner and wins Peter back. Her Quaker friends tell her that we are all equal before God, and Isabella became a devout Christian, memorizing large portions of the Bible, and dedicating herself to a godly life.

A sojourner is a traveler who stops for a short while and then continues on. Isabella changes her name to Sojourner Truth and spends the next forty years travelling, speaking for truth and justice, working for women's rights, black rights, and prison reform. She wears a banner with the words from Leviticus 25:10:

"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

We enjoy great freedoms in the United States. We are very blessed, as many people, near and far, are bound to poverty, to oppressive political systems, to religious persecution, to ignorance, and to a multitude of vices. As we celebrate the birth of our nation, and the freedoms we enjoy, let us take inspiration from Sojourner Truth to continue the work of spreading the wave of freedom around the globe.

DAVID M. SMITH
Interim Dean
Associate Professor
Graziadio School of Business and Management