

“...For the land of the free, and the home of the brave.” America is the country that doesn’t stop until she reaches her victory of freedom and liberty. Brave hearts and souls live, fight, and contribute every day to make our country the way it is today. Although there have been some hardships and obstacles to be overcome, Americans never backed down and kept fighting and turned that pain into fuel to continue on. Because we know that everything this country has overcome has been for the better, we know that it’s what has brought us to where we are now.

What does it mean to be truly proud of your country? I believe being proud of your country is being grateful for the men and women who fought to change the status quo. In addition, being proud is to remember the challenges we faced and keep in mind that all the rights we have were demanded, fought for, and achieved throughout our history. April 1861, the Civil War begins. This war was fought to end slavery in the South. Throughout years and years of battle, the South finally surrendered. Even though slavery was outlawed, this did not stop segregation. People like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks stood for civil rights because they were not satisfied, and they felt a need to better the lives of future generations. Now, because of their courage to be different and to move against the current, segregation has decreased immensely.

Voting has been a part of America for decades. Even still, who could vote has changed throughout the years. First, the standard voting age was 21 and over for white men who owned land. Slowly, those qualifications have become more equitable. After the Civil War, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed and stated that all men could vote, still ignoring the rights of women. It wasn’t until a few years after the war when these

rights were acknowledged. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were two women who made an important impact on how voting is today. In addition, these women brought all women's rights into forefront.

America is a country continuously moving for the best. Every day we're making changes and decisions powered by brave people. I'm very proud of what my country has accomplished and I'm looking forward to what changes are to come.