

Immigrants: Restless Dreamers, Economic Pillars

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The American dream is alive and well, at least to immigrants who are magnetized by it. It is they who challenge the rest of us to foster a culture of inclusion, access, opportunity, and empowerment. Moreover, they are the ones with the starkest sense of how America differs from every other country in the world. Their very belief in that difference virtually guarantees the American dream come true.

As James Jasper noted in his book *Restless Nation*, immigrants “picked this country because of its promise. They dreamed the dream.” This has always been one of the underlying premises of this dream, which has simultaneously been a catalyst for renewal and transformation of our society over the centuries. When it comes to the topic of immigration, however, the public debate seems to undermine the positive contributions of immigration to our economy. True, border control and illegal immigration need to be dealt with, not only to protect the American people, but for the immigrants themselves.

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