

## The Past Shapes the Future

When we look across history and all we have endured as a collective people, it's not always easy to identify the lessons learned. We think about the sweeping poverty of the Great Depression, the lives lost in WWII, the inequities that brought about the civil rights movement. It's easy to look at history through the cold and objective lens of facts and figures. But what are the lessons to be learned, what are the stories behind the struggles and the strife we can derive strength from and, most importantly, how do the stories of those that came before us **change** who we are today?

Ancestry® recently conducted a study and found that **91% of Americans polled believe lessons from the past can help change how we live our lives today\***. Americans clearly value history and seek to learn from it. The University of Wisconsin department of history says, "To study history is to study change," and the late and honorable Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said, "real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time." Bringing these two ideas together, we see that history has brought millions of changes and those collective changes over time have made for significant shifts that shape our experiences and our reality today. If history is about infinite moments of change, our call to action is to uncover the stories and people behind the change.

As a family history company, Ancestry has always understood the importance of unlocking history to discover, preserve and share stories. Our families are the fabric of our collective history, they are the change-makers and their stories have the power to both change and inspire us. **88% of Americans polled see the ups and downs of history as inspirational lessons to help us rebound during modern hardships**. We recently uncovered in our U.S. Census data\*\* that in the years following the Spanish Flu, people working at hospitals increased by 81% and the teacher occupation increased by 90%. Our ancestors not only survived a pandemic, they pushed forward and changed the communities and economies around them to make life better. If we pay close attention, history proves to be a bearer of hope.

Through the changes in history and the stories that accompany them, we have a guide to become better versions of ourselves, better members of our collective communities and be the change-makers for future generations to look upon. **85% of Americans polled acknowledge that history repeats itself** if we don't make an effort to understand our own history to know how we can change the future. Every day brings new challenges, more change, new hope, and we keep progressing.

*\*All survey results from The Harris Poll on behalf of Ancestry, May 2020 (conducted online within the United States among 2000 U.S. Adults 18+)*

*\*\*Data from Ancestry Census Records comparing certain occupations and industries in 1920 (the year the Spanish influenza pandemic ended) and 1930 (a decade after the Spanish influenza pandemic ended)*