

Shortridge High School

Remarks by Azul Lerma, student

September 11, 2019



September 11, 2001 America met heartbreak and shock, 9/11 marked the day when thousands upon thousands of Americans cried for our country. 9/11 marks the day that from the ashes, brave heroes emerged.

My father came to the U.S. 45 years ago, he was here in the United States when 9/11 happened. That day, he was among those many Americans crying for our country, he was one of those Americans who felt the pain of what had happened. He cried for the families that lost loved ones.

9/11 marked the dawning of a new era, it was the day when dark times came and heroes stepped forward to lend a helping hand but it was also the day where many people turned that hurt into hate, and that hate into a weapon

It's been 18 years since then, and things seem to have only gotten worse. Time and time again we have shown how willing we are to let hate control our actions.

My question is: How many more will suffer? How many more will have to die? How many more soldiers are you willing to sacrifice for a war we have no idea what to do with? How many more

times will we divide ourselves? How many more people will die from police brutality? How many more children are going to die from school shootings? How many families will be separated in detention centers? How many more children will have to go to their own court trails to prove they are citizens? How much longer are we going to profile people and punish them for it. How much longer are we going to treat women like their bodies are property? How much longer are we going to wait to take action?

A year from now, we could have ended it. We could have set our differences aside, worked together to bring peace and fight injustice. Or a year from now we are right where we started, we could have done nothing, we could have even gotten worse.

So to the young people of the future I am sorry. I am sorry if we failed to move forward to create a better world for you. I am sorry if you are still facing the consequences of our actions driven by hate.

To the people of today: We have to eradicate the hate from our hearts to move forward. We must unite together, regardless of your race, gender, sexual identity or religion, we have to fight hate together. In order to strive for a brighter, better and safer future we must be willing to take that hate and overcome it. There is power in numbers.

We've changed once, we can do it again. Don't let every passing year mark how much we let our anger grow. Instead let it mark our determination to change. Do not lose hope, keep that faith inside your heart. There will be a silver lining if we work hard for it.

So let's make it happen.