

The Need to Persevere

By Victor Houze

As in the Great Depression, it is imperative that Americans today embrace the civic attribute of perseverance. Without this, there is a loss of hope, and we will fail to overcome obstacles before we even attempt them. Each day, our nation is called to rebuild itself and grow to be better, but that takes perseverance.

Perseverance takes character and strength. When an individual does not falter due to daily challenges – economic or personal, he or she is able to move above the problem to find solutions. Too often young teens today fall victim to weakness in character, letting others dictate how they think or what they should do.

As a young black male in a declining neighborhood of Detroit, I have faced many opportunities to quit doing the right thing, join the streets with the drugs, violence, anger, and hatred. Poverty and pain are not strangers to me. It is only through the perseverance of character provided by the example of my family and friends that I realized that I, too, have the strength to not quit, but keep going in a positive direction. It is only because of this, that I will be graduating in spring and entering the university world to grasp my future instead of being another failing statistic.

If Americans today do not face their struggles with strength of character and persevere, it will not only be an individual downfall, but the downfall of our country. Our country was built on the backs of men of character such as Jackie Robinson. He knew racism was wrong but he did not let that lack of character in the league stop him. He met the challenge and persevered. In every difficult period of our history, individuals met challenges that seemed insurmountable and faced each, persevering and contributing to the country we have today. The United States of America is not perfect, but neither are people. Yet, it has persevered through so much and grown through the efforts of those who do not quit, but try again and again.

The youth and all Americans today need to learn from those who came before us, as well as from those who walk alongside us and not give up, but persevere for a better today and a better tomorrow. It is in holding on that things will get better. Each of us can achieve something, but we have to be ready for what life throws at us and not run away from our problems so that we, too, may be true people of character who persevere.