

## A Tsunami of Enthusiasm

[Photo: Dr. Farmer.jpg] **12/16/20** — Do you know anyone who is tired of wearing face masks? How about anyone who has been frustrated by being unable to hug friends due to social distancing guidelines? While it remains critically important for us to maintain safety precautions until vaccinations can be widely distributed, many of us are experiencing COVID-19 fatigue.

Coupled with these minor daily irritants are feelings of guilt when we consider those who have been much more negatively impacted by the pandemic. So many have lost loved ones, lost their jobs, and suffered both economically and emotionally. Our health care workers and first responders have placed themselves in harm's way for a prolonged time period...and some have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Children and young adults have also been impacted in a myriad of ways. Senior proms have been cancelled, varsity athletics seasons have been altered, and millions of students have been transitioned to virtual learning. Some of these children and young adults have also had economic hardships and the loss of family members layered on top of all the normal challenges associated with adolescence and early adulthood. Frustration, depression, and anxiety have become far too pervasive.

The pandemic has also introduced a global market disruption and economic instability. Such instability has resulted in a few economic winners and many economic losers. It has also created both pent up demand and incredible opportunity.

Out of the ashes of fear and despair will soon rise a magnificent phoenix of hope and opportunity. A tsunami of enthusiasm will soon power a dynamic economic recovery and lift Texans to new heights in the process. When the vaccination provides us with some semblance of normalcy, people will flock to restaurants, movie theaters, and entertainment venues in record numbers. More than ever, friends and family will value shared experiences and warm embraces.

Weatherford College is optimistically preparing for the coming tsunami of enthusiasm. We have added new academic and athletic programs. We have partnered with state agencies to retrain the recently unemployed and help them obtain taxpaying jobs that provide family sustaining wages. We are building a beautiful new workforce and emerging technologies building that will support our regional businesses and help stimulate economic development. A record number of scholarships are now available to help students transform their dreams to reality.

The coming tsunami of enthusiasm will wash away the pandemic negativity and anxiety that has poisoned our collective thinking. Humanity has survived world wars, plagues, and pestilence, and humanity will survive this pandemic. We will emerge a stronger civilization with new applications for technology. We will have a greater appreciation for the health care workers and scientists who helped us both navigate and end the pandemic. We will be better prepared than ever before to fight both current and future viruses. We will emerge stronger, wiser, and better prepared for success.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." I believe that collective enthusiasm will soon come, and with it, we will accomplish great things.

**Tod Allen Farmer**

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