



Eastwood
WEALTH

2014 Annual Letter

I hope this finds you doing well! During this season of thanksgiving and celebration, I do not have to look far to count my blessings. First and foremost, thank you for the opportunity to be of service to you and your family. This responsibility is one that I enjoy and embrace. As 2014 comes to a close, I would like to share a few reflections on the past, present and future.

Recently, I have observed that the term American Dream has made a comeback. I have noticed it on billboards, commercials, t-shirts and through casual conversation with others. It typically finds its way in topical discussions when times are good and disappears during lean years. In the United States, it is most often connected with buying a home. President Bush even signed into law the American Dream Downpayment Act in 2003. The adage, along with low interest rates, was heavily advertised and helped lead the housing boom in the mid-2000s.

I have learned that the words can mean something totally different as you move through the phases of life. For example, I grew up in a neighborhood full of young boys where we did all of the things that young boys do. We played different sports as they were in season, rode our bikes everywhere and probably aged our church youth directors a few years. At that time, the American Dream was the nickname of one of our favorite wrestlers. His character was based on a hardworking man that fought through adversity to climb the ladder of life.

In 1931, James Truslow Adams coined the term American Dream in his book, *The Epic of America*. He defined it as a “dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone with opportunity for each, according to ability or achievement. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able at attain to the fullest stature or which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.”

I believe this idea is what the forefathers of our country had in mind when they signed our most cherished symbol of freedom, the Declaration of Independence. While presiding over the signing, George Washington sat in a chair that was embossed with a sun. James Madison later reported that Benjamin Franklin said, “I have often looked at that behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now I know, it is a rising sun.” Thomas Jefferson penned his view of this dream in the declaration as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The opportunities that are present in the United States and around the globe are better than at any other time in history. We are truly going further faster. For example, the cell phone that we carry has more computing power than existed in the entire world in 1950. Less than 20 years ago, it took ten or more bulky devices to perform the same activities that we now do with a phone that fits comfortably in our pocket. This is just one example of a tangible advancement making us the most progressive society known to mankind and similar conclusions can also be drawn when looking at other products and services.

Over time, most certainly there will be obstacles and bumps in the road. At some point, the cyclical nature of today's economy will take hold and we will find it tough to move forward for a period of time. We will experience the peak, recession, trough and expansion phases that have typically happened every five to seven years. Thankfully, the ups have been more prevalent than the downs.

I believe we should employ our best wealth accumulation tool, our ability to earn an income, to transform our life and our family tree. Experience has taught me that our ability to pursue goals, our financial behaviors and how we spend our resources have a far greater impact than any rate of return we can earn on an investment portfolio. I have learned that there are very few secrets to success. However, there are time tested principles that, if followed over an extended period of time, have yielded significant positive results.

At Eastwood Wealth Management, we believe that the American Dream is alive and well. To us, it's the aspiration to seek a better quality of life allowing you to spend more time with the people you love and performing the activities that you enjoy most. It's about creating a better life for your children, your grandchildren, your family, your friends and your favorite charitable causes. It's about being present in the journey and keeping the destination in perspective. It's the idea that tomorrow will be better than today.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your family and for being a part of ours. We hope your 2014 holiday season is the best ever and look forward to a prosperous 2015!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Evans CFP® CLTC
Founder

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