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## A Special Independence Day Message from Tim Perrin

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### Human Resources



*Baxter Drive residents getting ready for the 4th of July Parade on campus.*

July the Fourth brings to mind raising our children on campus on Baxter Drive—patriotically decorated bikes and scooters for the parade, barbequing with neighbors and friends at Baxter Drive park, and watching fireworks from what we called “the grassy spot” along Baxter Drive on campus. July the Fourth conjures memories of close-knit community and overflowing joy.

This holiday celebrates the Declaration of Independence, signed by 56 brave founders on July 4th, 1776, 249 years ago. Our founders were not perfect. Yet, I’m still inspired by their hopes,

dreams, and aspirations. About a decade after the Declaration of Independence, the founders drafted a Constitution for the new country with the stated purpose of forming “a more perfect union” among other objectives. Ratified by the states in 1788 (and effective in 1789), the US Constitution is now the world’s longest surviving written charter of government.

My kids are all grown now and have moved away from home. They don’t decorate their bikes anymore on the Fourth of July. But there are still reasons for joy! During the pandemic—in 2020—I became a grandfather to sweet Luna Hope who is now almost five-years-old and loves sparklers and fireworks and celebrations. I’m an insufferable grandparent—just ask me about Luna! Having a grandchild has made me more mindful of the future, not less. There is still reason to work toward a more perfect union.

Forming a more perfect union is both a collective and an individual pursuit. Looking back, those campus community parades, barbeques, and celebrations were investments in forming a more perfect neighborhood. And yet, the world has changed dramatically in the last two to three decades. We live in a terribly divisive and uncertain time.

My hope for the future rests on my confidence that God holds the future in His hands. Of course, that confidence doesn’t excuse me from working to disagree better, to be an engaged and informed citizen, an excellent employee, a caring neighbor, a more reliable friend, a loving spouse, and a devoted parent. Not at all! And it doesn’t mean that everything is going to go my way all or most of the time. Far from it! In a world with so much division and uncertainty, we can still know that God is on the throne (even on our worst days!) and that nothing can separate us from God’s love (Romans 8:39). As you celebrate the Fourth of July this year, reflect on how you can help “form a more perfect union,” while remembering that our hope for the future transcends this temporal moment.

Happy birthday, America!

**Tim Perrin**

Senior Vice President for Strategic Implementation

*“Strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way”  
(1 Corinthians 12:31).*



