

## WHAT PATRIOTISM MEANS TO ME

An amazing thing happened in America two-hundred and thirty years ago. Fifty-five men came together in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to create a new nation. They were merchants, farmers, doctors and lawyers. They would come and go because travel was difficult, weather was bad and they had other jobs. But what ultimately took place was the most significant event in America's history: A Constitution was signed; a government was born; a democracy was created. It is this remarkable story that defines what patriotism means to me.

The framers of the Constitution wanted to make sure that freedom and independence were the bedrock of our democracy. They wanted to ensure that citizens were protected from a government that was too powerful or too autocratic. They did not want the people to be at the mercy of any one single branch of government or under the rule of one leader. America did not want a king.

The framers of the constitution wanted the nation to belong to the people. Our patriotism is our attachment to our nation. It is our vigorous support of our country. The framers brilliantly understood that our nation was not a perfect nation. The Constitution's Preamble states, "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union". Patriotism means that Americans will roll up their sleeve and fight to make the nation more perfect because it belongs to all of us. Its success is in our safekeeping. Patriotism is love for our country despite its imperfections.

Today, there are people marching in the streets. We have faced a series of natural disasters. There is a threat of war with North Korea and technology threatens our democracy. There are feelings of uncertainty across the land. However, it is our preordained bond with this country and our belief that our Founding Fathers planned for our future that tells us we need not bend to fear. We will not give up. Our patriotism connects us to each other and this country we love. We will fight for it. We are Americans.