



America at 250—Through the Eyes of Generations

Generations of Family, Service, Hard Work, Optimism and Hope are What Fuels America

America's 250th Birthday has me thinking about my grandfathers. They came from Italy and Sicily with barely a dime in their pockets, but had optimism and faith in what this country could make possible.

That is why [Business for America's "Together for 250" campaign](#) is timely, inviting business and civic leaders to share something real about America, through our own voices.

Purpose, leadership, and connection aren't just words. They are a way of life for me and they were for my grandfathers and grandmothers too.

I thrive on connection—leading a life of purpose for whatever cause or campaign I'm involved in. I choose these campaigns and causes wisely—now as an elder—much more so than in my younger, wilder years.

When I worked in the U.S. Senate in the 1990's, I saw people disagree sharply but still treat one another with respect. That experience shaped my belief that public life does not have to be bitter or reduced to a sound bite.

As the Host of the new [Purple Inspiration Podcast](#), my mission is to bring people together, bridge divides and get people talking again—beyond the red and blue labels.

I heard a prayer on [Hallow](#) and it reminded me that America's story has always been carried by people who came here with courage, faith, and the hope of something better—

"God, our Father. We thank you for the gift of this nation, and for the generations of immigrants who helped build it – people who arrived with courage, faith, and the hope of something better for their families and for those who would come after them.

As I listened, I remembered the stories of my grandfathers who fled Italy and Sicily—coming to this great nation to start a new life. They were the dreamers who labored in factory jobs to make enough money to feed their families. They wanted to leave their children an even better life than the one they had and the one they fled.

My Mom and Dad worked hard their entire lives. My Mom quit high school to take care of her four brothers and little sister, since my grandmother held a factory job alongside my grandfather, to help support the family.



Many of the factory jobs they held are now taken over by technology. That's not a bad thing.

My grandparents were the dreamers who set the path so we could follow their example to create an even better life—one filled with complicated innovations that lead to health care advances in medicine. My father-in-law was one of those innovators who left the world a better place and his family better off than he began. His inventions impacted millions of lives around the world.

And so goes the story of America—threads sewn in directions my grandparents could not possibly have imagined when they came here. Every generation changes the way the world works through a commitment to a better life.

That is what business, civic life, and the American promise are all about—freedom, self-government, equality under the law, religious liberty, free speech, voting rights, opportunity, dissent, civic duty, resilience, and the unfinished work of making those ideals real to impact more people.

We can build workplaces and communities where people feel seen, useful, and connected to a mission larger than themselves.

Believing in America is not just about cheering for the red, white, and blue. It is about honoring the real people who make this country tick every day—doers, dreamers, innovators, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, neighbors, workers, entrepreneurs, and citizens.

I guess for me and my family, “America at 250” is not just a catch phrase or a birthday party. It is our responsibility, as business leaders to remember who built this country, honor those building it now, and decide what we want to leave for the generations still to come.

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