

Reflections

On the approach of the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 2001, the Business Journal asked members of the local business and civic communities to share their thoughts and experiences from that day and the intervening years. Here are their reflections, with others online at www.westfaironline.com.

'Rekindle the spirit of America'

"Many meanings can be ascribed to 9/11. My understanding of the tragedy is a simple one – America is still the land of the free and the home of the brave, however trite that may sound. On that day, men and women of decency and good faith became so much more than they thought they were because in a national crisis they demonstrated the kind of courage Hemingway aptly defined as 'grace under pressure.'

The U.S. is at a moment of peril. We all sense it. Only recently, Vice President Joe Biden tried to reassure China's leaders and people that their assets were secure despite the downgrading of our country's credit rating. 'You're safe,' he told students at Sichuan University, but that two-word comment concealed an anxious sentiment that has taken on a global dimension. Quite simply, many of us fear America is not what it once was. The commemoration of 9/11 should be an occasion for all of us to step up and do the right thing because our country is at a critical time in its history as we stand at the threshold of the third millennium.

Let us all, then, undertake a conscious effort in large ways and small to rekindle the spirit of America, as business people, as civic leaders, as elected officials, as mothers and fathers, as public servants, as teachers and students. The return to greatness is not an easy path, but we owe it to the memory of those who died on 9/11."

*– Robert Dilenschneider, chairman,
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