



Remembering 9/11

By Educator Barnes – September 11, 2020

Tuesday, September 11, 2001 was the date when terrorists hijacked four passenger planes. Two were flown into the World Trade Center. One was flown into the Pentagon, and the fourth plane crashed, landing in a field. Nearly 3,000 people died, and more than 6,000 people were injured. Reflecting on these events 19 years later still doesn't lessen the disappointment that this is part of American history.

Last year, I reflected back upon where I was when the events on September 11, 2001 took place:

When 9/11 took place, I had recently turned 18 and was a freshman education major at Purdue University in West, Lafayette, IN. Although I had only been in college for a little over a month, I had earned the nickname, "Mom" because as my dorm mates put it, I had a parent-like concern about their choices. In hopes of shaking this name, I reluctantly attended an event on the night of Monday, September 10, 2001 with my dorm mate. Since we didn't get back until early the next day, I had slept through my first class. When I finally woke up, I remembered how my all-female dorm was quiet, absent of the country music that was typically blaring.

I sprinted to campus to arrive at my next class, minority leadership, on time. In class, everyone was somber. I finally asked a classmate about what was going on, and he told me about the attacks. Our professor let us speak freely and discuss the events. Classes were canceled for the rest of the day. When I decided to walk back to my dorm, I remembered what I was told during Boiler Gold Rush, a Purdue orientation program, "You are adults now. Welcome to the real world!" At the time, this event made me think I'm not ready for the real world if events like this would be taking place.

After the tragedy of 9/11, two shifts happened in our society. One shift was good and the other was not. Americans became more united. There were more images of the American flag and people coming together to support and help each other. The other occurrence was Muslims began to be stereotyped and seen as suspicious by some. When I think about the events that occurred after the death of George Floyd, some people became more united and others have become divided. I hope we begin to lean into unity.

It should not take a tragedy for us to become more unified or to be reminded of how precious life is. Today, I hope you take a moment and pause in remembrance of the lives lost on 9/11. I also challenge you to think about how you can contribute to the goal of unity, so regardless of what takes place in the future, we have each other lean on.

Click [here](#) for resources to talk about 9/11.