

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Resolve to get the year off to a 'Six-Pillar' start

New Year's resolutions can be framed in any number of contexts, depending largely on the depth of your desire to make a change for the better.

Benjamin Franklin, the legendary American statesman and inventor, was of a mind each year to dispense such wisdom as to "be at war with your vices" and "at peace with your neighbors," timeless advice that takes on added significance in the presidential election year of 2024.

As one of the Founding Fathers, Franklin also viewed the onset of a new year as an opportunity to either write "a new chapter and verse" or to relive "the same old story."

If he had been born in the jet age, Franklin very well could have reasoned that while the "bad news is that time flies, the good news is that you're the pilot."

That last missive seems particularly timely as we chart a new course in the year ahead, a time period that can be viewed within the framework of the Six Pillars, which for the past three decades



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but she isn't stupid.**

have served as the bedrock principles of Primerus.

When Primerus was founded in 1992, the legal profession and our system of justice were under siege. The attacks from self-serving politicians and late-night comedians were about as subtle as the neon lights in Times Square.

In the face of that hostility, we decided it was time to take a stand, mounting a counter-offensive that spelled out the true value of the legal profession's worth to a civilized society.

Initially, our efforts to change the public's perception of the legal profession came in the form of a series of creative newspaper and television ads designed to tell "the rest of the story," as famed radio broadcaster Paul Harvey was fond of saying. The ad campaign was centered on the theme of "Good People Who Happen to Be Good Lawyers."

One of those ads centered on a drawing of Lady Justice, holding the scales of justice in one hand and a sword in the other, atop a headline that proclaimed, "She may be blind, but she isn't stupid."

Another was bold enough to highlight photos of Hitler, Stalin, and Ayatollah Khomeini, bearing the message of "Three leaders who really knew how to streamline a legal system."

Tyrannical law, by any measure, is brazenly "efficient," the ad noted.

"Their law wasted no time or money," the ad message said of the three tyrants. "They allowed no lengthy trials or appeals.



"So next time you hear someone lament our legal system's inefficiency, remind them: efficiency is possible. But its price is horribly high."

While those ads helped put Primerus on the map, it was the development of the Six Pillars that cemented our identity as an organization built upon integrity, quality, value, competency, civility, and service. Melded together, those qualities and concepts comprise the backbone of Primerus, and serve as the standards to which we are constantly measured.



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Such measuring sticks can be particularly helpful during the new year, a time of reflection when we traditionally take stock of ourselves and develop plans for self-improvement.

With that goal in mind, we can all use the Six Pillars as a handy guide, starting with “Integrity” as our foremost building block. The word, of course, encompasses truth and honesty, “true north” concepts where there is no room for any ethical shades of grey.

“Quality” is the second standard of measurement, a point where we can further define our commitment to excellence by consistently delivering work that is exceptional in every respect.

The third post among the Six Pillars revolves around “Value” and the desire to produce great worth, whatever the service provided.

The concept goes hand-in-hand with a high degree of “Competency,” the fourth of the Six Pillars, where proficiency is guaranteed through a continued commitment to lifelong learning.

A belief in acting with “Civility” in all personal and professional matters is perhaps the golden rule of Primerus, ensuring that a sense of dignity and respect pervades every interaction with others, whether they be friend or foe.

And finally, a willingness to provide “Service” to others in the community

is a benchmark quality that can yield lasting dividends. It embodies an abiding commitment to leading a well-rounded life built upon a desire to help others for the betterment of society.

The joy of giving back can help erase any chorus of doubt in the community, quelling the negative forces of skepticism and disdain in favor of hope and belief. Faith in the power of those two positive and uplifting words can give us a sense of renewal to nourish the soul in the year ahead.

Best regards,

Jack Buchanan, President