

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

Our nation's 2020 celebration of Memorial Day may look different this year, but it does not change the gratitude we have for our fallen heroes, veterans and current service members. We especially honor and remember those that have served this country and have given their lives to protect our freedoms.

Memorial Day, originally known as Decoration Day, began on May 30, 1868 to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, as proclamation of General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, under the direction of President Abraham Lincoln. It wasn't until America's entry into World War I that the tradition was expanded to those killed in all wars. The tradition of putting flowers on the grave of the deceased began in 1868 and continues today. It wasn't until 1967 that it was officially renamed Memorial Day and declared a federal holiday in 1971.

Growing up, my family always celebrated Decoration Day by wearing bright red paper poppies and visiting the cemetery with my Grandmother to place flowers on her loved ones' graves. I can vividly remember my task was to carry the watering can, to make sure there was water for the flowers. It was a ritual that was honored every year and it was for us the purpose of the holiday.

Today, many of the traditions may have changed, as families celebrate this upcoming holiday as the beginning of summer. While we may focus on our family rituals; hanging the American Flag, backyard barbecues, picnics and long bike rides, let's not forget the true meaning of holiday. It is to honor our military service men and women who gave their ultimate sacrifice.

I hope you have all enjoyed Midwestern University 2020 Graduation Week and the virtual Commencement Videos. Our congratulations and best wishes to all our graduates.

Have a safe Memorial Day and a blessed holiday weekend.

Be well.
Dr. G.