

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 22, 1999

MEMORANDUM TO JOHN PODESTA

MARIA ECHAVESTE
STEPHANIE STREET

FROM: GENE SPERLING

SUBJECT: UPCOMING NEW MARKETS TOUR

cc: DOUG SOSNIK
MARY BETH CAHILL
LARRY STEIN

I want to recommend that we do our next New Markets tour in February as a "Close the Digital Divide" New Markets Tour.

I. Rationale

While clearly the second trip showed that with interesting stories – the New Jersey Nets in Newark, the Tomato-Burger King Cooperative in Hermitage – we can continue to generate some positive attention to our New Markets visits, I believe it will be difficult for us to sustain the level of interest simply by continuing to visit random cities with ad hoc private sector commitments. Therefore, the way we may be best able to keep our New Markets Initiative freshest is to build future trips around key issues or major deliverables. In that light, I recommend that our next New Markets Initiative event be a February Digital Divide New Markets tour.

1. Central Policy Issues: Without making the case at length, most of us agree that access to technology, technology literacy, and the internet would be critical in determining whether we will have increasing equality or greater divides among income and race in the future.
2. Crystallize POTUS and VPOTUS Efforts: The President and Vice President have a tremendous record on this, but most people are not fully aware of this. This is largely because since the Net Days, our efforts have lacked break-through visibility. A full two-three day tour on closing the digital divide, with the top high-tech CEOs traveling with us could be a true "breakthrough" event, providing a context not only to highlight our new efforts but our previous successes as well.
3. Potential for Major Private Sector Investments: If we were to have 10 full weeks to motivate private sector commitments, we might have time to generate some substantial private sector commitments on closing the digital divide. Currently, Case (AOL), Armstrong (AT&T), and

others are committed to attending the December 9th conference that Secretary Daley is hosting. If we were to let the entire high-tech community know that we were going to shine a spotlight on their closing the digital divide efforts, we might be able to mobilize significant, high profile private sector commitment.

4. Platform for New State of the Union Initiatives: While we have not decided on our new budget initiatives yet, we are currently planning on pushing a couple of significant New Market / Close the Digital Divide initiatives. While the basics would come out with the budget, we would unveil the details or at least highlight what has been announced during the trip.
5. Launching on December 9th: Currently, Secretary Daley has a December 9th Digital Divide event with impressive turnout from Case, Armstrong, and maybe Colin Powell, as well as Hugh Price (Urban League is very committed to this issue). While this could be a good event in itself, it is more likely to be another good event that will not break through. On the other hand, if we could make the deliverable the announcement of a New Markets / Digital Divide trip – with hopefully Case, Armstrong, Powell, and others announcing they would participate – we could push this to a higher level.
6. News Interest: Besides being an important issue, this is a sexy one as well for the media. If we preview this and make clear we have high-profile CEOs committed, I believe we could renew press enthusiasm for our trip.
7. Variety of New Markets Angles: A “Close the Digital Divide” theme also can allow us to deal with urban schools (or our Community Technology Centers); new efforts to bring broad band to rural America; initiatives to allow small businesses in underserved areas to have access to the internet for exporting opportunities, as well as a potential Native American initiative.

II. New York Visit

While we have plans to visit Congresswoman Velazquez’s district and to attend Reverend Jackson’s Wall Street Project, I would not try to expand our trip beyond this. With the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays coming up, and with a rush to come up with a budget and State of the Union initiatives in the next four weeks, I would recommend against seeking to make this a three-to-five visit trip and instead focus our time and energy on a February New Markets / Digital Divide trip.

III. Making Decisions

I recommend we make a decision on these issues soon both because it will determine the nature of the December 9th event, and so everyone can use their time rationally.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 9, 1999

December 9, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Narrowing the "Digital Divide;" Creating
Opportunities for All Americans in the
Information Age

Information tools, such as the personal computer and the Internet, are increasingly important to economic success and full participation in all aspects of American society. People with computers and Internet access can use these tools to find a job, acquire new skills, start a small business, get lower prices for goods and services, and become more informed citizens.

Currently, not all Americans are enjoying the benefits of the Information Age tools. In July 1999, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration issued a report, *Falling Through the Net: Defining the Digital Divide*, which found a growing gap between those with access to these tools and those without. Black and Hispanic households are only two-fifths as likely to have Internet access as white households. Households with incomes of \$75,000 and higher, in urban areas, are more than twenty times as likely to have access to the Internet as households at the lowest income levels, and more than nine times as likely to have a computer at home. As information technology plays an ever-increasing role in Americans' economic and social lives, we cannot afford to leave anyone behind.

Fortunately, competition and advances in technology are driving down the cost of computers and Internet access, which will make these new Information Age tools affordable for more Americans. I believe that we should set a national goal of making computers and Internet access available for every American. Furthermore, we should explore ways of using technology to expand the economic opportunities for those Americans who have not yet enjoyed the benefits of our prosperity.

Accordingly, I am directing executive departments and agencies ("agencies") to take the following specific actions to help Americans benefit from advances in information technology:

1. The Secretary of Commerce shall work with the private sector and others to develop a national strategy for making computers and the Internet accessible to all Americans, with the goal of significantly narrowing the "digital divide."
2. The Secretary of Commerce shall continue to measure the level of connectivity of Americans to telecommunications and information tools, and report periodically on the relationship of income, education, race, gender, geography, and age to Americans' access to these tools.
3. The Secretaries of Education, Housing and Urban Development, Health

and Human Services, Labor, and Commerce shall:

- (a) expand our growing network of Community Technology Centers to provide access to technology for low-income Americans; and
 - (b) encourage the development of information technology applications that would help enable low-income Americans to start and manage their own small businesses.
4. The Secretaries of Education, Labor, and Commerce shall work with the private sector to upgrade the information technology skills of America's workforce, particularly workers living in disadvantaged urban and rural communities.
 5. The Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall highlight and disseminate the lessons learned from their grant programs and educational technology initiatives, with an emphasis on underserved citizens, to increase the number of communities across the Nation that could reap the benefits of information technologies for their residents.
 6. Items 1-5 of this memorandum and my July 1, 1997, and November 30, 1998, memoranda shall be conducted subject to the availability of appropriations and consistent with agencies' priorities and my budget, and to the extent permitted by law.
 7. The Vice President shall continue his leadership in coordinating the United States Government's electronic commerce strategy. Further, I direct that the heads of executive departments and agencies report to the Vice President and to me on their progress in meeting the terms of this memorandum, through the Electronic Commerce Working Group (ECWG) in its annual report. To the extent that substantial new policy issues emerge, the analysis and action on those policies will be coordinated in a manner consistent with the responsibilities of the ECWG, the National Economic Council, and the Domestic Policy Council, as appropriate.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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Draft December 10, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR GENE SPERLING

FROM: TOM KALIL

RE: COMMUNITY COMPUTING CENTERS

I. Vision: Computers and Internet access could be powerful tools for widening the circle of opportunity. Imagine if low-income children could:

- Improve their performance in school by having access to high-quality educational software after school;
- Get excited about learning by exchanging e-mail with a "tele-mentor" or another student half way around the world;
- Prepare for the workplace of the 21st century, and getting a high-tech, high-wage job by getting certified with an IT skill (e.g. Certified Network Engineer, web-page design, etc.)

Imagine if low-income adults all over America could use computers and the Internet to:

- Learn English as a second language -- or take a self-paced adult literacy or adult basic education course;
- Get access to America's Job Bank to see what jobs are available - and learn to type up a resume and cover letter using word processing software;
- Get a free e-mail account to communicate more frequently with teachers; and
- Learn to start up their own "micro-enterprise" or Web-based business, or acquire new training.

II. Goal

- In two years, more than 1.7 million poor children would have access to computers, the Internet, and high-quality educational software from over 2,000 community computing centers. These resources would help improve student performance, help close the "digital divide" between the information haves and have-nots, and give children the technology literacy skills they need to compete for high-wage, high-tech jobs. [There are 3.2 million school-age children living in poverty in the 200 school districts with the largest number of poor children. This represents roughly 40 percent of all poor school-age children.]

- These resources would also be available to the broader community of low-income adults for the kinds of applications described above, and could also reinforce and support other Administration initiatives such as promoting adult literacy.
- This would be a significant expansion of current activities. Currently, there are about 430 centers as part of HUD's "Neighborhood Networks" program. There are another 250 members of the "Community Technology Centers' Network."

III. Cost

a. Proposed option

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
\$74 mn	\$100 mn.	\$56 mn	\$22 mn.

2200 centers in 2 years serving roughly 1.7 million children, ongoing support for centers in 2002 and 2003 - 4 year cost of \$252 million.

b. Lower cost option

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
\$32 mn.	\$47 mn.	\$27 mn.	\$12 mn.

1000 centers in 2 years serving roughly 800,000 children, ongoing support for centers in 2002 and 2003 -- 4 year cost of \$118 million.

IV. Cost assumptions

- The one-time capital cost per center is \$80,000, which could pay for:
 - 30 computers (\$1,000 each)
 - peripherals (printers, scanners)
 - local area network
 - hardware to connect to Internet (low cost router)
 - educational software (both K-12, adult basic education, and IT training)
 - Basic office productivity software
 - Some low-cost information appliances (e.g. WebTVs) that can be loaned
- Salary cost would be at least 1 full-time equivalent at \$40K per year for an instructor/center coordinator -- assumes that this person can recruit volunteers.

- The federal government would pay for half of cost (\$60K) -- and require matching funds from non-federal sources (private sector, state and local) in the first year. The federal contribution would drop to \$30K in the 2nd year and \$20K in the third year -- and the center would be required to develop a strategy for sustainability.
- Each center can support an average of 800 children
 - 2 children per PC
 - Centers open 40 hrs during non-school hours and weekend
 - Every kid uses PC three hours per week
- Since there are 3.2 million school age children in poverty in the 200 school districts with the highest absolute numbers of poor children, the goal should be to serve a large fraction of these.
- In addition to the centers, the initiative should support \$2 million/year for an organization that:
 - provides technical assistance to the centers
 - encourages sharing of best practices
 - organizes bulk purchasing and licensing of best educational software
 - serves as a matchmaker between centers that need help and companies and organizations that are willing to provide it

V. Benefits

A survey of users of Community Technology Centers found that:

- 2/3 of the users were minorities;
- 62 percent had incomes of less than \$15,000;
- 65 percent took computer classes to improve their job skills, and 30 percent used the Internet to look for a job;
- 41 percent got homework help or tutoring at the center;
- 87 percent said the center had made a difference in their life -- general improvement in their confidence, their outlook on life, and their future prospects; work-related benefits such as improved job skills, improved computer skills, and educational benefits; improved perceptions of technology; social and community benefits; and appreciation for

access to hardware, software.

[Source: *Impact of CTCNet Affiliates: Findings from a National Survey of Users of Community Technology Centers*, Education Development Center, July 1998.]

VI. Program design considerations

- There should be a broad range of eligible recipients, with a preference for those who already have infrastructure (people and physical) in place, including:
 - Libraries
 - Schools with after school programs
 - Public and assisted housing
 - Non-profits (boys' and girls' clubs, expansion of existing community technology centers)
- Although the program should be open to grants from individual centers, we should encourage larger communities to submit proposals for a network of centers to reduce the number of grants that the government would have to administer.
- We should also consider how this program could support and be supported by other Administration initiatives, e.g.
 - Supported by Americorps volunteers
 - Supported by innovative applications of information technology developed by TIIAP program (e.g. automatic e-mail notices for childhood immunization)
 - Supports adult literacy and welfare-to-work

Draft December 12, 1999

From Digital Divide to Digital Opportunity

During the Clinton-Gore Administration, access to computers and the Internet has exploded. In 1993, few people outside of our nation's universities had even heard of the Internet – today, over 100 million Americans have access to the Internet. Computer penetration has also risen from 24 percent of U.S. households in 1994 to 42 percent in 1998 as the cost of computers has declined.

Access to computers and the Internet and the ability to effectively use this technology are becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political and social life. People are using the Internet to:

- Find lower prices for goods and services;
- Work from home or start their own business;
- Acquire new skills using distance learning so that they can compete for higher-paying jobs;
- Make better informed decisions about their healthcare needs;
- Plan for a financially secure retirement;
- Track the voting record of their elected officials on the issues they care about; and
- Get more involved in the education of their children by communicating more frequently with teachers, and comparing the performance of their school with other schools in the region.

Unfortunately, there is strong evidence of a “digital divide” -- a gap between those individuals and communities that have access to these Information Age tools and those who don't. In some instances, this divide is actually widening. A July 1999 report from the Department of Commerce, based on December 1998 Census Department data, revealed that:

- Households with incomes of \$75,000 and higher are more than *twenty times* more likely to have access to the Internet than those at the lowest income levels, and more than *nine times* as likely to have a computer at home.
- Households with a bachelors' degree or more are more than eight times likely to have a computer than those households at the lowest education level.
- From 1994 to 1998, the percentage of white households with computers increased from 27.1 percent to 46.6 percent – while the percentage of black households with computers increased from 10.3 percent to 23.2 percent. For households with

incomes above \$75,000, however, the difference between white and black adoption of computers has virtually disappeared.

There are other aspects of the digital divide as well.

- Low-income households may not be as prepared to take advantage of the opportunities created by these new technologies, because of lower levels of functional and technological literacy.
- Certain minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans) are under-represented in the IT industry. This is important because jobs in the IT sector pay almost 80 percent more than the private sector average.
- Telecommunications companies are less likely to offer advanced services (such as high-speed Internet access) to residents and businesses in rural areas or economically disadvantaged regions of the country. Advanced services may be more expensive or not available in rural America because of the lower concentration of customers (teledensity). There is at least anecdotal evidence to suggest that this is becoming an important factor in where businesses locate, particularly given the growing importance of e-commerce and e-business.
- Computers and content on the Web may be inaccessible to people with disabilities, unless they have been designed to be accessible.

Market forces, competition and technological progress will clearly help bridge the digital divide. The semiconductor industry is able to double computing power every 12 to 18 months – which has significantly reduced their cost. Companies are also developing low cost “information appliances” such as the WebTV – which is available for \$100. Competition between telecommunications companies and Internet Service Providers is driving down the cost of connectivity.

But clearly, a national campaign to help bridge the digital divide would help accelerate the rate at which we can create digital opportunity for all Americans. We should take advantage of these new technologies to bring America together – not to further divide us along the lines of race and class. A public-private partnership, with an important role for the government as catalyst and convenor – would help create “one America.”

I. Universal, affordable access to computers and Internet access at home

The President should set a goal of ensuring that every American that wants it should have affordable access to a computer and the Internet at home, by directly supporting the cost of Internet-connected computers for low-income households.

1. Direct support for Internet-connected computers for low-income households

Currently, companies are offering Internet-connected computers at \$25-\$30 month in a leasing arrangement, with a new computer provided every three years. The cost of this could be split three ways:

- The government could provide \$10/month;
- Individual households could provide \$5-\$10 month;
- The private sector could provide \$10/month – through some combination of at or below cost pricing, advertising, and corporate sponsorships at the national or local level. Employers who are interested in helping their employees upgrade their skills using computer-based training is one group of possible corporate sponsors.

Cost: Assuming that the government wanted to start with a pilot of 800,000 households, the cost to the government would be \$100 million/year for three years – or \$300 million over three years.

Options for consideration

- A. No direct government money - just use the "bully pulpit" to try to get a pilot going in this area.
- B. Go forward with the proposal -- but link it more to our "welfare to work" proposal by enlisting employers of people who have recently moved off of welfare. The rationale would be that people who move from welfare to work often wind up in jobs paying only \$6-\$7 hour. An Internet-connected PC would help them acquire new skills using Internet or computer-based training -- e.g. ESL, GED equivalence, basic IT skills, job-specific skills -- and become eligible for higher-paying jobs.
- C. Go forward with proposal with a more sweeping "closing the digital divide" rationale.

Implementation/policy issues

1. *Public-private partnership:* An effective public-private partnership should be at the core of this initiative. Private sector and other stakeholders would set up a not-for-profit corporation (the "Digital Opportunity Corporation") with the following responsibilities:
 - Define minimum technical standards for participation in the program to help ensure its integrity. These standards would evolve over time to reflect changing marketplace conditions. These standards would be primarily "performance-

based” (e.g. ability to support full Web access, ability to run word processing and other basic software, etc.)

- Identify partners who can increase awareness of the program (e.g. through public service announcements, celebrity endorsements, civil rights organizations, black churches, local chambers of commerce, etc.)
- Recruit corporate sponsors (e.g. major employers of working poor such as retailers and temp agencies).
- Collect and disseminate “best practices” that emerge at the state and local level.
- Recruit content partners (example is Intuit – which has a program to provide its financial software for free for everyone with an income under x).
- Interact with the government to develop a consensus on important policy issues that emerge.
- Sponsor research (e.g. better understanding of attitudinal or cultural barriers to adoption of information technology using market research)

Recruiting a prominent former high-tech CEO to run the organization would help build bipartisan support.

2. *Eligibility*: Two options:

- Limit to those households with income that is less than 130 percent above the poverty line;
- Expand threshold to those eligible for EITC – but reduce government payment to \$60/year for those above 130 percent of poverty line.

3. *Advertising/privacy*: Need to avoid advertising sponsorships from companies such as alcohol and tobacco. All corporate sponsors should have adopted a strong privacy policy that is audited by a third-party organization (e.g. TRUSTe, WebTrust, BBBOnline).

4. *Payments*: Payments would be made to the companies providing below-cost access – to reduce the administrative overhead of the program. Payments from low-income households to companies is an important issue that will require some scrutiny because many of these households do not have credit cards or checking accounts.

5. *Support and repair*: Expanded support for Community Technology Centers could allow them to provide some user support, and to recruit technically-skilled people in the region willing to staff a volunteer help-desk or buddy system.

6. *Government information & services*: One issue is whether the government wants to have certain information or services “pre-loaded” or continuously delivered. Electronic delivery of government information and services could result in cost-savings for the government – and help reduce the net cost of the program to the government because of savings in other areas.

7. *Sunset*: The Administration could announce a sunset for the program – tied to factors such as:

- significant increase in penetration in low-income households
- emergence of a viable business model for free or nominal cost access
- presumption that it would phase out after some fixed period of time (e.g. 5 years)

8. *Access to inappropriate material*: Companies would pledge to help provide filtering and blocking software pre-loaded - and prominent access to the “GetNetWise” web site that gives tips for parents that the industry has developed at the request of Vice President Gore.

II. **Digital Opportunity through new content and applications**

The government should also support the development of applications and content that will help empower low-income households and communities. Although companies are willing to spend \$30 million to develop a Nintendo video-game, or \$100 million for a Hollywood movie, very little private sector capital is available for the development of applications that would expand economic and social opportunity for low-income Americans.

Software and digital information has an important economic characteristic that should be explored in the development of applications – namely, that the marginal cost of disseminating it to more people is almost zero. This could create a new economics for the delivery of social services. Traditionally, the cost increases proportionally to the number of people being served. This is not the case with software and digital information.

a. *Micro-enterprises*: Create courseware that will give someone the skills they need to start their own business. Create an online toolkit that would walk someone through the steps needed to start their own micro-enterprise and obtain financing.

b. *Adult literacy*: Develop courseware for adult literacy, GED equivalence, or English as a Second Language.

c. *Information Literacy*:

"Knowledge is of two kinds: we know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it." -- Samuel Johnson

According to the American Library Association, an information literate person is "able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use it effectively." This skill is obviously becoming increasingly important – because of the increased volume of information.

Librarians are an ideal position to help provide these skills – the Administration could support these efforts at the local level by expanding support for the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

c. *Local information:* Provide local information on public transportation, job opportunities, and child-care.

d. *Job training:* Provide courses that allow low-income households to compete for higher-paying jobs.

Example: SFWorks (a San Francisco non-profit) and e-learning company DigitalThink are working together on a program called "WELFARE-TO-WEB." The program gives former welfare recipients who have entry-level jobs acquire skills such as the use of office software, programming, and networking using DigitalThinks's courseware. They are starting out with a pilot program, but hope to be able to scale to 3,000 participants within 2 years.

c. *Public health:* Communities around the country are beginning to experiment with information technology to improve public health.

Example:

- One county is using geographical information systems to reduce childhood lead poisoning. Using a variety of data sets they can identify neighborhoods with concentrations of (a) older houses; (b) low-income households; and (c) children under 6.
- The Department of Commerce has given a grant to the Michigan Public Health Institute to develop an electronic childhood immunization network for the greater Detroit area. Currently, Michigan has the lowest rate of pre-school immunization. This network is allowing health care providers to have access to the immunization history of the child, generating automatic reminders for parents and doctors, and improving the ability of schools to track a child's immunization status.

f. *Strengthening parental involvement in education*

Example: Hillcrest Elementary School is an inner-city K-5 school in Orlando, Florida. 80 percent of the students received free or reduced-price lunches. Many of the students

speak Vietnamese, Spanish and French and have limited english proficiency. The school purchased WebTV's that children could take home with them to improve their language skills. This also resulted in an increase in parental involvement, which had been low because of language barriers. Parents were encouraged to sign on with their children to help with lessons and to use the school's Web site, which features a weekly newsletter, the school calendar, the daily lunch menu, teachers' email addresses and parenting resources.

Cost: The government could support the development of these applications with a significant increase (+\$40 million) in the Commerce Department's Telecommunications Opportunity Program (TOP), which is currently funded at \$20 million. This increase in funding would support partnerships between non-profits, foundations, companies, and state and local governments to:

- Develop applications of information technology that will help empower low-income Americans and communities;
- Demonstrate these applications on a pilot basis and evaluating the results;
- Develop strategies for replicating the results in other communities.

This is a highly successful and competitive program. Currently, the Commerce Department program can currently only fund 1 in 15 grants. A recent evaluation of the program found that every federal dollar generated an additional \$4 in matching funds, project expansions, and new spin-off activities, and that 90 percent of the projects funded during the first 2 years kept going even after federal funding had stopped.

The Administration could also increase support for the Institute for Museum and Library Services to expand "information literacy" programs in 80 communities (\$250,000 per community – for a total cost of \$20 million).

III. Communities

1. Increase support for Community Technology Centers

Current level of support for CTCs is \$32.5 million. One option would be to increase by \$100 million to \$132.5 million.

This complements the "access to the home" initiative by stimulating demand and providing training. Once people feel comfortable using a computer and the Internet in a Community Technology Center, they might purchase one for home use.

An additional \$100 million would fund an additional 1,000 centers - ten times the number we were able to fund with the first round of FY99 grants. We know that in the first round of funding, the Department of Education got 750 applications and was only able to fund 40 applications (some applicants supported multiple centers).

2. **Broadband Communities**

The Administration could propose an increase in programs that are designed to promote economic development such as EDA and the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service – targeted to greater use of telecommunications for economic development. The types of projects that would be supported include:

- Aggregation of demand from companies and public institutions to encourage telecommunications companies to build out their networks to rural areas. The cost of high-speed Internet access can be 10 times higher (\$2,000 vs. \$200) in rural areas than in urban areas because of the cost of sending traffic to a far-away network "point of presence."
- Better use of rights-of-way to speed deployment and encourage competition between multiple telecommunications companies
- Deployment of high-speed networks to inner-cities to provide employment that can be "out-sourced" – such as data entry, call centers, and entry-level programming. This also solves some of the biggest obstacles associated with welfare-to-work – lack of affordable child care and public transportation.
- Lower-cost connectivity to industrial parks and business incubators.
- Trials of wireless and other technologies to find more affordable broadband alternatives for rural communities.

Cost: \$50 - \$100 million for projects in 50 urban and rural communities - half in EDA and half in Rural Utility Service.

IV. **Tax proposals**

Obviously, there are some tax incentives that could be part of the "digital divide" initiative -- including:

- Increased incentives for donations of computers - change in "basis" or increase the range of eligible recipients to community technology centers or other non-profits.
- Version of Dorgan technology training tax credit that is just targeted to low-income communities, and would include cost of home PC as eligible expense for employer.

Summary of costs

1. Universal access to the home

- \$100 million for PC/Internet access in 800,000 low-income households - \$300 million over 3 years

2. Content/applications for digital opportunity

- Triple Telecommunications Opportunity Program - \$40 million
- Help libraries in 80 communities establish "information literacy" programs - \$20 million

3. Communities

- Increase Community Technology Center program to \$132.5 million - establish 1,000 new centers - \$100 million
- 50 urban and rural "broadband communities" -- \$50 - \$100 million

4. Tax credits

- Expanded computer donation tax credit. ???
- Technology training tax credit -- just for low-income. ???

Total: ~ \$310 - \$360 million

Smaller package

1. Universal access to the home

- 500,000 households - \$60 million

2. Content/applications for digital opportunity

- Double Telecommunications Opportunity Program - \$20 million
- Help libraries in 80 communities establish "information literacy" programs - \$20 million

3. Communities

- Increase Community Technology Center program to \$100 million - establish 675 new centers - \$67.5 million
- 25 urban and rural "broadband communities" -- \$25 - \$50 million

Cost: \$192.5 - \$217.5 million

PRESIDENT CLINTON VISITS BROOKLYN, NEW YORK AND THE WALL STREET PROJECT TO ANNOUNCE HIS FY2001 NEW OPPORTUNITY AGENDA

January 13, 2000

TODAY, PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL VISIT BROOKLYN, NEW YORK AND THE WALL STREET PROJECT TO ANNOUNCE FURTHER ELEMENTS OF HIS NEW OPPORTUNITY AGENDA. Today, President Clinton will announce his FY2001 New Markets agenda and highlight the need for continued efforts by the private sector to invest in distressed areas. This agenda includes:

- A major expansion of his New Markets and Empowerment Zone Tax Credits.
- A new initiative known as *First Accounts*, to bring the "unbanked" into the financial mainstream.
- An invitation to corporate leaders to participate in a roundtable at the White House to discuss how the business community can build upon the success of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

President Clinton will kick off the day with Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez who will be the lead sponsor in the House of Representatives of the New Markets Venture Capital legislation, a key component of the President's New Markets initiative. This legislation was introduced last year in the Senate (S.1594) by Senator John Kerry. The event will take place at Brooklyn's Boricua College where they will announce the opening of a new Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the creation of an innovative new lending cooperative, that will focus on Brooklyn's Hispanic business community.

President Clinton will then speak to the Wall Street Project, founded by the Reverend Jesse Jackson, where he will address 2,000 corporate leaders to discuss the importance of corporate involvement and investment in underserved areas. At each stop, the President will emphasize his strong commitment to developing and passing in to law a bi-partisan legislative initiative based on the agreement that he and Speaker Hastert announced last November.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL BE JOINED TODAY BY CONGRESSWOMAN NYDIA VELAZQUEZ AND OTHER CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADERS.

These include: Victor Alicea (President and Founder, Boricua College), Marjorie Magner (CEO of the Consumer Bank, Citigroup), Francis Byrd, (Assistant Vice President, Bank Popular), Woodrow C. McCutchen (President, National Association of Small Business Development Centers), James King (Director, New York State Small Business Development Centers), Steve Kravitz (President and Chairman of Loan Source), Terry Ludwig (Executive Director, Accion New York), and Andrew Murstein (President, Medallion Financial Corporation).

IN BROOKLYN, CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADERS JOINED THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESSWOMAN VELAZQUEZ TO ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING COMMITMENTS FOR BROOKLYN, NEW YORK:

- The Opening of a New Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Boricua College. This Small Business Development Center which is housed in Brooklyn's Boricua College will focus on the area's Hispanic business community by providing assistance in an effective, culturally-conscious environment. The program will deliver business counseling, training and technical assistance in all aspects of small development business management. The following commitments have been made to the Center:

- ✓ **SBDC program:** \$250,000
- ✓ **Citigroup:** \$100,000 per year for next three years
- ✓ **Boricua College:** \$22,000 plus donation of space
- ✓ **Banco Popular:** \$7.500

✓ **Bell Atlantic: \$35,000.** Bell Atlantic has provided prime office space at the Metroplex facility in the heart of Brooklyn's business district as an SBDC outreach location. They have also provided free internet access to the SBDC.

- Creation of a New Lending Co-operative Affiliated with Small Business Development Center. The New Markets Lending Cooperative is an innovative program that will bring together several levels of capital funding to Brooklyn. The Cooperative will be a first-of-its kind effort in Brooklyn, a much-needed vehicle to bring debt and equity capital to business owners in this predominantly Hispanic neighborhood. The Cooperative is a pool of resources that will be available to small business owners and has obtained commitments totaling over \$13 million in loans and venture capital for the Brooklyn community. The program will offer assistance for loans and venture capital through three participating partners – Accion New York, a Community Development Financial Institution and microlender that will provide \$5 million in microloans over the next two years to Brooklyn, the Loan Source, a Small Business Lending Company that will provide \$3-5 million in SBA-guaranteed loans, and the Medallion Financial Corporation, a Specialized Small Business Investment Company that will provide \$5 million in loans and venture capital.

THE PRESIDENT WILL ALSO ADDRESS THE WALL STREET PROJECT LUNCHEON ON HIS FY2001 NEW MARKETS AGENDA AND DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES.

In the afternoon, the President will travel to Reverend Jesse Jackson's Wall Street Project to address a luncheon of 2,000 of the country's corporate leaders. During his remarks, the President will highlight his new opportunity agenda and emphasize the importance of Corporate America's participation in the economic development of underserved communities around the country. He will extend an invitation to corporate leaders to participate in a roundtable discussion at the White House to explore how the business community can build on success of CRA. In addition, the National Academy Foundation is signing two formal Memoranda of Understanding with two federal agencies: the Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration.

- Sanford Weill, on Behalf of the National Academy Foundation (NAF), signed two Memoranda of Understanding with SBA and Department of Commerce to Increase Opportunities to Youth. Today, Sanford I. Weill, Chairman of the National Academy Foundation by and Co-CEO of Citigroup signed two MOUs, one with SBA and one with Department of Commerce which raise awareness of opportunities to support the development of youth. These newly formed alliances will help provide opportunities for mentoring and internships; to advise NAF on curriculum development and public service opportunities for high school students.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New York, New York)

For Immediate Release

January 13, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT WALL STREET PROJECT LUNCHEON

Sheraton Towers Hotel
New York, New York

2:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. The reason we were scurrying around up here is that Reverend Jackson had taken my speech. (Laughter.) That's okay, I've taken a lot of his over the years. (Laughter.)

Sandy, thank you for that wonderful introduction. I'm glad one of us made money out of this administration. (Applause.) I want to congratulate Robert Knowling and my longtime, wonderful friend, Barry Gordy, on their awards. I thank Mr. Iverson and Mr. Steinberg for supporting this important work. I thank Secretary Slater and our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez, for being here with me. And I think Secretary Cuomo spoke here earlier today. He and the Vice President have done a wonderful job with our empowerment zone program and the other HUD economic development initiatives.

I want to say a special word of appreciation here today to the members of Congress who are here -- Congressman Rangel, Valasquez, Owens, Maloney, Engel, and Jackson. (Applause.) And my personal thanks to two former members of Congress who are here, the leader of the NAACP, Kweisi Mfume -- (applause) -- and my good friend, Reverend Floyd Flake, who went home to his mission in life. And I thank him. (Applause.)

I saw my friend, Mayor Willie Brown from San Francisco, and we congratulate him on his reelection. (Applause.) And former Mayor David Dinkins of New York -- thank you, Mayor Dinkins. (Applause.) And our Comptroller, Carl McCall, and so many others who are here. (Applause.)

I want to thank Hugh Price for the Urban League's work. And I'd like to thank all the business leaders here who have helped the whole effort that Reverend Jackson has made over the last several years, but I would like to say a special word of appreciation to three who have been close to me and also close to Reverend Jackson -- Willie Gary and Ron Burkle and Dennis Rivera, thank you all very much for what you have done. (Applause.)

Now, we've got a lot of folks here who have done things, but I want to say also how much I appreciate Reverend Jackson's family -- Jackie and all their wonderful children. They've been great friends to Hillary and to Chelsea and me, and I just get a big rush every time they stand up and get introduced. It's quite exciting. (Applause.) Reverend, you've done a lot of important things in your life, but those kids are the most important, by a long, good way, and I want to thank you.

Let me say, I always look forward to this event, but it keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger. If it gets any bigger we're going to have to start holding it in Yankee Stadium -- (laughter) -- and that's a good thing. I would like that very much.

You know, I'm just practicing for my -- did you see the way I got Barry up here and I took out the stand and then I picked up his glasses when he dropped them? I'm practicing for my role as a Senate spouse. (Laughter and applause.) Did you catch my wife on Letterman last night? Was she great, or what? (Applause.) You know, it's bad enough that I have to give up being President -- now I've got to give up being the funny one in my family. (Laughter.) Life is always teaching you lessons of humility. (Laughter.)

Although the press, you know, they keep saying I'm a lame duck. I think what a lame duck is, you know, you show up for one of these things and nobody else comes. (Laughter.) So I want to thank all of you for making me feel like I'm still President today. (Applause.)

Now, to the business at hand. We all know why we're here and we all know what we're supporting. I am profoundly grateful, not only as President, but as a citizen, for the work that Reverend Jackson has done with this Wall Street Project. I am profoundly grateful that so many business leaders have supported it.

I want to say, also, a special word of appreciation to the members of the Congress that I have already introduced, and to the current and former leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Representatives Waters, Clyburn, Roybal-Allard and Becerra. I want to thank Senators Sarbanes, Kerry, Robb, Rockefeller and Congressman LaFalce from New York, because they've been especially supportive of this New Markets Initiative.

Now, you heard Sandy Weill say some very kind things about the economic record of the administration. But I would like to put it in a little different context. It is true that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years; that in just a few weeks we'll have the longest economic expansion in the history of America, we'll then be over 20 million new jobs, surpassing the expansions that occurred in World War II when we were fully mobilized for war. It is true that we have the lowest recorded African American and Hispanic unemployment rates, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years. That's all true. But it's also true that the minority unemployment rate and the minority poverty rate is still about twice the national average.

I was just in Brooklyn with Nydia Velazquez to kick off a small business center with Aida Alvarez -- you heard her talking about it. In Brooklyn, a borough in New York City that has been very good to me and to the Vice President, the national unemployment rate is 4.1 percent; the Brooklyn unemployment rate is still over 9 percent. The national poverty rate down to about 11 percent; the Brooklyn poverty rate way over 25 percent. The national home ownership rate, 66 percent; Brooklyn home ownership rate about 28 percent.

A lot of good things are happening there. And the whole area has been reborn on the energy of new immigrants. And I feel very good about it long-term. But I want to make a point here. If we're in a position -- which we weren't in seven years ago because the whole country was in a mess, economically and otherwise -- but if now it is true that we have perhaps the best economy we've ever had -- instead of having the biggest debt in history, we're now paying the debt off for the first time in the history of the country -- the Treasury Department started buying the debt in early so we could provide more capital for the private sector at lower interest rates, and our goal is to have America debt free, the government debt free in 15 years -- now, if we're in a position to do that, there will never be, number one, a better time for us to bring economic opportunity to people and places that have been left behind. Number two, it has to be done in a partnership with the public and private sector, because we've still got a debt to pay off and an economy to keep strong and the government can't do this alone. This needs to be driven by private sector investment, private sector expertise, the kind of thing that will change for the long-term not only people, but whole neighborhoods and rural areas, Native American reservations, by empowering them to shape a different future for themselves.

If we can't do this now, we will never do this. We will never get around to doing this if we don't do it now. (Applause.) So, point number one, we have a moral obligation to use our prosperity at this moment, especially, to lift up the areas not only of New York City, but Upstate New York, which would rank 49th of all of our states in job creation -- if you

took the city and the suburbs out, the rest of New York would be 49th of the 50 states in job creation.

And there are lots of things that need to be done there that creative entrepreneurs can deal with, in terms of transportation and investment, lots of other issues. And all over America.

The second thing I want to say is this is in the economic self-interest of the people who are doing very well. The people whose stock has gone from five bucks to 55 bucks. Why? Why is that? Well, Sandy stole Bob Rubin from me, and he probably figures that now he's bullet-proof from whatever we do in the government, you know. But let me tell you, you would be astonished at the time we spent both when Secretary Rubin was there and after he left, in the White House and a few blocks down, the time Chairman Greenspan and his staff spend at the Federal Reserve thinking about the following question: How can we keep this going? How much longer can this go on, after we even eclipse the record of expansion in wartime in just couple of weeks -- how can we do it? How do economic expansions end?

Well, sometimes they just run out of steam. There's nobody left that doesn't have any loose money to buy more stuff. You know? And then, sometimes, they run out of steam because everybody starts making so much money that they ask for higher pay, or supplies get tight and they become so expensive they could get inflation in the economy, and then you have to raise interest rates to stop inflation, and the cure for stopping inflation also breaks the economic growth. Unemployment goes up, growth goes down, and it happens over and over again.

Have we sort of repealed the laws of the private economy? No, we haven't repealed it, but technology and open markets and competitiveness and productivity have changed it and made new things possible. But how are we going to keep this going?

Well, I would argue the only way to keep the growth going without inflation is to find both new businesses and new employees and new customers at the same time. If you have new people with money to spend and jobs to hold, then you can have growth without inflation -- so that if the unemployment rate in Brooklyn drops from 9.4 percent to 4.1 percent, where it is nationwide, because you've got a whole lot of new jobs there, and then those people that have the jobs spend their money there, that won't contribute to inflation, it will keep the economy going.

And the same thing is true all across the country. And don't forget, folks, this is not just an inner-city problem. One of the best things Jesse Jackson ever did was go to Appalachia. We were out there in Appalachia with this New Markets tour last summer, and this little courthouse town in West Virginia, and he

got a bigger hand than I did because he had been there before.
(Laughter.)

The face of -- today we celebrate the fact that the face of wealth is color-blind, and that there is an equal distribution of talent in our country. You also see that the face of poverty and deprivation and the lack of opportunity is color-blind. This is an American challenge.

We were in Appalachia -- we visited a company called Mid-South Electronics that now makes communications equipment -- some of you might buy it -- that makes its way onto the desktops of many Fortune 500 companies represented in this room. Ten years ago, in a distant place in Appalachia that's hard to get to, they had 40 employees. And now, thanks to the availability of capital, they have 650. Way back in the hills in Appalachia.

In East St. Louis, with the great Mel Farr, Jesse Jackson and I visited a large new Walgreen's store, first store that had been built in this distressed neighborhood in 30 years. And the manager of the store was a 24-year-old woman who just graduated from college a couple of years ago -- running that store with 30 employees. And I believe every one of them but two were older than her, and they thought she was great. And the neighborhood was coming alive because of capital.

In Mississippi, we met a woman who had been working for years in a small computer store and never made any money at all -- just in this little, bitty store in a town in Mississippi. She had no money in the bank and they were going to close her store. But she got an equity capital investment, and then she could get some loans. And she bought her business, where she had just been an employee all these years, but within a year, she had more than doubled the size of the business and was making good money. She went from modest wages to being a proud business owner.

And there are lots of stories like this everywhere. But for every story like it, in these distressed places there are 10 more people who could be this story and aren't yet. And that's why people like you come to events like this.

This country owes a lot to visionary business people who are part of this movement. We owe a lot to the members of Congress who are trying to help me pass my initiative, without which I could do nothing, and I thank them for being here. And we owe a lot to you, Jesse Jackson, for understanding that this was the next great frontier in the civil rights movement, years and years ago, and fighting for it all these years. (Applause.)

Now, here's what I'm going to try to do this year, in our last year in office -- to set up a framework that will enable us to bring opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind. First, I will resubmit, with certain changes, my

New Markets Initiative, the general idea that I want to give people the same incentives to put money in underdeveloped neighborhoods and towns in America that we give them today to put money into poor areas in Latin America and Africa and all over the developing world. (Applause.)

Now, I strongly support that, too. I believe that when Americans give people in distant villages a chance to build a decent life, they're more likely to be good citizens and to support democracy, and less likely to join the narco-traffickers or the people that are trying to corrupt governments and end freedom, or later try to cause problems in the world that the United States will have to deal with. So we need to keep reaching out there. But we can't say, at this moment of heightened prosperity and a real challenge to keep our growth going, that we're not going to give the very same opportunities to our own people.

Now, what are we going to do? First, I will propose a major expansion of the new markets and empowerment zones tax credits, to give investors tremendous incentives to give a long look to the underdeveloped areas in urban and rural America. I want to thank especially Representative Charles Rangel for the very large role that he has played in leading the charge on both these tax credits. (Applause.) I'll ask for more than twice the funding I asked for last year for this tax credit, to spur \$15 billion in new investment.

I'm also going to ask Congress to authorize two new components of our new markets agenda. First, our New Markets Venture Capital Firms, a program geared toward helping small and first-time entrepreneurs; and then America's private investment companies, modeled, as I said earlier, on the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, to help larger businesses expand or relocate to distressed, inner-city or rural areas. Now, together, all these components of the New Markets Initiative will leverage over \$20 billion of new equity investment in our underserved communities. (Applause.)

Here's how it works. Through our New Markets Venture Capital Initiative and the American Private Investment Corporation, we'll spur new investments in both small and large businesses by telling investors the following: If you put up \$1 of equity capital for new markets investments, we'll provide \$2 of government guaranteed loans. In some cases, we'll even defer interest payments for up to five years.

What is the practical impact of this? It says, if you're willing to take the chance of seeking a profit in the new markets with new partners, we'll help to lower your financing costs and some of your risks. Then, on top of that, the new markets tax credit will give investors a 25-percent tax credit on investments in the Private Investment Corporation, in the New Market Venture Capital Group, in community development banks, and

other funds that invest in our new markets. This will enable us, alone, to increase the amount this tax credit serves, from \$6 billion to \$15 billion dollars.

Now, is anybody going to, all of a sudden, put money into a sinkhole where they think they'll lose it? No, not unless we give you a 100-percent tax credit. But if you know there is a marginal increased risk, but a potential big reward, not only for your investment, but for our country as a whole, what these initiatives will do will say, hey, take a look at these places in America that have been left behind. And they're out there, and they're gifted people.

I ordered Christmas presents, a few Christmas presents on the Internet this year for the first time. But you know who my seller was? One of America's Indian tribes. When we went to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota -- do you think it's tough in Brooklyn -- do you know what the unemployment rate on the Pine Ridge Reservation is, because it's so far from everywhere? One of the most noble places in America, the home of the Oglala Sioux, the tribe of Crazy Horse -- their unemployment rate in this economy is 73 percent.

I met -- I was taken around through this neighborhood by this young woman who had had a very difficult childhood, but she was one of the most impressive, self-possessed, articulate people I have met in a long time her age. And I thought to myself, there is an equal distribution of talent and intelligence everywhere in our country, and it is wrong for these people to be denied good jobs, good education, good housing, decent businesses, and the opportunity to build a different kind of 21st century community. Now, this is wrong. (Applause.)

So I say to all of you again, I want you to help me pass this New Markets Initiative. I want you to help me increase the empowerment zone tax credits. And I want you to help me keep doing the things that are working. I want you to help me work with Vice President Gore and Secretary Cuomo to get a whole other round of empowerment zone communities, so we can put even more intense efforts there. And I want you to help me make it a nonpartisan deal.

The Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, a Republican from Illinois, joined Reverend Jackson and me and Congressman Bobby Rush and some others in Englewood, Illinois, recently, and he pledged to work with us to find common ground on these proposals. Economic opportunity should not be the political province of any particular party. Economic opportunity should be the birthright of every American. (Applause.)

Let me just mention one other thing I'm going to do, which is related to this, because I think it's important. Our new budget will carry a new initiative we call First Accounts to expand access to financial services to low-income Americans -- an

idea long championed by Maxine Waters and many other leaders in Congress. Today, it's hard for some of you to believe, but far too many families have no bank accounts at all. They wind up spending a lot of their precious money on unnecessary fees, therefore, when they pay bills or cash checks.

Under this First Accounts' initiative, we're going to work with financial institutions to encourage the creation of low-cost bank accounts for low-income families; to help bring more ATMs to safe places in low-income communities, like the post office; to provide training to help families manage household finances and build assets over time, which will work very nicely with the financial education efforts you're launching at this conference.

And then, finally, I want to convene a roundtable at the White House to build even greater awareness in the corporate community of the benefits of the Community Reinvestment Act. (Applause.) You've already heard a lot of talk about that, but we had to work hard to ensure that when we passed the Financial Modernization bill and expanded the powers and opportunities for banks, we expanded the CRA, as well, and kept it, instead of weakening it. That law has been on the books for over 20 years, with more than 95 percent of all the money loaned under it has occurred in the last five years. And I'm very proud of that because more than a \$1 trillion in long-term commitments have been made to invest in our communities.

So I say to you, we've got to do more of this. Especially when you put the responsibilities of financial institutions on the Community Reinvestment Act with all these incentives -- if we can pass them through Congress, we can have a flood of money into areas that have never before had it, to people that have never before been able to get a loan, in ways that are good for all the rest of us, because they'll keep this engine going with no inflation.

Anyway, that is the idea. And I loved all this New Markets tours we've done. And Reverend Jackson and I, many members of Congress, we've stopped at a lot of places where Presidents never go. And I'm having such a good time, we're going to do another one this spring. So, Reverend, you've got to clear your calendar, we're going to go. And we're going to specifically focus on something that I hope all of you will help us on. We're going to focus on the digital divide. (Applause.)

This very conference is being broadcast live over the Internet to people all over the world. But a lot of the people you're trying to reach don't have a computer, can't afford the hook-up. We have worked very hard, under the Vice President's leadership, to get something called the e-rate as a part of reform of the telecommunications system, which gives a couple of billion dollars in subsidies to schools and libraries around the country that are in low-income areas, so everybody can afford to be hooked up.

When we started five years ago, we had -- only about 14 percent of the schools in our country were connected to the Internet; now over 80 percent are. We're really working hard, and we've had a wonderful partnership with the private sector. But it's not enough for the schools.

I went to Hudson County, New Jersey, which has a lot of first-generation immigrants, in a school that had so many problems it was almost closed by the state. And then the principal of this high school not only started making sure all the immigrant kids whose first language was not English were trained on the computer, they started putting computers in the parents' home and showing them how to do it -- so that all these low-income working people could e-mail their parents, teachers, and their principals every day. The dropout rate went way down and the performance of these kids in a low-income neighborhood, most of them immigrant kids, rose above the state average of New Jersey.

We can do this if we close the digital divide.
(Applause.) Your company had a lot to do with that, and I thank you. (Applause.)

So, again, I say, you know, when you know something works and you know you ought to do it, you know, by the way, it will help you as well as help other people, you need your head examined if you don't do it.

I see this as a part of America making the most of this precious moment. This week -- I'll just close with this -- this week, I had one of the great, sort of personal encounters with beauty in my whole life. I flew to the Grand Canyon and I got there late at night. And I stayed in this old lodge built in 1905, which is right out on the edge of the Grand Canyon.

Thirty years ago, when I was a young man, not long after I met Hillary, I drove all the way to California to see her. And I stopped at the Grand Canyon late in the afternoon. And back then, you had greater access before we lawyers got hold of everything. And I crawled out on a ledge and I watched the sun set over the Grand Canyon for two hours. And you know, that canyon was formed over millions of years, and there are lots of layers of rock and lots of different shapes. So when the sun set, the light comes out of the canyon until it disappears, and it changes everything. So for the first time in my life, this week I got to see the sun rise over the Grand Canyon. So when it rises, it goes down into the canyon and has the same impact.

And I went there to set aside another million acres to protect it there, under authority that Presidents have had since Theodore Roosevelt got Congress to pass something called the Antiquities Act, in 1908. And really 100 years ago, the times

were -- bore a lot of similarities to today. We were becoming a nation of immigrants; we changed from being an agricultural country to an industrial country -- just like we're going from being an industrial country to an information-based global society now.

And Theodore Roosevelt said that the great hallmark of every young and growing society must be that it takes the long look ahead. It's a nice phrase, isn't it? So if we are what we dearly want our children and grandchildren to believe we are, we will take the long look ahead.

We'll deal with the challenge of the aging of America; the children of America; the need to balance work and family; the need to prove that we can improve the environment as we grow the economy; the need to put a human face on the global economy; the need to stand against the new threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, and the old demons of racial and ethnic and religious hatred around the world. But we need to start in the long look ahead with the clear understanding that this is the only time in the lifetimes of most of us here when we ever had a chance to give everyone their shot at the American dream.

When Martin Luther King was preparing to go to Chicago a long, long time ago, and Jesse Jackson was not still in high school, but he was very young -- (laughter) -- in preparation for Dr. King's arrival, Jesse launched Chicago's Operation Breadbasket, an effort to open the dairy, the grocery, the other segregated industries to African Americans. In just two years, he helped more than 3,000 men and women secure good jobs and an income that totaled over \$22 million a year. So decades ago, Chicago got a glimpse of how good business could be when more people could play, to use the Reverend's phrase. Now, everyone in America knows this. You are all here in recognition of this.

In a little more than a year, I'll just be a citizen again. And when I leave, I want to know that my country took the long look ahead, to give every poor person a chance to have the dignity that comes when your mind and your body and your spirit are engaged in productive labor for yourself and your family and your children.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

2:33 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New York, New York)

For Immediate Release

January 13, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO COMMUNITY, COLLEGE AND STUDENT LEADERS

Boricua College
Brooklyn, New York

11:55 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. You know, I have to tell you, I was sitting here listening to all the previous speakers and looking at the people in the audience, feeling very grateful for how good Brooklyn's been to me over the years, and thinking, this is why I ran for President. These are the people that deserve help, a hand up, a chance to work together and to live their dreams.

Enealia Nau, thank you for your wonderful words. Thank you for the power of your example. Thank you for the kind things you said about my wife, who, I should tell you, has been involved, as I was, for now over 15 years in these kind of endeavors. We brought a small development bank to our state, modeled on the Southshore Bank in Chicago, which did so much to revitalize difficult neighborhoods there. We started a micro-lending program and we're now spreading micro-lending all across America. And last year we made 2 million loans in poor villages in Latin America and Africa and Asia, as well, to help people everywhere -- (applause.)

I always like to come to New York and give my wife a plug. I thought she was going to run for office here, but after David Letterman last night, she may be trying to get his job instead. (Laughter.) I sat there and I said, you know, I thought I was supposed to be the funny one in this family. (Laughter.)

I want to thank Aida Alvarez for the wonderful job she's doing. She's the first Puerto Rican American ever to serve in a President's Cabinet, and she's doing quite -- (applause.) And I want to thank our HUD Deputy Secretary, Saul Ramirez, who has already been acknowledged. But he and Secretary Cuomo have

been real champions of economic development here in New York and across the country. I thank him.

President Alicea, thank you for having me here. I love to go to community-based educational institutions. I think they are in many ways the most successful institutions in America. They are entrepreneurial, creative, flexible and they give everybody a chance at the brass ring. And so I thank you.

I thank Jim King, the State Director of the Small Business Development Center, and Woodrow McCutchen, the President of the National Association of Small Business Development Centers. I want to thank all the people who put up the money so far. Thank you, Steve Kravitz, for making this day possible. I want to thank Marge Wagner (phonetic) and her boss, Sandy Weill, from CitiGroup, for donating \$100,000 to help launch this Boricua Small Business Development Center. I thank Accion and its representative for being here.

But most of all I want to say a word or two about Nydia Velazquez. She has one emotional level -- (laughter) -- intense. (Laughter.) She communicates one feeling only -- passion. (Laughter and applause.) When she asks you for something, you get the feeling that you can tell her yes now, or tell her yes later. (Laughter.) And in the end, you wind up with Enealia's pun on her last name; you decide to go for now. (Laughter.) So she will do anything, I mean anything, to get her way. (Laughter.)

She took a trip with me on Air Force One -- she gave dancing lessons to a Republican congressman just to try to get him to go -- (laughter and applause.) He was a very nice, attractive Republican, but being a Republican, he had rhythm problems. And he took care of it, you know. (Laughter and applause.) It was wonderful. I say that because I never want that to hurt her in her overwhelmingly Democratic district -- she was just trying to build more bridges the way she always does. (Laughter.)

It is also true that she was one of the first people to say to me, now that we had turned the American economy around, we had to reach out to the markets in America that had not turned around. And so, for all of you, the most important thing I can just say is, thank you, because you have proved that this can work, and, therefore, you have laid a very strong foundation for the legislation I'm going to ask Congress to pass this year.

Let me just say, for example, if you look at the work of the small business development centers in New York State alone -- let's just take New York State -- the five-year success rate of businesses getting off the ground here with the help of these local centers is an astonishing 95 percent.

Now, as you have heard, the center that will be here at Boricua College is getting a tremendous boost from the New Markets Lending Cooperative that Representative Velazquez has been so instrumental in creating. This will provide more than \$13 million in loans and venture capital for entrepreneurs like Ms. Nau. And many of them would not have access to capital in any other way.

Again, let me say I want to thank Accion, the Loan Source, Medallion Financial Corporation, all of them for their commitments to this cooperative. For hundreds of hardworking families in this community, you are underwriting the American Dream.

Over the past year, I've been to places that Presidents don't normally go. I've been to Watts -- I've been to Watts half a dozen times since I started running for office, but I went back to Watts. I've been to inner-city Newark, inner-city Atlanta, the poorest housing projects in Chicago, in East St. Louis, the barrios of South Phoenix and Hartford, rural and farming communities in my native state of Arkansas, and Mississippi and Kentucky. I've been to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, where the unemployment rate is 73 percent. In every one of these places, and here in Williamsburg, as well, I see potential, not hopelessness.

Now, here's the pitch I try to make when I'm not here to get support for many, many more endeavors of this kind. Seven years ago, when I started this odyssey as President, we had national economic distress, social decline, discredited government. But, today -- so we could be forgiven for concentrating on the big needs of the majority of the American people -- we had to turn the ship of state around.

But now we have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the first back-to-back balanced budget in 42 years -- surpluses.

We have, for the first time in my lifetime, a strong economy, an improving social fabric and the absence of severe domestic crises or foreign crises. Now, if we cannot fulfill our responsibility now to give every American a chance to live up to his or her God-given potential, when in the wide world will we ever get around to it? If we can do it now, when will we ever do it? (Applause.)

The second thing I want to do is to amplify a little bit on a point that Nydia made, that this is good business. A long way from this community in Washington, D.C., you would be amazed at how many hours we spend with our economic team -- and Aida has been part of it -- and how many hours they spend over at the Federal Reserve, with Mr. Greenspan, figuring out how can we

keep this economic growth going. In just a few weeks, this economic expansion will become the longest expansion in the history of the country, eclipsing those which occurred in war time, when we were fully mobilized.

Now, how do you keep it going? Well, what normally kills expansion? They run out of steam because there is no opportunity to grow, or the growth leads to inflation. And then to break inflation you have to raise interest rates. And that ends the economic expansion because people can't afford to borrow any money anymore, and they're paying more for what they've already borrowed. And they get in trouble, so that ends it.

Now, is there an inflation-free way to keep the economy going? Yes, there is. What is it? You have to find new markets and create new jobs and new businesses in places where they didn't exist before. If, at the same time, you create new businesses and new employees and new consumers, you will have more growth without inflation.

So in a funny way -- you need to know this -- what you're doing here is good for people in North Dakota where the unemployment rate is under 3 percent. It's good for people in New Hampshire where the unemployment rate is under three percent. Why? Because you are permitting them to having a growing American economy without inflation.

So every American should be supporting this -- not only because it's morally right to give people who are poor and who don't have access to capital the chance to live their dreams, but because it is in our self-interest as a nation if we want to keep this astonishing economic revival going.

And more and more people are coming to understand that. I thank the Congress on a bipartisan basis for already passing the first bill last year appropriating the funding, the first level of funding for my national New Markets Initiative. Now we're working to pass a set of tax incentives and loan guarantees to give companies the same financial incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give them to invest in poor areas in Latin America or Africa or Asia.

I support the incentives we give American businesses and financial institutions to invest overseas. Those people are our customers, too, and they're our partners for the future. And if we want democracy and peace and harmony to reign around the world, people need a chance to live their dreams, too. It's no accident that the crime rate goes down in America when the economy goes up. And the trouble rate goes down around the world when the economy goes up. But I do believe that people in America deserve to have the same opportunities from their government, and people in America with money deserve to have the same incentives from their government to help Americans that we

give them to help people in the rest of the world. And that's the basic theory behind the New Markets Initiative.

An essential component of this is the New Markets Venture Capital Fund, which your representative in Congress has played such an enormous role in creating. The idea is basically simple, but I want to explain it. For every dollar in equity capital you invest in America's new markets, we will give another dollar in government-backed loans, effectively doubling the investments. Altogether, we think this program that Nydia has helped to create will stimulate \$1.3 billion over five years in new investments to start up and expand businesses in areas that have been left behind in urban and rural America. And I thank her again for this remarkable thing. (Applause.)

Now, we still have to pass this. That's why we need her passion and focus, you see. (Laughter.) And it is a great testament to the efforts that she and others have made that not very long ago we had a big New Markets event in Chicago. And the Speaker of the House, who is from Illinois, joined us there -- just a couple of months ago. He made it clear that he is ready to work with us to come to agreement on legislation early this year. And I talked to him a few days ago, he reaffirmed that commitment. If we do get this kind of bipartisan agreement, I don't want you to forget that Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez will be a major reason why we get this done. (Applause.)

Let me just close with this. Think about where we are now as opposed to where we were a hundred years ago, right here. At the turn of the last century, Williamsburg was known as one of the best incubators of new businesses anywhere in America. It was positioned near a big port and a major market. The waterfront was packed with docks, shipyards, warehouses, metal works, sugar refineries and mills.

After World War II, everything changed. Today, you've heard your unemployment rate, your poverty rate and your rate of home ownership are more than twice the national average in the wrong direction. But the people here represent a whole new wave of American immigrants -- more than 90 ethnic groups represented within just a mile or so of where we are. And Williamsburg once again is becoming a remarkable incubator, from retailers and restaurants to bodegas and bookshops. And the economy is changing.

We had a huge wave of immigrants who came into New York City 100 years ago from all over the world, just as people began to move from rural areas in America to the city, because the economy changed from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy. And America was changing with it, and people saw hope. Well, the economy has changed again. And for 30 years, Brooklyn bore the brunt of it, as the industrial economy shrank, particularly in the number of employees it took to produce things

and manufacture them. And we developed a new information-based economy in an increasingly globalized society.

But we're hooking into that now with things like information services. There's a tremendous opportunity out there for people who will help do what Enealia Nau is doing -- now. (Laughter.) And this represents a clear understanding that most of the job growth is coming in America from small businesses, and most people who start small businesses have a good idea of what they want to do, but they may not know how to do it, or all of the other stuff you've got to do just to do what you want to do and what you're trained and skilled to do.

So this is a big part of America continuing its growth and using literally the only chance in my lifetime, which is getting a little longer as the days go by, the only chance in my lifetime we have ever had to give every American who is willing to work the chance to live the American dream.

So I want to say again how profoundly grateful I am to all of you, to say thank you and Dios los bendiga. Bless you. (Applause.)

END

12:12 P.M. EST

**THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION:
FROM DIGITAL DIVIDE TO DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY
February 2, 2000**

Today, President Clinton will unveil a comprehensive proposal to help bridge the Digital Divide and to help create digital opportunity for all Americans. This issue has also been a top priority for Vice President Gore, who has worked to bridge the Digital Divide by ensuring that all of our children have access to educational technology. Access to computers and the Internet and the ability to effectively use this technology are becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political and social life. Unfortunately, unequal access to technology and high-tech skills by income, educational level, race, and geography could deepen and reinforce the divisions that exist within American society. President Clinton believes that we must make access to computers and the Internet as universal as the telephone is today -- in our schools, libraries, communities, and homes.

To make the most of these new opportunities, the President believes we must:

- Broaden access to technologies such as computers, the Internet, and high-speed networks;
- Provide people the skilled teachers and the training they need to master the information economy;
- Promote online content and applications that will help empower all Americans to use new technologies to their fullest potential.

President Clinton will announce specific proposals in his FY2001 budget to help accomplish these goals and help create digital opportunity for more Americans -- including \$2 billion in tax incentives to encourage private sector activities such as computer donations, and \$380 million in new and expanded initiatives to serve as a catalyst for public-private partnerships.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S 2001 BUDGET INITIATIVES

1. \$2 billion over 10 years in tax incentives to encourage private sector donation of computers, sponsorship of community technology centers, and technology training for workers.
2. \$150 million to help train all new teachers entering the workforce to use technology effectively.
3. \$100 million to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods.
4. \$50 million for a public/private partnership to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families.
5. \$45 million to promote innovative applications of information and communications technology for under-served communities.
6. \$25 million to accelerate private sector deployment of broadband networks in under-served urban and rural communities.
7. \$10 million to prepare Native Americans for careers in Information Technology and other technical fields.

To Help Mobilize Public/Private Partnerships To Close the Digital Divide, President Clinton Will Lead A New Markets Trip This April: Closing the Digital Divide requires creative partnerships between industry, non-profit organizations and government. That's why President Clinton will lead a New Markets trip this April designed to mobilize a significant private and public effort to close the digital divide. This trip, which will include leading high-tech CEOs, will highlight communities that are using information technology to enhance our children's education, expand access to life-long learning, and create economic growth and high-tech, high-wage jobs.

THE CLINTON-GORE AGENDA FOR CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY

Private sector competition and rapid technological progress are powerful forces for bridging the digital divide and for making Information Age tools available for more and more Americans. The information technology industry is able to double the amount of computing power available at a given price every 12-18 months, and is now selling low-cost computers and "information appliances" -- such as specialized Internet access devices. Some companies are even offering free, advertiser-supported Internet access. By working with the private sector and community-based organizations, the Administration can accelerate the trend of expanded access.

But access to technology is only the first step. We also need to give more people the skills they need to use technology, promote content and applications of technology that will help empower under-served communities, and ensure that our teachers can use technology effectively in the classroom. Below is a brief description of the initiatives that President Clinton and Vice President Gore are proposing to help accomplish these goals:

- \$2 billion over 10 years in tax incentives to encourage private sector donation of computers, sponsorship of community technology centers, and technology training for workers:** President Clinton's budget includes \$2 billion in tax incentives to encourage companies to donate computers to schools, libraries and community technology centers, to sponsor schools, libraries, and community technology centers in designated Empowerment Zones, and to provide basic computer training, workplace literacy, or other basic education for their employees.
 - **Encouraging companies to donate computers.** The President proposes to extend and expand an enhanced tax deduction to provide companies with an incentive to donate computers to schools, libraries and computer technology centers. This enhanced deduction allows companies to deduct more than the cost of their donation. Under current law, this enhanced deduction applies to donations of computers to schools only and expires after the year 2000. The President's proposal would extend this provision through June 30, 2004 and would expand it to donations to public libraries or community technology centers in Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, and high-poverty areas.
 - **Promoting corporate sponsorship of schools, libraries and community technology centers.** The President proposes tax relief to encourage companies to sponsor schools and community technology centers in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities and targeted low-income areas. The President's proposal would allocate credits for \$16 million in corporate sponsorship to each of the 31 existing Empowerment Zones and 10 proposed new Empowerment Zones and \$4 million in corporate sponsorship for each of the more than 80 Enterprise Communities. In total, the President's proposal would help support up to nearly \$1 billion in annual sponsorships to help improve schools and community technology centers.
 - **Supporting technology training for workers.** The President's proposal would provide targeted tax relief to encourage companies to provide basic computer training, workplace literacy, or other basic education for employees that lack the basic skills to succeed in the modern workplace. Companies would be allowed to take a 20 percent tax credit for up to \$5,250 in annual expenses per employee. Eligible employees generally would not have received a high school degree or its equivalent.
- \$150 million to help train all new teachers entering the workforce use technology effectively in the classroom:** Under the leadership of President Clinton and Vice President Gore, the United States has made enormous progress in connecting schools to the Internet, and increasing the number of modern computers in the classroom. However, access to computers and the Internet will not help students achieve high academic standards unless teachers are as comfortable with a computer as they are with a chalkboard. President Clinton's budget calls for \$150 million in Department of Education grants -- double the last year's investment of \$75 million -- to ensure that all new teachers entering the workforce are technologically literate and can integrate technology into the curriculum. The need for this investment is clear. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 20 percent of teachers report that they are "very well prepared" to integrate technology into classroom. And over the next 10 years, K-12 schools will need to hire 2 million new teachers to fill the vacancies left by retiring teachers and to accommodate increasing student populations.

- 3. \$100 million to create up to 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural communities:** The President's budget more than triples the Department of Education's support for Community Technology Centers - from \$32.5 million in FY2000 to \$100 million in FY2001. This initiative, championed by Congresswoman Maxine Waters was initially funded at \$10 million in fiscal year 1999. The goal of the initiative is to help close the "digital divide" by providing computers and Information Age tools to children and adults that are not able to afford them at home. These community technology centers will help empower hundreds of thousands of low-income children and adults in a variety of ways. Children will be able to improve their performance in school by having access to high-quality educational software after school and prepare for the high-tech workplace of the 21st century by getting certified with an information technology skill. Adults will be able to use computers and the Internet to take a self-paced adult literacy course; get access to America's Job Bank to see what jobs are available; learn to type up a resume and cover letter using word processing software; learn to start up their own "micro-enterprise" or Web-based business, or acquire new training. A study sponsored by the National Science Foundation confirms that Community Technology Centers are helping to bridge the digital divide. Of the users surveyed: 62 percent had incomes of less than \$15,000; 65 percent took computer classes to improve their job skills; and 41 percent got homework help or tutoring at the center.
- 4. \$50 million for a public/private partnership to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families:** The President's budget includes a new \$50 million Department of Commerce pilot program to expand access to computers and the Internet for low-income families, and to give these families the skills they need to use these new Information Age tools effectively. This new program will provide competitive grants to public-private partnerships at the local level. Potential partners might include: local school districts seeking to expand parental involvement in education; high-tech companies willing to provide discounts on computers and access; libraries offering training on "information literacy"; employers seeking to upgrade the skills of their workforce using distance learning, and government agencies at all levels seeking to save taxpayer dollars through the electronic delivery of government services. The Administration will continue to work with the private sector and non-profit organizations on the most effective way to design this program.
- 5. \$45 million to promote innovative applications of information technology for under-served communities:** President Clinton's budget will increase the investment in the Department of Commerce's highly-successful Technology Opportunities Program (TOI*) to \$45 million -- triple the current level of \$15 million. This program encourages innovative applications of information technology that help empower low-income communities -- public health information systems that raise childhood immunization rates in inner-cities, tele-mentoring for at-risk youth, and electronic networks that strengthen local communities by fostering communication and collaboration.
- 6. \$25 million to accelerate private sector deployment of high-speed networks in under-served urban and rural communities:** High-speed Internet access is becoming as important to the economic vitality of a community as roads and bridges are today. The President will propose a new \$25 million program at the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture to accelerate private sector deployment of broadband networks in under-served urban and rural communities -- using grants and loan guarantees. The potential payoff from these kinds of investments is enormous. One company, for example, has helped people move from "welfare-to-work" by connecting their community with the high-speed networks needed to support telecommuting. This solves some of the biggest barriers associated with welfare-to-work -- lack of childcare and transportation.
- 7. \$10 million to prepare Native Americans for careers in information technology and other technical fields:** The National Science Foundation will support efforts by tribal colleges to increase the number of Native Americans who are prepared to pursue careers in information technology and other technical fields. The ability to use technology is becoming increasingly important in the workplace, and jobs in the rapidly growing information technology sector pay almost 80 percent more than the average private sector wage.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Access to computers and the Internet and the ability to effectively use this technology are becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political and social life. People are using the Internet to find lower prices for goods and services, work from home or start their own business, acquire new skills using distance learning, and make better informed decisions about their healthcare needs. The ability to use technology is becoming increasingly important in the workplace, and jobs in the rapidly growing information technology sector pay almost 80 percent more than the average private sector wage.

Technology, used creatively, can also make a big difference in the way teachers teach and students learn. In some classrooms, teachers are using the Internet to keep up with the latest developments in their field, exchange lesson plans with their colleagues, and communicate more frequently with parents. Students are able to log on to the Library of Congress to download primary documents for a history paper, explore the universe with an Internet-connected telescope used by professional astronomers, and engage in more active "learning by doing." Students are also creating powerful Internet-based learning resources that can be used by other students – such as award-winning Web sites on endangered species, the biology of sleep, human perception of sound, and an exploration of the American judicial system.

Access to computers and the Internet has exploded during the Clinton-Gore Administration. Unfortunately, there is strong evidence of a "digital divide" -- a gap between those individuals and communities that have access to these Information Age tools and those who don't. In some instances, this divide is actually widening. A July 1999 report from the Department of Commerce, based on December 1998 Census Department data, revealed that:

- **Better educated Americans more likely to be connected.** Between 1997 and 1998, the technology divide between those at the highest and lowest education levels increased 25%. In 1998, those with a college degree are more than *eight times* likely to have a computer at home and nearly *sixteen times* as likely to have home Internet access as those with an elementary school education.
- **The gap between high- and low-income Americans is increasing.** In the last year, the divide between those at the highest and lowest income levels grew 29%. Households with incomes of \$75,000 or higher are more than *twenty times* more likely to have access to the Internet than those at the lowest income levels, and more than *nine times* as likely to have a computer at home.
- **Whites more likely to be connected than African-Americans or Hispanics.** The digital divide is also persistent and growing along racial and ethnic lines. Whites are more likely to have access to the Internet from home than African-Americans or Hispanics have from *any* location. African-American and Hispanic households are roughly *two-fifths* as likely to have home Internet access as white households. The gaps between white and Hispanic households, and between white and African-American households, are now more than six percentage points larger than they were in 1994. However, for incomes of \$75,000 and higher, the divide between whites and African-Americans has narrowed considerably in the last year.
- **Rural areas less likely to be connected than urban users.** Regardless of income level, those living in rural areas are lagging behind in computer ownership and Internet access. At some income levels, those in urban areas are 50% more likely to have Internet access than those earning the same income in rural areas. Low income households in rural areas are the least connected, with connectivity rates in the singles digits for both computers and Internet access.

In addition, data from the National Center for Education Statistics reveals a "digital divide" in our nation's schools. As of the fall of 1998, 39 percent of classrooms of poor schools were connected to the Internet, as compared to 62 percent for wealthier schools.

A STRONG RECORD OF WORKING TO CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked hard to close the digital divide, and to help create opportunity for more Americans in the Information Age.

- President Clinton and Vice President Gore have set a national goal of **ensuring that every child is technologically literate**. In addition to preparing children for the high-tech workplace of the 21st century, technology can help change the way teachers teach and students learn. Teachers can communicate more frequently with parents, keep up with the latest developments in their field, and exchange lesson plans with their colleagues. Students can conduct research using primary source material, learn the principles of genetics by breeding virtual fruit flies, and learn astronomy by using a professional telescope located 3,000 miles from their classroom.
- **As a result of the Clinton-Gore educational technology initiative:**
 - The number of classrooms connected to the Internet has increased from 3% in 1994 to 51% in 1998.
 - The number of schools connected to the Internet has increased from 35% in 1994 to 89% in 1998.
 - The "e-rate", part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, is providing \$2.25 billion in 20% - 90% discounts to connect schools and libraries to the Internet, with the deepest discounts going to the poorest schools that need it most. The e-rate alone has provided Internet access for children in more than 1 million classrooms.
 - Our total investment in educational technology at the federal level (including the e-rate) has increased from \$23 million in 1993 to over \$3 billion today.
 - Grants supported by the Department of Education are training 400,000 new teachers to use technology effectively in the classroom.

In addition, President Clinton and Vice-President Gore have worked to:

- **Expand access to technology for people with disabilities:** President Clinton and Vice President Gore have been strong supporters of efforts to make technology more accessible for people with disabilities. Recent actions by the Federal Communications Commission will help ensure that telecommunications equipment, such as cellular phones, is designed to be accessible for people with disabilities.
- **Expand access to technology in under-served communities:** In addition to the Community Technology Center program, HUD Sec. Andrew Cuomo has created approximately 500 Neighborhood Network learning centers that bring state of the art technology to publicly-assisted housing across America. HUD's Neighborhood Networks are innovative private/public partnerships that establish computer-based multi-service centers to help people in publicly-assisted housing learn critical computer skills and prepare for 21st century jobs.
- **Ensure that the Administration makes closing the Digital Divide a top priority.** In December, 1999, President Clinton directed members of the Cabinet to take specific actions to address the digital divide: President Clinton is directing members of his Cabinet (Secretaries of Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor) to take specific steps to close the Digital Divide, including:
 - Continuing to measure the nature and extent of the digital divide by examining the importance of income, education, race, gender, geography and age to Americans' access to Information Age tools;
 - Expanding the network of Community Technology Centers to provide access to technology for those American who can't afford it;
 - Promoting applications of the Internet that will empower low-income families, such as the ability to start their own business; and
 - Upgrading the IT skills of workers in low-income communities.

*John (Gann)
Chris
Spurling
Echaveste*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 18, 2000

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Podesta
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Spurling
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

**FROM: GENE SPERLING
MARIA ECHAVESTE
STEPHANIE STREETT**

**SUBJECT: APRIL PRESIDENTIAL NEW MARKETS TRIP TO BRIDGE THE
DIGITAL DIVIDE**

BACKGROUND

As you know, you will travel the week of April 9th across the United States to continue to bring attention to the need to bring digital opportunity to youth, families and communities. We hope that this trip will generate momentum, excitement and concrete commitments, as well as provide a national framework for government, private sector and non-profit actions to close the digital divide and create digital opportunity. Similar to the first two New Markets trip in July and November, you will be joined by a congressional delegation, community leaders, and corporate executives where you will make announcements about new private sector investments and initiatives as well as partnerships between the corporate, non-profit and government sectors to bridge the digital divide.

PROPOSED ITINERARY FOR APRIL TRIP

- Monday, April 10: East Palo Alto, CA and
A Native American reservation in New Mexico
- Tuesday, April 11: Detroit, MI and
A rural community in North Carolina

We would also develop creative ways to use the Internet and other technology to involve multiple sites around the country.

At the last event in North Carolina, we propose that you announce a future event/trip that would focus on bringing digital opportunity to Americans with disabilities.

KEY DIGITAL DIVIDE ACTIONS

Although this memo focuses specifically on the April Digital Divide trip, we have provided you with an outline of key digital divide actions we recommend for the upcoming months.

April 4th: Call to Action Event and Kick-off for April Trip

- We have circulated a "Call to Action" to major corporations, non-profits, and individuals to sign to show their support for our two national goals to provide digital opportunity to all Americans. These goals are:
 - Bringing 21st Century learning tools to every child in every school
 - Bringing digital opportunity to every family and community
- On April 4th, you will host an event at the White House to announce your "Call to Action" and demonstrate the widespread support for your two national goals. This event will provide you with the opportunity to recognize the hundreds of corporations, non-profits, civil rights groups, unions and other community organizations that have signed on to the National Call as well as the need to build partnerships to provide comprehensive solutions to the digital divide.
- This event is also an opportunity for you to preview the trip and talk about the on-going Administration and private sector efforts to create digital opportunity for children, adults and communities all over the country.

April 10-11: Digital Divide Trip

- This trip will provide the opportunity for you to highlight meaningful, lasting efforts that can be sustained. See below for more detailed information.

Follow-Up Report

- After the trip, in order to continue with our commitment to create digital opportunity for all Americans, we propose that a follow-up report be issued in the summer that would describe new and existing commitments to close the digital divide. This could help disseminate best practices and highlight commitments that were not featured in the trip.

Connected Communities Day

- We are also proposing a "Connected Communities" day in the late fall to maintain momentum and generate grassroots activity, building on the highly successful NetDay model. Since we could not organize this ourselves, we would work to ensure that there was sufficient outside support before launching this.

PROPOSED PLAN FOR APRIL DIGITAL DIVIDE TRIP

DAY ONE

Site 1: East Palo Alto, California

East Palo Alto is a low-income urban community in the heart of the Silicon Valley. Over 80 percent of the students in local K-8 schools are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches. The latest data available indicates that 21 percent of East Palo Alto residents had incomes below the federally designated poverty level. Despite its geographic proximity to Silicon Valley, the center of the high-tech world, East Palo Alto residents are struggling. Much of the community lacks the skills necessary to succeed technology-based skills. Going to East Palo Alto would demonstrate that even in the shadow of Silicon Valley, there is still a substantial divide.

Message: Importance of Motivation

- At every briefing where we have discussed the Digital Divide, the issue of motivation has consistently come up, particularly with underserved communities. While the price of computers is continuing to decline, and some companies are beginning to offer free Internet access, not enough has been done to demonstrate why gaining access to technology is so important.
- You could use this first event of the trip to highlight this issue and bring together a number of major CEOs, celebrities, minority entrepreneurs as well as low-income youth who have obtained high-tech jobs.
- This would help motivate underserved communities (especially youth) to "get connected" and become technologically literate by stressing the economic opportunities in the high tech world.

Potential Site Visits and Events

- You could visit a high school to highlight the need for information and technological literacy for young people and adults.
- You could begin the event with a roundtable with major CEOs where you could highlight corporate commitments and discuss the importance of technology and the opportunities available for both youth and adults in schools and communities.
- You could then move to the school auditorium, where you could give opening remarks that would frame the importance of motivating both youth and adults to use technology.
 - ✓ You would be joined on stage in an informal setting by two celebrities (i.e. Magic Johnson), a minority entrepreneur and a young adult who has acquired a job in the high-tech field.
 - ✓ This event will provide an opportunity for you and the other participants to speak about the many doors that can be opened through technology.
 - ✓ This would also allow the participants on stage tell their stories about how technology made a difference in their lives. Young people who are hooked up to the event via the Internet from schools in other parts of the country could ask questions and interact with you and the other participants.

Key Commitments for East Palo Alto Event

Public Service Announcements

- You could announce the kick-off of a major Public Service Announcement campaign with celebrities and sports stars to motivate young people and adults to use computers and explore the Internet. This could include a "no fear, no shame" campaign for those adults who may be reluctant to admit that they don't know how to use technology.

AT&T

- You could announce a \$1.2 million grant over four years from AT&T to create an Academy of Information Technology, a high-school curriculum to prepare students for the IT industry. The academy would be in Oakland, California.

Americorps / PowerUP

- You could announce the commitment by Americorps to significantly increase the number of volunteers as PowerUP scales up the number of national sites. PowerUP is a major initiative by AOL, Gateway, and other companies to expand access to technology for under-served youth in community centers and schools.

Yahoo!

- Yahoo! has agreed to commit \$1 million in Internet banner PSAs to recruit technology workers to join Americorps and other volunteer organizations to serve as technology workers. Yahoo! has also committed \$1.5 million to create "Camp Yahoo!", a training program for non-profits, CTCs and other community groups (including the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and PowerUP) around the country.

3Com

- You could also announce 3Com's new "Connected Entrepreneur Awards Program", a quarterly award program highlighting successful small businesses that use networking technology to offer innovative products and/or services to their communities.
 - ✓ The Program which is a partnership between 3Com and the YWCA of the U.S.A., encourages small businesses to institute mentoring programs that educate youth, particularly young girls and women, to the benefits of high technology in the workplace and to create an overall positive learning experience.
 - ✓ 3Com will reward these "economic heroes" by providing their small businesses with the technology tools that enable them to continue to succeed. In return, the honorees commit to mentor young girls and others who come to the YWCA for assistance.
 - ✓ 3Com will also announce the creation of the YWCA TechGYRLS, a program to raise girls' interest, confidence and competence in the area of technology. They also plan to announce their first round of awards throughout the country.
- You could also announce another 3Com/YWCA program called NetPrepGYRLS that will offer high-school aged girls training in computer networking that could lead to industry-standard certification. 3Com and YWCA expect 600 girls will be trained at 30 NetPrepGYRLS programs around the country.

Intel and Tech Corps

- You could announce a partnership between TechCorps and Intel that would provide free software for students to develop living history websites to create a virtual community of living histories on the web.

Qualcomm

- The company has also committed to assist in the deployment of educational technology in San Diego area schools, and other institutions, including high speed Internet access, deployment of PCs, support of technology-focused curricula, and related teacher training and technical support.

Department of Education

- You could announce that a number of deans of colleges of education have agreed to work with us to ensure that all new teachers are prepared to use technology effectively in the classroom. Currently, most schools of education do not adequately prepare new teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum.
- You could announce the Department of Education's Technology Innovation Challenge Grants (3 grants totaling \$6 million) and Star School awards. (4 grants totaling \$5.5 million)

Site 2: Native American Reservation in New Mexico

As you know, Native American communities face major economic and social challenges. A stop in Indian Country will allow you to highlight these difficulties and focus on how private and public sector investments can help bring digital opportunity to Native Americans.

Message: Bringing Digital Opportunity to Indian Country

- You could use this event to focus on access to technology as a vehicle for economic development to help bring employment opportunities to Native Americans by, for example, enabling more small Native American businesses to sell goods on-line.

Potential Site Visits and Events

- You could visit a tribal college and highlight the programs that the school has developed to promote economic development through technology and help provide training and job skills to its students.

Key Commitments for Indian Country

America On-Line (AOL)

- You could announce \$1 million in the AOL Foundation's Digital Divide Grants, one of which will be in Indian country.

Compaq Computers and TechCorps

- You could announce a national expansion of "Techs4schools", a new online mentoring initiative that connects IT professionals with remote and underserved schools to give them access to much-needed technical support and advice.
- Compaq, in partnership with Tech Corps, currently has 12 pilot sites (one on an Indian reservation in New Mexico) and has decided to fully fund the program so that it will be available to all schools nationwide in April. You could also encourage Federal government IT workers to volunteer their expertise to be on-line technology mentors.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

- You could announce the FCC's proposal to increase funding under the Lifeline program so that every member of a federally recognized Indian tribe who is income eligible can have basic phone service for a very low monthly fee. We still need to run a policy process on this idea.

HUD's Native American Economic Access Center

- You could announce the new toll free number and website for the Native American Economic Development Access Center, through HUD's Office of Native American programs (ONAP). The Access Center will, for the first time, link over twelve agencies through a single toll-free number and web-site so that entrepreneurs--Native Americans, lending institutions, non-profits, foundations, and private businesses--can collaborate to achieve sustainable economic development in Indian Country.

Partnership between University of Michigan and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

- You could announce a partnership between the University of Michigan and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to work with a group of Tribal Colleges to create a "virtual Tribal College library." A major database structure will be located at Bay Mills Community College, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan which is working with other Tribal colleges and universities (TCU) to develop a virtual identity for each Tribal College. The virtual library will span challenging geographic boundaries and bring near limitless access to learning to TCU students and faculty.

Partnership between Crownpoint Institute of Technology (CIT), Phone Solutions and Computer Cabling Connection Network System Integrator

- You could announce the partnership between CIT and two private firms, Phone Solutions and Computer Cabling Connection Network System Integrator, to improve the telecommunications system across the Navajo Nation, an area the size of West Virginia. CIT initially will develop a call center in Crownpoint, New Mexico, before expanding to a high technological telecommunications system and offering high-tech telecommunications services throughout the Navajo Nation. The call center portion of the project is being conducted and will be managed by a corporation known as UCMS.

We are currently working on the following additional commitments that you could also announce at this stop:

- Commitments from e-commerce companies that could work with Native American entrepreneurs and help them create websites and e-businesses.
- Commitments from the private sector to upgrade equipment and training (i.e. e-commerce training) to SBA's Tribal Business Information Centers (TBICs).

DAY TWO

Site 3: Detroit, Michigan

As you are aware, in the last few months Ford Motor Company took the lead in providing Home Access by providing computers and low-cost Internet to its employees. Detroit provides a good urban setting to highlight areas that are in need of access to technology and to demonstrate the way the people's everyday lives can be enhanced by it.

Message: Importance of Home Access, Community Technology Centers (CTC) and Neighborhood Networks

- You could use this first event to emphasize the need for access to technology and the skills to use it. While universal home access is our goal, it is essential that those without it do not get left behind. Community Technology Centers and the Neighborhood Networks program help provide access to computers and the Internet to people in many communities who would not otherwise be using technology.

Potential Site Visits and Events

- You could take a tour of a Neighborhood Network site or a CTC and highlight the importance of access to technology for adults, both by using Computer Technology Centers for job searches, training and the development of microenterprise as well as through employee commitments to provide home access to their employees.

Key Commitments for Detroit Event

Home Access

- We are currently working with a major PC company to see if there are other large employers, both in the manufacturing and service industries, that would be willing to match the commitments made earlier this year by the Ford Motor Company and Delta Airlines. By focusing on the service industry, we would be able to show the benefits of such an effort to lower income workers. We could announce this commitment and highlight the efforts of Ford and Delta. Ford is a good example of a company making the transition from the industrial age to a technology-based "e-business."

SBC Communications

- We are also talking to SBC Communications about providing high-speed Internet access to CTCs and Neighborhood Networks.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

- You could announce the doubling of HUD's Neighborhood Networks centers from 500 to 1000 over the next two years. As you know, the Neighborhood Networks program is a community-based initiative that encourages the development of resource and computer learning centers in HUD-assisted and/or-insured housing.

- You could also announce a new public-private partnership between HUD, Communities in Schools (CIS) and Cisco Systems to bring IT job opportunities to 10 underserved communities (including a location in Indian country), including a possible site in Detroit. Cisco Systems will commit \$1 million to work with HUD and CIS to expand its Networking Academy program to serve youth and their families in public housing, Neighborhood Network sites, Indian country, Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.

Department of Education's Community Technology Center Grants

- You could announce the Department of Education's grants for Community Technology Centers totaling \$32.5 million.

Site 4: Rural Community in North Carolina

North Carolina provides a good forum for addressing the broadband issue because it is a largely rural state. While North Carolina still has a significant number of communities that have not benefited from advances in technology, its leadership has expressed a strong commitment to address the needs of its rural population.

Message: Need for Broadband Technology in Rural Communities

- This event provides you with an opportunity to highlight the benefits of broadband as a way to provide access to rural communities. It is also a forum for you to recognize the importance of broadband networks to rural economic development, distance learning and telemedicine.
- As you know, Erskine Bowles has led a Rural Prosperity Task Force. The key conclusion of the Task Force was that broadband is critical to the economic future of rural North Carolina.

Potential Site Visits and Events

- You could visit a site that is linked up with the North Carolina Information Highway, a high-speed network that was created by Governor Jim Hunt.

Key Commitments for North Carolina

Qualcomm

- QUALCOMM has agreed to deploy wireless broadband Internet technology that will provide wireless broadband Internet access for people living in areas that are currently not served by DSL or cable modems.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

- You could announce that NSF plans to invest \$10 million in FY2001 funds for research for next generation broadband technology. Technological breakthroughs could accelerate the deployment of broadband networks in rural areas.

NTIA Report

- You could announce NTIA's report "Advanced Telecommunications Capabilities in Rural Areas." The report shows that rural regions may be falling behind urban areas in the development of broadband networks.

USDA

- You could direct the Department of Agriculture to expand its program for rural telecommunications to make it easier for companies to obtain loan guarantees for broadband networks.

Do you agree with the trip as proposed?

_____ YES

_____ NO

_____ DISCUSS FURTHER

April 13, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: GENE SPERLING
MARIA ECHAVESTE

SUBJECT: Overview of Your Digital Divide--New Markets Tour

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you an overview of your Digital Divide trip. We will submit more detailed background material for each of your 3 stops before the trip begins on Monday.

As you know, you will travel to East Palo Alto, California and Shiprock, New Mexico on April 17th and Chicago, Illinois on April 18th. Members of Congress will accompany you on each portion of the trip. In addition, it is likely that Secretary Cuomo will join you in New Mexico and Secretary Daley in Chicago. Reverend Jesse Jackson, Rainbow Push; Yusef Jackson, One Net Now; Bob Johnson, Black Entertainment Television; and Raul Yzaguirre, National Council of La Raza will also accompany you on the entire trip.

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- As you know, this is your third New Markets Tour. On the first two, you focused on equity investments in underserved communities and how more could be done to bring the benefits of free enterprise and empowerment (new businesses, new jobs, education and training) to underserved communities.
- This trip focuses on a critical element—bridging the digital divide. Computers, the Internet, and the skills needed to use this technology can provide people with a chance to move themselves out of poverty, perhaps more quickly than ever.
- America has an important chance to make. We can allow unequal access to technology to further polarize American society, or we could use technology to grow the economy and generate social equity at a faster rate than ever before.

- As with other trips, highlighting that the government is doing its part is important. However, it is important to challenge the private sector to help ensure that no one is left behind in the 21st Century. This trip will allow you to highlight how the industry, community-based organizations and government can work together to expand access to the new opportunities of the Information Age.

FIRST STOP – EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA (Morning of Day One, April 17)

Message: Motivating Underserved Youth to “Get Connected.”

- The East Palo Alto stop is your kickoff event. It is a low-income urban community in the heart of the Silicon Valley. Over 80 percent of the students in local K-8 schools are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches. The latest data available indicates that 24 percent of East Palo Alto school children live below federally designated poverty level. Despite its geographic proximity to Silicon Valley, the center of the high-tech world, East Palo Alto residents are struggling. Much of the community lacks the skills necessary to succeed technology-based skills. Going to East Palo Alto would demonstrate that even in the shadow of Silicon Valley, there is still a substantial divide.
- The focus of the event is on the importance of motivating and inspiring underserved youth to “get connected”. During the NBA All Star Summit that Gene attended and our OPL briefings here at the White House, we consistently heard that even though there is an increased supply of computers and Internet access, not enough has been done to demonstrate why gaining access to technology is so important. This event will provide you with an opportunity to emphasize to young people, particularly in underserved communities, why technology is critical to their lives.
- In order to make this motivational message real and communicate it to young people across the country, we have built a PSA campaign that the Kaiser Family Foundation has agreed to coordinate. Magic Johnson, Rebecca Lobo (WNBA player for the NY Liberty) have agreed to appear in the ads and a number of networks, including NBC, ABC, CBS, BET, MTV and Fox, have agreed to air them. This PSA campaign establishes a longer-term vehicle for this message.

Overview of Events

- You will start the day with an OTR stop at College Track, non-profit organization for self-motivated students who are college bound. Thereafter you will arrive at Plugged In, a Community Technology Center in East Palo Alto, CA where you will provide brief remarks to an audience composed primarily of teenagers from East Palo Alto. **Note:** Plugged In received a 1995 grant from the Department of Commerce.
- You will be accompanied on stage by Magic Johnson, Rebecca Lobo, and a number of major high-tech CEOs that have made commitments to bridge the digital divide.

- This event will be an opportunity for you and the other stage participants to interact with the audience, answer their questions, and emphasize the importance for young people to become technologically literate. This event will also be Webcast on the Internet-- young people will be hooked up to the event from schools and community technology centers in other parts of the country -- and will be able to e-mail you questions.
- You will then go to the nearby Costano Elementary school where you will have a roundtable with a number of CEOs, senior executives and community leaders to discuss their efforts to bridge the digital divide.

CEOs

For this stop, in addition to the community delegation that will be traveling with you, some of the CEOs who will join you include Carly Fiorina, Hewlett-Packard; John Morgridge, Chairman of Cisco Systems; Henry Cisneros, Univision; Robert Knowling, Covad Communications; and Kaleil Tuzman, Govworks.

Highlights of Corporate/Private Sector Announcements

In addition to the numerous private sector announcements, there are public sector announcements that will be made at each site. Here are some examples of the commitments that companies have made that will be announced in East Palo Alto:

- **The Kaiser Family Foundation is taking the lead in developing, producing and distributing the PSAs to help bridge the digital divide.** As stated above, the Kaiser Family Foundation, represented by President and CEO Drew Altman, will develop, produce and distribute public service announcements to help motivate young people to "get connected" and take advantage of the economic opportunities in the IT sector. BET, MTV, NBC, ABC, CBS, NBC, TBS, TNT, UPN, Fox, the Disney Channel, the Cartoon Network, the Odyssey Network and the WB have all agreed to join this effort by airing the PSAs. The National Association of Broadcasters has also agreed to distribute the PSAs to 1,000 of their members. Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo have agreed to appear in the PSAs.
- **American Online Pledges 100,000 free AOL Accounts to Students and Volunteers at PowerUP Affiliate Sites.** AOL will provide 100,000 AOL accounts to PowerUp affiliate sites valued at \$26 million annually. With AOL's donation, PowerUp will fund and equip each of the new sites in its effort to provide young people with access to the wide range of content and information on the Internet as well as assistance to develop the skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century.
- **QUALCOMM Commits \$6 million for Education Technology in Schools.** QUALCOMM will commit to helping to close the digital divide by supporting deployment of education technology in the San Diego, CA area. Efforts will include: 1) support to High-Tech High – an innovative secondary school program with a focus on math, science and technology, 2) helping to connect a minimum of five San Diego schools to the Internet, 3) contributing a minimum of 200 PCs to area schools 4) providing teacher training and technical support so that these schools may fully utilize their new resources and 5) supporting the School of Education's continued research and development efforts at the University of California at San Diego.

- **Gateway Commits to Train 75,000 Teachers.** Gateway has pledged to provide 75,000 teachers with technology training under the Teach America! Program. All 244 of East Palo Alto's teachers will be trained in the Teach America! program on ways to effectively utilize technology in the classroom.

III. SECOND STOP – The Navajo Nation in Shiprock, New Mexico (Afternoon of Day One, April 17)

Message: Providing Digital Opportunity to Native Americans.

- As you remember, you were the first President to visit a Native American reservation since President Franklin Roosevelt. You will be making a significant statement about your commitment to the Native American community by going twice in a 12 month period.
- The primary focus of the Shiprock stop will be to bring digital opportunity to Indian Country. As you know, Native American communities face major economic and social challenges. This stop in Shiprock will allow you highlight how private and public sector investments can help bring digital opportunity to Native Americans. This event will focus on access to technology as a vehicle for economic development, education and employment opportunities to Native Americans. New technologies could create "leapfrog" opportunities for Native American communities.

Overview of Events

- First, you will address an outdoor crowd of thousands of people at the Boys and Girls Club to announce the commitments that have been for Native American communities. You will be accompanied by the Navajo Nation Tribal President, Kelsey Begaj; Congressman Tom Udall and possibly Secretary Cuomo.
- You will then travel to the Diné Tribal College where you, along with a small group, will participate in a Webcast with 7th and 8th grade students from the Lake Valley School. There will also be students and teachers from the Boys and Girls Club at the Diné site.
- This webcast will be both a video and audio feed where you will be able to interact with the Lake Valley students who are located 1 hour and 45 minutes away from where you will be.

CEOs/Community Leaders

At this stop, in addition to those community leaders traveling, you will be joined by a number of CEOs, senior executives and community leaders. They include: Bruce Brooks, Director of Community Affairs, Microsoft [**Note:** he is the former deputy mayor of Seattle]; Robert Rutherford, Native American Systems; John Koehler, Taehyon, Inc.; Karen Smith, Executive Director, TechCorps; Susan Masten, President, National Congress of American Indians; and Kelsey Begaj, President, Navajo Nation.

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- You may first start with a tour of one of the exhibits on the floor of the Comdex trade show. You will then address a 4,000 person audience of Comdex attendees. As stated earlier, Secretary Daley may accompany you to this event.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 14, 2000

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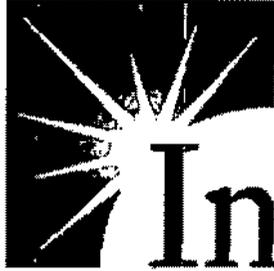
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**THE PRESIDENT'S NEW MARKETS TRIP:
FROM DIGITAL DIVIDE TO DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY
Motivating Young People to "Get Connected" in East Palo Alto**

April 17, 2000

TODAY, PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL KICKOFF HIS DIGITAL DIVIDE NEW MARKETS TRIP IN EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE MOTIVATION TO "GET CONNECTED." President Clinton will kick off his third New Markets trip in East Palo Alto, CA, where he will hold a discussion with Magic Johnson, New York Liberty star Rebecca Lobo, high-tech CEOs, community leaders and young people from East Palo Alto. His discussion will center on motivating and inspiring all young people to "get connected" and become technologically literate as a means to increasing their future economic potential. The President will emphasize how critical information technology skills are to competing for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the 21st century. The discussion will be webcast on the Internet, giving young people across the country an opportunity to email questions to the President.

President Clinton will announce several private and public sector commitments that expand "digital opportunity" for underserved communities, families and youth. He will then participate in a roundtable with corporate and community leaders, focusing on the importance of closing the digital divide.

Today's visit comes two weeks after the President issued his "National Call to Action" with two major national goals:

- Provide 21st Century Learning Tools for Every Child in Every School. To reach this goal, America needs to connect every classroom to the Internet, provide all students with access to computers, train teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum, and provide high quality educational content and software.
- Create Digital Opportunity for Every American Family and Community. For all families and communities to benefit from the New Economy, we must ensure that all Americans have access to technology and the skills needed to use it. We must work to make home access to the Internet universal, bring technology to every neighborhood, empower all citizens with IT skills, and motivate young people to "get connected."

EAST PALO ALTO HAS NOT FULLY SHARED IN THE NATION'S DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Although it is in the heart of Silicon Valley, East Palo Alto has not shared equally in the region's phenomenal economic expansion. While progress has been made, the city still faces significant economic challenges.

- High Poverty Over 24 percent of local K-8 students live in poverty and over 80 percent are eligible for the free lunch program (Census Bureau, 1997; CA Dept. of Finance, 2000).
- Lack of Education Technology East Palo Alto schools have a 28 to 1 student/ computer ratio, limiting the ability of teachers to use technology in the classroom. (CA Dept. of Ed., 1999).

PRESIDENT CLINTON, AND CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY LEADERS WILL ANNOUNCE KEY INITIATIVES TO BRING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY TO YOUTH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES:

- The Kaiser Family Foundation Commits to a Media Campaign to Motivate Young People to "Get Connected." Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo Will Star in the Public Service Announcements that Will Air on 13 Major Networks. BET Will Also Produce and Air PSAs to Encourage African-Americans to Participate in Digital Economy.
- HP Announces \$15 Million Partnership to Expand Digital Opportunity in 3 Communities, Including East Palo Alto
- Gateway Launches Program for Technology Training for 75,000 Teachers -- Including All East Palo Alto Teachers
- QUALCOMM Commits \$25 Million to Bridge the Digital Divide in San Diego -- Including \$7 Million for Math and Science Education
- PowerUP Commits to Expanding to 250 Technology Centers for Underserved Youth Across the Country - With Major Support from AOL (100,000 Free Accounts Valued at \$26 Million) and Waitt Family Foundation (50,000 Gateway Computers)
- Novell Will Donate \$20 Million in Software to Non-Profits Devoted to Underserved Hispanic Populations
- Cisco Systems Pledges \$1.4 Million to Develop 10 Pilot Networking Academies
- Applied Materials Pledges \$1 Million for Digital Divide Projects -- Including a Partnership with the Rainbow/ PUSI Coalition to Create a High-Tech Job Training Center in East Palo Alto
- AT&T Pledges \$1.2 Million to The Academy Of Information Technology
- PeoplePC Will Provide 300 Computers and Internet Access to Schools in the East Palo Alto Community
- govWorks's Community Commitment Program Will Donate Computer Equipment to Communities it Serves

A COMPLETE LIST OF PRESIDENT CLINTON AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S INITIATIVES TO BRING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY TO YOUTH, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The Kaiser Family Foundation And Black Entertainment Television Announce Public Service Campaigns to Motivate Young People to Participate in Technology. President Clinton will highlight the efforts of the Kaiser Family Foundation and Black Entertainment Television (BET) to help motivate young people to "get connected" and raise public awareness about the digital divide. The Kaiser Family Foundation will produce public service announcements (PSA) featuring celebrities and role models who will highlight their connections to technology and encourage young people to recognize ways that becoming technologically literate can open doors to them. Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo are the first celebrities to agree to appear in the PSA campaign. ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, BET, MTV, TBS, TNT, UPN, The Cartoon Network, Odyssey, The Disney Channel, Univision and the WB will all air the PSAs. The National Association of Broadcasters will distribute the PSAs to their 1,000 members. The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the American Library Association and the Digital Divide Network have also agreed to support this effort.

BET will produce and air the PSAs on the BET Cable Network, encouraging African-Americans to use the Internet and to participate in the digital economy. The PSA's will feature major African-American celebrities from the music, sports and film industries explaining the importance of African-American participation in the digital economy, as consumers, employees and entrepreneurs. In addition, BET.com and BET Holdings will sponsor an online celebrity auction to benefit efforts to address the digital divide.
- Hewlett-Packard Announces a \$15 Million Digital Village Initiative -- New Program To Start in East Palo Alto. HP will invest up to \$15 million in products, partnerships and people in 3 underserved communities -- starting in East Palo Alto. HP's comprehensive approach will focus on programs that serve adults and kids at home, in school, and through community centers:
 - HP @ Home will help families learn and grow together;
 - HP @ School will emphasize enhancing K-12 education through the use of technology; and
 - HP @ Neighborhood Community Centers will help adults and kids to learn, communicate and explore using the Internet, both before and after school.
- Gateway Launches Teach America! and Commits to Training 75,000 Teachers -- Including All East Palo Alto Teachers. Gateway has pledged to provide 75,000 teachers with technology literacy training under the Teach America! program. This effort will provide teachers with hundreds of courses to increase their use of the Internet and multimedia applications. All East Palo Alto's teachers will be trained in the Teach America! program on ways to effectively utilize technology in the classroom.
- QUALCOMM Commits \$25 Million to Bridge the Digital Divide in San Diego -- Including \$7 Million for K-12 Math and Science Education. QUALCOMM will help to close the digital divide with a \$25 million commitment -- including \$7 million to improve math and science education in San Diego schools through investments in educational technology and enhancing the math and science instructional skills of K-12 teachers.
- PowerUP Unveils 250 New Sites in 43 States Across the Country. The PowerUP program will announce a major expansion of its successful program to give underserved youth access to technology and guidance on how to use it. PowerUP will have 250 -- up from 19 -- new, fully-equipped and staffed sites by the end of 2000. PowerUP is comprised of more than a dozen non-profit organizations, major corporations and federal agencies. The federal AmeriCorps program is a strong supporter of the PowerUP effort and has assigned 400 members to work in PowerUP sites. Partners that have contributed to the launch of the first 250 sites include America Online, Gateway, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, America's Promise, the Steve Case Foundation, the Waitt Family Foundation, Americorps*Vista, Boys & Girls Clubs, Communities in Schools, National Urban League, Save the Children, YMCA and the Department of Education.
- American Online Pledges 100,000 Free AOL Accounts to Students at PowerUP Sites, Waitt Family Foundation Providing 50,000 Computers Worth \$30 Million. The expansion of the PowerUP is made possible because of commitments from a number of organizations -- including a pledge by AOL to provide 100,000 AOL accounts to PowerUP sites, valued at \$26 million annually, and a donation of 50,000 Gateway computers by the Waitt Family Foundation.

- Novell Will Donate \$20 Million in Software to Non-Profits Devoted to Helping Underserved Hispanic Populations. Novell is expanding its software donation program to include non-profits that help underserved Hispanic populations. The donated software has a retail value of \$20 million. Currently, many non-profits are lagging behind the private sector in their use of the Internet and information technology.
- Cisco Systems, HUD and Communities In Schools Announce 10 Pilot Networking Academies. Cisco Systems, Inc., the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Communities In Schools will announce a program valued at \$1.4 million to establish 10 Cisco Networking Academies in underserved communities. The Cisco Networking Academy Program teaches students to design, build, and maintain computer networks through a 280-hour web-based curriculum and hands-on laboratory exercises on real networks. HUD, Cisco and Communities In Schools are also establishing internship opportunities so that Academy students graduate not only with a marketable skill, but also with on-the-job experience. Academy graduates who pass the industry standard Cisco Certified Network Associate exam are immediately eligible for information technology jobs with high starting salaries.
- Applied Materials Pledges \$1 Million and Partners with the Rainbow/ PUSH Coalition to Create a High-Tech Job Training Center. Applied Materials has pledged \$1 million to help provide "information for everyone," starting with the development of a high-tech job training center for the people of East Palo Alto, in partnership with local government and Reverend Jesse Jackson's Rainbow/PUSH Coalition.
- Semiconductor Equipment and Materials International (SEMI) Will Pledge \$1 Million to Reduce the Digital Divide in Silicon Valley. SEMI, the global trade association for the semiconductor equipment and materials industry, is pledging \$1 million dollars to five workforce development programs focused on reducing the digital divide. The organizations that will receive \$200,000 each are: Workforce Silicon Valley; Industry and Technology Outreach Foundation; Jose A. Valdez Math Institute; and the Charitech Civic Venture Fund.
- AT&T Announces a \$1.2 Million Commitment to the Academy of Information Technology. AT&T will support the Academy of Information Technology with \$1.2 million to develop a high school curriculum that will prepare students for jobs in the IT industry. In addition, AT&T will commit \$250,000 to develop a national forum series for underserved communities to engage high school students and policymakers in a dialogue about economic opportunities, education, job skills, and leadership for the 21st century.
- PeoplePC Commits to Providing Multimedia Computers to the East Palo Alto Community. The President will announce a pledge by PeoplePC to provide the schools of East Palo Alto with 300 new brand name computer systems and unlimited Internet access. Currently, the elementary schools in East Palo Alto have a student-to-computer ratio of 28-to-1, making it difficult for computers and the Internet to be used as powerful tools for learning in the classroom.
- govWorks, Inc., Announces the Community Commitment Program to Reinvest in Communities Around the Country. govWorks, Inc. will announce the launch of its Community Commitment program to help communities across the country address the digital divide. govWorks will reinvest a portion of its revenue in local communities to purchase computers, high-speed Internet access and technology training, which will be donated to libraries, public schools, and community centers. It will launch a pilot of its Community Commitment program this week by donating computers and a year's supply of high speed Internet access to the Thomas Creighton Elementary School in Philadelphia, PA and to Nora Navara Public Library in New Orleans, LA. Additionally, govWorks plans to provide the school and library staff with computer and Internet training. govWorks expects to roll out its Community Commitment program in 50 cities by the end of the year.
- NetDay and TechNet "One-Stop-Shop" for Educational Technology. The President will announce a commitment from NetDay and TechNet to develop an Internet-based "one-stop-shop" of information on educational technology, including technology planning, hardware, educational software, professional development, and sources of financial support. The database will be designed for principals, teachers, parent support groups, and community members.

- The ThinkQuest® Program Bridges the Digital Divide by Reaching Out to Underserved Students. ThinkQuest, a non-profit Internet-based education initiative, will announce a partnership with the Department of Education's TRIO and Community Technology Center programs, HUD's Neighborhood Network centers and ABILITY Awareness to bring ThinkQuest's award-winning program to the large number of students in underserved schools and communities as well as to students with disabilities. The ThinkQuest program guidelines promote teams that include members from diverse levels of computer competency who come from various cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. To date more than 50,000 students and educators from 100 countries have participated in ThinkQuest.
- The Department of Education Announces Technology Innovation Challenge Grants The Department of Education will announce three new Technology Innovation Challenge Grants (TICG) totaling \$24 million over 5 years. In-kind contributions to these Technology Innovation projects will total more than \$67 million. This program serves as a catalyst for positive change for schools. It supports educators, industry partners, communities, parents, and others who are using new technologies to help bring high quality education to every classroom and neighborhood. Effective use of new technologies in these communities will contribute to improved student achievement in reading, writing, science, mathematics, history, the arts and other disciplines. Each project will support training for teachers and promote greater parent and community involvement in education.
- The National Endowment for the Humanities Announces \$1.45 Million In Schools for a New Millennium Projects The National Endowment for the Humanities announces \$1.45 million in Schools for a New Millennium projects designed to train humanities teachers to integrate technology tools into their classroom teaching. Schools for a New Millennium projects include teachers, university scholars, technology experts, local museums and libraries, parents and school administrators committed to bringing digital opportunity into the classroom.

IN EAST PALO ALTO PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL BE JOINED BY HIGH-TECH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIPS TO BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The President will participate in a roundtable discussion with CEOs from the technology industry and leaders of the civil rights community and non-profit organizations. The President will lead a discussion on concrete steps that industry, community organizations and government can take to bridge the digital divide. Participants in the roundtable will include:

Dr. Drew Altman, President & CEO, The Henry J. Kaiser Foundation

Henry Cisneros, President & COO, Univision Communications

Darien Dash, Chairman & CEO, DME Interactive Holdings, Inc.

Magda Escobar, Executive Director, Plugged In

Carly Fiorina, CEO, Hewlett Packard

Rae Grad, CEO, Power Up

Nick Grouf, CEO, People PC

Rosalind Hudnell, Vice President, Intel Corporation

Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rainbow PUSH

Yusef Jackson, Chairman, One Net Now

Irwin Jacobs, Chairman & CEO, QUALCOMM

Carlton Jenkins, CEO, One Net Now

Robert Johnson, Chairman & CEO, Black Entertainment Television

Roberta Katz, President & CEO, TechNet

Robert Knowling, CEO, Covad Communications

Jim Martin, Senior Vice President, America Online

Kenneth McNeely, Vice President, AT&T

James Morgan, Chairman & CEO, Applied Materials

John Morgridge, Chairman of the Board, Cisco Systems

David Robino, Vice Chairman, Gateway

Eric Schmidt, Chairman & CEO, Novell

Srinija Srinivasan, Vice President & Editor-in-Chief, Yahoo!

Kaleil Tuzman, CEO, GovWorks

Raul Yzaguirre, President, National Council of La Raza

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(East Palo Alto, California)

For Immediate Release

April 17, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN DIGITAL DIVIDE DISCUSSION
WITH THE EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY

Plugged In
East Palo Alto, California

9:07 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: You all sit down. Good morning. I want to thank Mayor Wilson for making us welcome today. And thank you, Magda Escobar for all you have done. I also want to recognize some other people who are here with us today. Reverend Jackson, thank you for coming. (Applause.) Carly Fiorina, the President of Hewlett-Packard; and Robert Knowling, the President of Covad, thank you for being here. (Applause.) Rebecca Lobo, thank you for being here. We're glad to see you. (Applause.)

I'd like to also acknowledge the presence in the audience of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew Cuomo; the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission Bill Kennard; and many members of Congress -- Representative Zoe Lofgren, Representative John Conyers, Representative Bill Jefferson, Representative Barbara Lee, Representative Silvestre Reyes, Representative Stephanie Tubbs-Jones, Representative Anna Eshoo -- I think that's all the members of Congress who are here.

I'd like to thank Gene Sperling and Maria Eschaveste. And I want to recognize especially the man who helped us avoid the Y2K problem, a distinguished Republican Senator from Utah, Bob Bennett. Thank you for coming, Senator Bennett. We're glad to see you. (Applause.)

I'd also like to thank all the civil rights leaders who are here, the high-tech CEOs, the foundation directors. And I'd like to thank Julian Lacey who is here for helping us kick off our national call to action for digital opportunity. I know that all of you know Julian. Thank you. (Applause.)

I want to thank AOL for web casting today's event live. And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to one person who is not here who helped us to develop our entire approach to closing the digital divide, Vice President Al Gore. I thank him as well. (Applause.)

Now, I will be brief because I want to get on to the questions. But I want to tell you why we're here. This is a very fortunate time for our country. We have the strongest economy in history. We have the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates our country has ever recorded, and the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years. But we all know there are people and places that have not fully participated in this new economy.

I have been to a lot of those places on my digital divide tour -- I mean, my New Markets tours -- because I see these places as places of opportunity, places of new markets. If we can create new employees, new businesses, new jobs, new opportunities, we can keep the American

economy going. This is one of those fortunate times when, by doing the thing that is morally right, we actually help to keep America's economic expansion churning forward. It's going to take the efforts of government, business and the community sector to succeed.

This is our third New Markets tour. When I leave you, I'm going to Northern New Mexico, to the Shiprock Navajo Reservation. And tomorrow I'll be in Chicago, meeting with representatives of every aspect of the high-tech industry in America. I wanted to begin here in East Palo Alto -- (applause) -- because even here in Silicon Valley, there are many people who could be left behind, and because you're doing so much to make sure you're not left behind. And we ought to be giving a helping hand.

I don't think there is a better place in America to show what can be done to reach out to our children who are at risk of falling behind. We can see that here at Plugged In, at the Silicon Valley Project, at the new Cisco Sun Academy, where graduates are virtually assured of good jobs that pay up to \$70,000 a year. In a few minutes, I will announce some other things that corporate leaders here today are prepared to do to help this city on the move, move even faster.

Let me just briefly ask you to remember the history of this community. One hundred and fifty years ago, East Palo Alto got its start as a community called Ravenswood. Ravenswood was a good candidate to become the last stop on the transcontinental railway, something that was very important in the Industrial Age. Unfortunately, plans changed, the railroad bypassed Ravenswood altogether, and it was a decision that had repercussions for the people who lived in this community for a century or more.

Today, we're in another time of fundamental economic transformation, but we can do it very differently because, unlike the railroads of the Industrial Age, the trade routes of the Information Age can run through every city, every town, every community. And, in fact, the more communities they run through, the better it works.

No one has to be bypassed this time around. The choice is in our hands. We can use new technology to extend opportunity to more Americans than ever before; we can truly move more people out of poverty more rapidly than ever before, or we can allow access to new technology to heighten economic inequality and sharpen social division.

Again, I say, the choice is ours. But I want to reiterate a point I made earlier. The truth is that doing the right thing will accelerate the strength of this powerful economic engine. (Applause.) Every economist knows that new technologies will continue to drive rapid economic growth only if they continue to spread to all sectors of our economy.

I have made closing this digital divide a big priority. It is a big priority in our budget and a big priority for trying to enlist the energies of our fellow citizens. That's why I issued a national call to action, to enlist the support of businesses, state and local governments, community groups, foundations, schools and volunteers. Already, more than 400 organizations have signed on to our call.

To reach these broad national goals, all of us are going to have to do our part. In addition to our \$2.25 billion e-rate initiative, which allows us to hook up every school and library in the country to the Internet, including those who can't afford it on their own -- (applause) -- and our new \$450 million Technology Literacy Challenge, which helps to provide to poor areas -- the computers, the software, the teacher training and the Internet access that's so important. I'm asking Congress for \$100 million for community technology centers like Plugged

In --(applause) -- \$150 million to help train all new teachers to use the technology and the Internet in the classroom -- (applause) -- and \$2 billion in new tax incentives for computer donations and contributions to our schools, our libraries and community technology centers. (Applause.)

But the important announcement is the one I want to make today. Corporations in this area have committed over \$100 million to help you do what you do best. Gateway will provide technology training to 75,000 teachers, including every single teacher here in East Palo Alto. (Applause.) Novell will donate \$20 million in software for nonprofit organizations devoted to helping underserved Hispanic organizations. (Applause.) Hewlett-Packard will invest \$15 million in a new digital village initiative to help three underserved communities, starting here in East Palo Alto. (Applause.)

Qualcomm is giving back to the city where it's based, San Diego, with a \$25 million commitment, including \$7 million -- this is important -- to improve math and science education among all of our young people. (Applause.) Power Up, a partnership of AOL, Gateway and several other companies that bring technology to young people in schools and community centers, is going to expand from 19 to 250 sites nationwide. AmeriCorps, a strong partner of Power Up, will assign 400 of our young volunteers to work at these sites. AOL is going to provide 100,000 accounts for use at these sites, a commitment worth \$26 million every year. (Applause.)

Applied Materials has pledged a million dollars for projects such as a new high-tech job training center for the people of East Palo Alto. (Applause.) And they are going to be in partnership with the city and with Reverend Jackson's Rainbow Push coalition, which has an office right around the corner here. (Applause.) I promised Jesse, I would promote his job site too, you see, around the corner.

AT&T is committing \$1.2 million to support the Academy of Information Technology, which is dedicated to helping high school students prepare for high-paying jobs in the high-tech industry. Cisco will invest \$1.4 million to expand its Cisco Network Academy Program to 10 more under-served communities. People PC has agreed to donate 300 new multimedia computers to the East Palo Alto Schools. (Applause.)

I want to thank all these corporations and all their leaders for their new commitments and I want to thank Covad for leading an effort to increase minority participation in the high tech industry. We are nowhere near where we ought to be on that. (Applause.)

Now, the commitments of governments and corporations are only part of the equation. The rest requires motivation and that's what I want us all to focus on for the rest of our time here. Frankly, all the computers and software and Internet connections in the world won't do much good if young people don't understand that access to new technology means access to new learning opportunities, new job opportunities, new entrepreneurial opportunities -- access to the new economy.

That's why I am very pleased that the Kaiser Family Foundation is going to create a major public service campaign to inspire young people to get on computers and get on line. The ads will air on NBC, ABC, CBS, Fox, BET, Univision, MTV, The Cartoon Network and other major channels. They will feature Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo, who will highlight new technologies and the fact that they're not only fun, they can open a lot of doors in life. Bet.com will also air their own PSAs, encouraging African Americans to use the Internet and participate. Let's give them all a hand. That's great. (Applause.)

Now, let me just say this. I want to thank the people at Plugged

In again, Magda and all the others. Places like this can change lives forever. You come in, learn how to design web pages or set up networks or just how to use the Internet as a tool for discovery. That gives you the power to control your future.

I want to show you something. If you haven't done this, I want to urge you all to take a look at the classifieds from yesterday's San Jose Mercury News. There are 10,000 technology-related jobs advertised in this paper. If they could be held by every unemployed and underemployed person in East Palo Alto, this would be a better country today. (Applause.) So whether it's finding a high-tech job or serving as a teacher or just being a more effective parent, every young person needs to know how to use this technology. It will serve you well, no matter what you do.

Now I'd like to begin our discussion by asking Rebecca Lobo a question that I hope will help us to understand what's involved here in getting young people to actually commit themselves to becoming technologically literate.

A lot of people, Rebecca, across the country look up to you because -- you're tall. (Laughter.) And they also look up to you because you're a great basketball player, a great human being and, therefore, a great role model. They see the life you have; they'd like to have a career in professional sports. But a lot of kids have to find their stardom somewhere else -- there are only so many people who can make it in sports, but everybody can make it in life. So I'd like to know how you would speak to children to try to persuade them how to become technologically literate, why they should master computers and the Internet. What would your message be?

MS. LOBO: My message to kids all the time -- generally, they ask questions about basketball, but it's to follow their dreams, because whatever their dreams are, they can come true. Generally, all kids just want to be successful and they want to have an opportunity to be successful. And now the Internet is the way to be able to find the success that they want, to achieve the dreams that they want. And they just need the opportunities to be able to get on the Internet, to have access to the Internet, to have people showing them how to use it so that they can pursue whatever dream it is -- they can find information about whatever job or whatever career -- whether it's sports or anything that they want to pursue.

And one thing that's been exciting for me -- I'm on the Internet all the time -- through waba.com, kids can ask me questions. And I try to answer all of my e-mails and I think it's a pretty cool thing when a kid is doing a report in school, and they're doing a report on me and they have a question. And so they e-mail it to me and they get it right from the source, the answer.

But you go out and you encourage these kids and let them know how much fun the Internet can be. And you want people to pursue their passions. I've been fortunate to be able to follow my dream and make a living doing what I love to do. And you want all people to have that opportunity and you want to encourage these kids, that they can find that opportunity and have that access through the Internet. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Is it on? I'm still technologically challenged, right? (Laughter.) I want to ask Reverend Jackson a question. You've been involved in the civil rights revolution all your life. We were just in Selma together. When Dr. King died, he was moving the civil rights revolution to a new stage, the stage of economic opportunity. And you have spent most of the last 30-plus years trying to extend that opportunity to people who have been left out and left behind. What do you think this new technology means to your prospects of succeeding at

the work of the last 30 years?

REVEREND JACKSON: First of all, let me take the liberty to say, Mr. President, that you're taking the message to the people, taking light to dark places, coming to Selma, to Appalachia, to East Palo Alto. This is the quality of leadership our nation deserves. We must really thank you for that. Thank you for that. (Applause.)

When Dr. King looked at the Great Divide in 1955, he knew it was the enlightened energy of young America that could change the course. And so when Rosa Parks refused to go to the back of the bus, he said better that we walk in dignity than walk in shame, young America came alive. At that time, the White House didn't move, the Congress didn't move. Young America came alive. In 1960, four students sat in to get hamburgers; they got handcuffs and they were threatened expulsion from school. They chose dignity over dollars and degrees. Young America came alive.

We now have a public accommodations bill, the right to vote, all because young America came alive. And thus, those who would be free must strike the first blow. Literally, at that time, we were in a social revolution and we changed laws. We are now in a cultural revolution and young people must bring forth a new energy. I would say, to use one poet, Gene Sperling's language, shift from high tops to laptop, in terms of what's important. Because you can get your high tops from your laptop and you cannot get your laptop from your high tops, in terms of what is important to young America.

We are going to do a conference out here May 1st through 3rd, the Rainbow Push. And I must say the first thing -- we are going to meet with 3,000 youth from East Palo Alto and San Jose and energize them, and Carly Fiorina and Bob are here about computers -- so we must make this the mass, stylish, the thing-to-do movement. We are also going to organize a thousand churches. We want the churches to put laptops and computers in their Sunday school rooms, so churches can be after-school homework centers for our youth, and make this a mass movement for students and parents and preachers.

I am convinced, when I look at people like Magic Johnson and Isaiah Thomas -- when these young people grasp this -- and they are now -- I hope we're closing the gap real fast with those who have the energy to make it happen. And I see young America catching on. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to ask a question of Carly Fiorina. One of the things that bothers me about being President is that I can -- I'm a fairly high energy person so I can go to a place like East Palo Alto and we can get everybody together and we can get all these commitments and people can follow through on their commitments. But I'm always worried that somehow there will be a gap between this moment and when people's lives really change. And I would like to know what you think it will really take for the investment revolution to permeate this community and others like it to the extent that we really will be able to guarantee equal opportunity to all these kids, if they master the fundamentals of the information revolution.

MS. FIORINA: Well, first, I would say, Mr. President, that you are correct. As wonderful as it is that you come here today, what it's really about is all of the commitments that preceded your visit and all of the commitments that will follow your visit.

There are, however, I think three basic laws in the high-tech industry today -- laws that I think represent opportunity for those who will learn and have access to the technology. One fundamental law is that the high-tech industry is in a constant war for talent. We don't have enough people with enough skills. That will continue to be the

case for many, many, many, many years to come because this is a growth industry and there is no end to that growth in sight.

So whether it is Covad or Novell or Cisco or Sun or Hewlett-Packard or any of the other companies that are here in Silicon Valley, all of us worry first and foremost about finding enough talent. That's the first law.

The second law is that technology -- information technology and the Internet can be the great equalizer. The Internet and information technology can erase the barriers of time and distance, and yes, the barriers of prejudice, as well, because if people have the tools, if people have the skills, if people have the access, they represent the talent that this industry needs.

And the third law is that without those tools, without that access, without those skills, the divide becomes greater and greater and greater. And so I really think it is about communities and corporations and government working together to make sure that people have access to the tools and the technology, access to training, access to skills. But rest assured, the industry needs people who have these skills. It's worth the effort to learn because it can change lives in dramatic ways, but the need for the skill is there and that need for skill will last for many, many decades to come. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Let me just say -- I just want to follow up on something. I want you to think about this. We're all sitting here talking about this -- with 10,000 job vacancies being advertised in the paper yesterday in this area. If we don't do this now, when are we ever going to get around to it? Do you think we'd be having this meeting if the unemployment rate were 10 percent in America, or 10 percent in California? This is the time we've got to do this.

We're back in Washington today debating legislation about how much -- not whether, but how much -- we have to raise the cap on visas to bring in people from other countries who are trained in these skills. And I'm pro-immigration. I'm all for this. We've got to do it, we've got to keep these industries going. We've got to do the right thing. But I'm also trying to make sure when we do it, we get more investments to train people here to do those jobs. Because you can do it. (Applause.)

And I just want to say something to the local folks here and to the kids who are here. You've got to decide whether you believe intelligence is equally distributed in this world; I do -- whether you believe ability is equally distributed; I do. I mean, not for everything. I couldn't play basketball like Rebecca. But everybody can do something, and everybody can learn this.

I just got back from India, a country with a per-capita income of \$450 a year. And I was in a poor village where I saw women who were almost illiterate, never even been given a privilege of going to school, getting on computers, calling up their government's web page, getting information about how to take care of their newborn babies, in remote villages because they had a computer with a good printer to take the software -- give it to them, they could take it home.

This can change the way the world works, and it can save you and your children from having to wait 30 years to move into the mainstream. It can be done in a matter of months or a year. But you have to believe it, and you have to take advantage of it. And if we can't do it where there's 10,000 job vacancies in the paper, we will never get around to doing it.

I would like to ask Bob Knowling to talk a little bit about -- to

be more specific here. What kind of job opportunities are available for minorities, for example, who may come from poor homes or poor neighborhoods or poor communities, if they get the skills and the training they need? And what do you think is the most important thing they could do and we could do to bridge this gap?

MR. KNOWLING: Thank you, Mr. President. The jobs, quite frankly, they cover the waterfront, and there are technicians that can design web sites become software developers; there are a number of IT personnel that are needed in the industry. The jobs truly, they scan the waterfront.

The issue, I believe, however is all the things that we've heard today. But there are some other issues that also need to be addressed. And I, for one, thank the President of this country for his leadership in terms of providing these forums and becoming a catalyst for change.

In some work that I've been doing with the ITAA, which is trying to at least address the issue of how come we don't have more women and people of color in these high-tech jobs -- if you think about the number of students that are taking the math and science courses, computer science courses, engineering, there is a disproportionate number of them that get through the educational system and the process, but they don't end up in the jobs. And you have to ask yourself the question, why not. And while there may be 10,000 jobs in the San Jose paper this past weekend, I'm convinced that the last, at least, frontier for this issue is that business must quit lip service and provide the job and give the access. (Applause.)

It seems to me that if you just look at this little scenario I painted for you, why don't they end up in the jobs? Is the issue they don't have the intellectual capacity? Is the issue they haven't had the right grades? Well, I am a firm believer, as the President just said, that this is not about genetics, it's all about environment. And we still live in a country where we don't value difference. We still live in a country where the open access is not there.

I just recently finished a meeting with Hydra-- where they were telling me they had over a hundred CEO jobs in the high-tech sector that they're trying to fill. Well, as we move down into organizations and get to the middle-level jobs and the entry-level jobs, this problem just mushrooms.

So what I hope that will happen because, basically, what the President just said is this is sort of like Sunday service -- we go to church on Sunday, and when he comes here it's sort of like the Sunday morning message and we all feel good, we all leave here very pumped up, committed, et cetera. But then Monday morning comes, and by the time we get to Friday we forgot everything that he just told us and we're right back to Sunday, needing some more renewal.

So my hope is that when he will leave here today, we will stop the lip service about access and we will open the doors and embrace -- because the people are out there. Covid Communication -- this is not a commercial -- is filling jobs. We are filling jobs at every level. We need more talent.

And I guess at the end of the day it surprises me somewhat, but coming from a family of 13 and being poor all my life, I never thought I'd get to the day where I would not consider myself a role model. But I am extremely encouraged that folks like Rebecca and Magic Johnson are going to go on the public service airways and show kids that it's cool to be high-tech. Because when they see folks who they admire, they see people that they've looked up to -- if they can see them embracing technology, you will get a kid who's in the 3rd and 4th grade saying,

you know what, maybe I should go to class, maybe I should study the math, maybe I should become plugged in. Because I believe if they can see the right kind of role models, kids will want to stay in the discipline and I do believe the jobs are there.

So let's hope that we cannot disappoint the President and the next time he comes here there's not 10,000 jobs in the paper, but there's only a few jobs in the paper. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Good deal.

Q Mr. President, we have a question from a child in the audience.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. There's somebody in the audience? Okay.

Q Good morning, Mr. President. I am nine years old. My question is, what do you use your computer for and what do you use the Internet for. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Let me tell you what, you know what I did? At Christmastime I actually ordered Christmas presents with the computer. I confess, I don't use it much for e-mail, but that's for very personal reasons. When I want to talk to my daughter, for example, I get on the phone and call her. If you work for the government, you don't use e-mail very much unless you want it all in the newspaper. (Laughter.)

So I mostly use -- and the other thing I do is I try to find new sites. When I hear about something new, I try to get onto it. For example, when I learned that now up to 30,000 people were making a living off e-Bay -- I'm always reluctant to give one company a free commercial here -- and that a lot of them had once been on welfare, I wanted to look at it and figure out how were these people making a living.

So, for me, I'm almost like you, I'm still trying to learn about all this and I'm so interested in what its possibilities are. But the only thing I get personal benefit out of is shopping, because it's hard for me to move around very much. (Laughter.)

Let me say, I also wanted to thank -- I forgot to say something -- I wanted to thank the Costano Elementary Choir. They sang before I got here. So let's give them a big hand. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Q Our event is also being broadcast live over the Internet courtesy of AOL. Internet questions are being submitted by young people from 17 locations across the country.

The question is from Jefferson Elementary School, we have Christine. What can we as students do to help attract high-tech industries into our area?

THE PRESIDENT: You should answer that.

MS. FIORINA: Well, high-tech industries go where there are a couple fundamentals. They go where there is a pool of skilled labor. They go where the education system will continue to develop that pool of skilled labor. They go where the tax systems encourage their participation and they go where transportation systems can enable their growth. And if those enablers are there, high-tech industries in search of talent will come. But it starts with education and talented pool of labor.

REVEREND JACKSON: Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead, Jesse. Let me just answer that question real quick, though, because this is important. People ask me this all the time.

The truth is, everything Carly said is right. Therefore, if you really want high-tech jobs in your area and you don't have them, you need to examine your school system and then get someone who understands all these factors that she just mentioned, to come into your community and help you develop a specific plan for all the changes you need to make to get it done. This is not something that can be done in a speech. I used to do this for a living when I was a governor.

This is about having a specific plan -- what are you going to do, what's the list of people you're going to contact, who's going to do the work. So if the students who asked me this question are really interested in it, your community needs a plan and then somebody needs to be charged with carrying it out and then somebody else needs to be checking on them to make sure they're doing it. It is like every other endeavor, you've got to have a plan and then you've got to execute it.

REVEREND JACKSON: I also think, Mr. President, it is also fair to say that, while motivation is important and attitude is important, Bob kept hammering at access. There are still many pockets in the country like Appalachia and like East Palo Alto, really, here, an island in the ocean of high-tech, fundamentally disconnected. We opened our office here two months ago and did not have enough lines -- wasn't big enough to get enough telephone lines in this island for the schools here, for the seniors who need the e-medicine here.

So we have these pockets where we have under-served markets and unutilized talent and untapped capital. And just maybe what your tour is doing, not only is it bringing light to East Palo Alto, but around the country as we visit we see virtually every city fully wired jails and unwired schools. Now, the move has been made to address that now, but we need some combination of structural universal access as well as motivation and access to capital for entrepreneurship. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I agree with that.

Any other questions in the audience there? Go ahead.

Q My name is Maria. I am nine years old. My question is, what will technology be in the future? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I certainly can't answer that. Who wants to answer that? Bob, you want to answer that question?

MR. KNOWLING: The technology of the future, I guess if I really did have a crystal ball and I gave you the right answer I might be able to retire tomorrow, because I will be a genius. Five years ago, could any of guess that we would be so eccentric, that literally the Internet is changing our lives, the way that we work, the way that we play, et cetera.

But I believe the technology of the future is that things that we take today, in terms of our manual mechanization of things, I think money will become passe. I think we all will be going around with smart cards and smart chips. The Internet access that we traditionally sit down at a hardwired device today to reach out to e-mail and to other people around the globe, it will become a very mobile technology, where -- literally, through handheld devices. And, as you've seen the migration of cellular technology, where devices went from bulky things to very sleek things. I'm always marveled when I get on an airplane and I see people with things that look as small as a credit card. It's

going to become very, very mobile in terms of the access and I believe that the other thing that will happen is that you will see a globalization in terms of the ability to transact and communicate through these devices will be sort of the future.

At the end of the day, though, the Internet and this whole revolution that we are seeing in front of us, 200 years from now when they write the history books, these will become the new Harvard business case studies. This will make the industrial revolution pale in comparison.

MS. FIORINA: I guess the only thing I would add is we hope people about your age help us figure that out, what technology will be like 20 years from now.

But I think to Bob's point, fundamentally I believe -- and everyone in the high-tech industry believes -- we are moving to a point where technology will become so pervasive, it will become both intimate and nonintrusive. Today, technology is intrusive, it's not everywhere. Technology will move to the point where it is friendly and intimate and personalized, where everything is connected and everything is intelligent. And it will work for you instead of you having to work for it.

THE PRESIDENT: I also think what you will see is that -- two things -- I think all communications, information and entertainment systems will merge. So people will be carrying around things that are telephones, are faxes, are televisions, you know, calling up movies and everything else in one little thing they can carry around with them. I think you will have that.

And the other thing I think will happen is there will be a radical alteration in the relationship of energy to work, which will enable us to dramatically improve the protection of the global environment and generate a whole different kind of jobs than we've ever had before. I think those are the two things that will happen over the next 20 years.

There was one other -- I promised the lady over here -- that young woman, yes, I promised her.

Q -- I'm with the Girls Club. And our question is, are you going to help our community's youth to receive internship in the Silicon Valley, since we also live here? (Applause.)

MS. FIORINA: I think that question was directed at companies. I hope so. But Hewlett-Packard has been providing internships to people in East Palo Alto and communities, frankly, all over the world for many decades. And I know other companies do so, as well. But internship for us is a way of getting access to talent; it's a way of us getting to know a potential future full-time employee. So our internship program has been very successful for us over decades, and we believe has been a great experience for the interns who have shared some time with us.

THE PRESIDENT: How old are the interns? When do you start?

MS. FIORINA: Most of them start at the end of their high school years and in their college years. I don't think we have interns much younger than 15 or 16.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me just say this. Maybe one of the things that the Mayor could do is to sort of scout the interest in the high schools of the community and then talk to some of the companies about it. I'll bet you could arrange for some intern or intern-like programs for kids in their high school years so at least they could be exposed to these companies and see what it is they need to do. And we could come out

with something good here. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, we have time for one last question from on-line. This is from Leadership Education Athletics in Connecticut, from Maya Watts: How do you plan to help children from poor neighborhoods get access to the Internet?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, right now, what we are trying to do is to make sure all the schools are wired. And when we started, only about 3 percent of our schools were, 1993. Now, we're up to 95 percent of the schools in the country have at least one Internet connection, including 90 percent of the schools in low income areas. Surprisingly enough, some of our schools, believe it or not, can't be wired because they are so dilapidated, which is why I've been trying to get a school construction initiative passed through Congress. (Applause.)

This may be hard for you to believe out here, but there are schools in New York City that are still heated by coal-fired furnaces. In Philadelphia, the average school building is 65 years old. And there are literally some of our poorest schools in our poor neighborhoods that we are physically unable to wire. But apart from them, by the end of this year, we should be at 100 percent of the schools.

Then what I think we need to do is to look at some of the things that have been done, for example, by Lucent and others in Union City, New Jersey, where they are trying to put more computers and Internet connections into the homes of first generation immigrants so that they can -- the parents can e-mail the principals and the teachers and learn and actually having -- my goal is -- it can't be done while I'm still President, but I'm going to keep working on it -- my goal is to have the penetration of computers and Internet access in this country to equal the penetration of telephone usage. That's what our goal ought to be. We ought to not quit until we get there. (Applause).

Q Mr. President, we actually have time for one last question from the audience.

Q Hello.

THE PRESIDENT: No, let this lady go and then I'll take yours. No, this lady first and then you. Okay, go ahead.

Q Hi, Mr. President. My parents both voted for you. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much.

Q My name is Weslina Ford (phonetic) and I used to work for Plugged In Enterprises. And my question is, what kind of programs and education would you encourage to help promote more access to science and engineering to me as an African American female?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I mentioned one of them in my announcement, but I think that beyond what we have talked about here, I think generally there needs to be a greater emphasis among young female students and among minority students on science, engineering, mathematics education. And we actually have some initiatives to invest in that, to do more outreach, do more recruitment, get more people involved in these programs; to encourage more people to go on to college to major in these programs in the 21st Century Science and Technology initiative that the Congress has. And I think it's about a \$3 billion initiative. I think it has very broad bipartisan support and I expect it to pass.

But I think we need to continue to just work on recruitment, and

then make sure that the kids that are interested in it take the courses in high school they need to take to get into the college majors. But I hope -- that's one of the things that I was talking about. You know, we don't have enough women or minorities in a lot of these technology fields. But there are a lot of other fields related to science and engineering where we need more.

I was talking to a young woman yesterday, who is a classmate of my daughter's at Stanford, about that, in the engineering area. And I think a lot of it, too, is making people believe they can do it. You know, in that sense, there is a parallel to the -- a few years ago, we had a lot of talented women basketball players, but they didn't imagine that they could have a pro league that could work, but it does now. And so Rebecca has got a whole different life than she would have had if she had been an all-American college basketball player 20 years ago. She wouldn't have had the life she now has. And that's -- someone imagined it and then they went around putting it together.

And I think it's even easier if we can just get more talent into the science and technology and engineering fields. And I think the main thing is recruitment and then making sure the young women and other people who have been left out actually do the preparatory work they need to get into the majors. I think the companies will recruit them coming out of college if they get there in the first place.

Now, I promised this lady she could ask her question.

Q I rise to a point of privilege. I'm a septuagenarian and I've been here for 40 years. The thing that I was going to say I'm not going to say. I'm just going to welcome you here on behalf of the community of East Palo Alto, welcome Reverend Jackson back again, and Mr. Conyers and the rest of the distinguished people. (Applause.)

Q We have received hundreds of e-mails from students across the country, and once the President gets back I understand he will be responding to them.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we want to respond to all the e-mails.

Q Great, wonderful.

THE PRESIDENT: Anything else? Let me say to all of you -- I'd like to ask you to give a big hand to Senator Bennett and all the members of the House of Representatives that are here. I thank them for coming. (Applause.)

One of the things I've noticed after seven years of being President is that the President gets to give the speeches, but if the Congress doesn't appropriate the money, it's just a speech. So I think their interest in being here is very encouraging, indeed. I want to thank all the chief executive officers of all these companies who are here because much of the work that will be done and much of the commitment that has been made today comes from them. So give them a hand as well. (Applause.)

And let me urge you again not to get discouraged, to work on this, and to remember that as big as the challenges seem, there are other people for whom the challenges are greater. I will just give you one example. When we get to the Shiprock Reservation today, we will be at a place where only 20 percent of the residents have telephones. Now, you can't be on the Internet if you don't even have a line. The last Indian reservation I visited, the unemployment rate was 73 percent.

The one thing you have here is physical proximity and you ought to make the most of it. I'm out there trying to figure out how to help

other people overcome physical distance from Appalachia to the small towns of the Mississippi Delta to these Native American reservations. You've got the proximity. These people showed up here today for you. And now, to some extent, the community, the schools, you've got to make the most of this. They want to be here to help you and you can do it. Thank you very much and God bless you.

(Applause.)

END 9:55 A.M. PDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 20, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY
CONFERENCE CALL WITH
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR ECONOMIC POLICY
TOM KALIL,
AND NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY ADVISOR GENE SPERLING

2:30 P.M. EDT

MR. KALIL: As you know, on Thursday, President Clinton will be traveling to Flint, Michigan, a part of his ongoing initiative to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for all Americans. He started this tour and kicked it off in East Palo Alto, California.

In Flint, the President will be visiting the Assistive Technology Access Center, which is at an organization called the Disability Network, which is a nonprofit that helps empower people with disabilities. And this center will be offering access to cutting-edge technology for people with disabilities and other members of the community.

To give you some sense for the kinds of technologies that help empower people with disabilities, it includes things like screen readers for people who are blind; voice recognition for people that have a difficult time using a keyboard due to physical disabilities; websites that follow the guidelines of the Worldwide Web consortiums, web accessibility initiative; audio and video captioning, video description; and computers that can be operated by eye movements for people with spinal cord or Lou Gehrig's disease, that type of thing.

So the President will see demonstrations of a number of different kinds of technologies. And then the President will be giving a speech at Mott Community College in which he will announce concrete actions by both the administration companies, universities and nonprofits, to help ensure that people with disabilities are full participants in the benefits of information technology.

The goals that we have identified after working with the disability community and the private sector are ensuring that existing information and communications products and services are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

The second goal is to approve the state of the art of the system technology. The third is to ensure that our existing efforts to bridge the digital divide, such as our initiative to create a national network of community technology centers are accessible to people with disabilities.

The fourth goal is to look at information technology as a way of increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. And finally, our last goal is to increase access to technology for people with disabilities that cannot currently afford this.

Q Tom, do the federal concrete actions involve money, or what?

MR. KALIL: Yes, that's right. We're not going to talk about the specific deliverables, but the federal government -- I also wanted to go over some of the reasons why the President is speaking on this issue, to give you some background on sort of where we are currently. Right now, about 24 percent of people with disabilities have access to a computer at home, and that's compared to around 52 percent of those without disabilities. Only 31 percent of the Americans with severe disabilities who are of working age between 21 and 64 are working, and that's compared to about 8 out of 10 of people without disabilities.

And the interesting thing is that people with disabilities believe that having access to the Internet is very important. And 48 percent of people with disabilities who have access to the Internet believe that it has significantly improved their quality of life compared 27 percent of the adults without disabilities. And that was from a Harris poll that came out in June of 2000.

Q You said a percentage of those with severe disabilities between the age of 21 and 64 working was 34 percent?

MR. KALIL: Thirty-one percent, and that's from the Census Bureau.

Q Have any other centers like these opened beside the one in Flint?

MR. KALIL: Yes, yes. There's an organization -- I want to step back and make a point, though. Our goal is to ensure that all information and communications technologies are accessible for people with disabilities, so one of the things that we are going to be working on is to ensure that the web is accessible for people with disabilities. So it's not like there will be a separate Worldwide Web for people with disabilities and another one for everyone else. The goal is to ensure that all mainstream information in communications technologies are accessible for people with disabilities.

Q This is John Williams with Business Week. How do you plan to achieve that goal, and what major businesses in the information tech field are going to take the lead?

MR. KALIL: Stay tuned for tomorrow.

Q Ahh, come on. (Laughter.)

Q Is there any carryover between the technology at these centers and the technology that's going to be available at the one-stops, for instance?

MR. KALIL: Yes. One of the things that's very interesting about the one-stop in Flint is that it has made really a special effort to ensure that it is accessible for people with disabilities.

Q Will the President be visiting that center as well?

MR. KALIL: He will not be visiting that center as well. He'll be at the Assistive Technology Access Center, at the Disability Network, and then he will be giving a speech at Mott Community College.

Q Who would be putting together this national network?

MR. KALIL: I'm sorry, which national network are you referring to?

Q Well, you mentioned the national --

MR. KALIL: Yes, in our budget proposal --

Q For fiscal 2001?

MR. KALIL: For 2001 -- we have proposed \$100 million for community technology centers. And that's building on previous investments that we've made in the last two fiscal years. We started out the program at \$10 million, and then last year we were able to get \$32.5 million. And this year we're requesting \$100 million.

Q And where are you in that process?

MR. KALIL: Well, it's getting near the end of the fiscal year. It's in the Department of Education budget, it's in Labor/HHS.

Q And how will this center differ from any of the tech centers that are out there now?

Q Or the rehab centers that are out there now?

MR. KALIL: What's different about this center, as opposed to other community technology centers, is that they have made a special effort to ensure that assistive technology is present, and it's co-located with a disability network organization.

Q How are they funded?

MR. KALIL: They have received a grant from the Department of Education, the Community Technology Center. And they've also received some local funding, as well.

Q Could you talk a little more specifically about some of the technologies that the President will see tomorrow? For example, you mentioned screen readers. Is he going to see those, and what are they?

MR. KALIL: There are number of different technologies that the President will be seen. Gene has just joined us. He will be seeing an Eye-Gaze system. This is a really remarkable piece of technology that allows someone with Lou Gehrig's disease or a spinal cord injury that is not able to speak and use a speech recognition system to operate a computer merely by looking at different parts of the screen. So they can send e-mail, they can use a computer, they can turn household appliances on and off just by looking at different parts of the screen.

Q And what is that system called? Is that the Genie system, or do you know?

MR. KALIL: Eye-Gaze.

Q Eye-Gaze. It's been around for about five years.

Q Oh, that's the brand name.

Q Is that available now?

Q It's been around for five years.

Q Can you describe anything else that he's going to look at? Anything that is new?

MR. KALIL: Yes. He will also be seeing electronic book technology. And what's really interesting about this is that this is the mainstream electronic book technology that companies are starting to introduce, but it is also going to have the benefit of being fully accessible to people with disabilities?

Q How so?

MR. KALIL: Because you will be able to display the information both -- and also braille.

Q So who's system is that?

MR. KALIL: It's using the daisy technical system.

Q National Cash Register has done some publishing with digital talking books.

Q I have a question. On the five goals, I noticed one of the goals that is mentioned is universal design and technology from the beginning. Is the President going to make any efforts to make this mandatory, that when software or hardware is created that it's accessible to people with disabilities?

MR. KALIL: Absolutely. The first goal is to ensure that existing information and communications technology are accessible and usable by people with disabilities. And the President has already taken a number of steps in this area --

Q I'm talking about newly developing technology. As they're developing technology, making it -- starting from day one -- universal design so that it's accessible to everybody in the development phase. I'm not talking about existing technology; I'm talking about in the development phase.

MR. KALIL: Absolutely. And that's been a priority of the administration. That's why the President is a very strong supporter of the provisions of Telecom Act of 1996 -- that's why we fought hard to ensure that the government uses its --

Q So you're saying it is mandatory? You're going to make this --

MR. KALIL: I'm saying that the -- provision, both in the '96 Telecom Act that -- require telecommunications companies to design their -- (phone line gets dropped.)

MR. SPERLING: This is Gene Sperling and Tom Kalil here.

Q When you talked about the 24 percent of those with disabilities who have access to home computers, do you know how big a group that 24 percent -- how many millions of people we're talking about?

MR. KALIL: The overall number of people with disabilities is 54 million according to the Census.

Q And when you talk about the \$100 million being sought for these community technology centers, are those technology centers designed exclusively or solely for the disabled, or is that --

MR. KALIL: No, no.

Q These are across the board?

MR. KALIL: Right.

Q Will the address at Mott College following the visit to the Disability Networking Plant, is that going to be on the same subject matter, then?

MR. KALIL: Yes, that's right. The President, in his address at the community college will announce the specific steps that the government, the private sector, universities and nonprofits are taking to help meet these five goals.

Q Will he be offering any types of tax incentives to the businesses to make their --

MR. KALIL: I'm not going to talk about the specific announcements that he's going to make. The President will make those announcements.

Q Can you tell us how you identified the people who will demonstrate the specific technologies, and if you can release their names?

MR. KALIL: We'll be able to have that information for you tomorrow.

Q Not until tomorrow?

Q Can you talk a little bit about the rest of the itinerary with the meeting with the Michigan Democrat Party and also with the attorneys, along with Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer?

MR. KALIL: No, I'm sorry, I'm not in a position to do that.

Q Tom or Gene, you mentioned one of the goals was making IT for the -- IT would increase employment opportunities. How does that translate for the civil service?

MR. KALIL: The President has set a specific goal during the 10th anniversary of the ADA, to increase civil service employment for people with disabilities.

Q Okay, so that won't really be further addressed.

MR. KALIL: That's right. The President addressed that during the 10th anniversary.

Q Tom, could you actually speak on the role that corporations are being asked to play in implementing this technology in the workplace?

MR. KALIL: We think they have a critical role to play, both in terms of the IT companies in designing new products so that they're accessible for people with disabilities, and as employers purchasing this technology and using it as a way of increasing employment for people with disabilities. I think you're starting to see more corporations interested in that, particularly as the labor market gets tighter and tighter.

Q Is the President addressing the need for training people in the use of these assistive technologies?

MR. KALIL: Yes, part of what happens at these community technology centers is it's not just that the technology's available, but that people are there to help people -- explain how to use the technology. And the particular center that we're visiting actually is developing a certification program so that people can get certified in the use of these technologies.

Q Would you mind giving me the name of that center one more time? I'm sorry.

MR. KALIL: Sure, it's the Assistive Technology Access Center, and it's at an organization called the Disability Network. It received funding from the Department of Education's Community Technology Center Program.

Q Do you know how old it is?

MR. KALIL: This is sort of -- I don't know how old the Disability Network is, but this will sort of be the grand opening of the center.

Q Tom or Gene, has OPM been encouraged at all to try and recruit people that receive training through these centers for the federal service?

MR. KALIL: OPM has been very involved in sort of our overall efforts to increase employment for people with disabilities, but I don't have an answer to your specific question.

Q What role will Section 508 play in increasing technology access?

MR. KALIL: We think that the federal government is a large purchaser of information technology. So we think that by requiring that the federal government purchase technology that is designed from the beginning to be accessible for people with disabilities, this will clearly increase the incentive of the private sector to develop more resources to this area.

Q Is this particularly community technology center unusual among the ones that have -- because of this technology you're talking about?

MR. KALIL: I think that they -- because it is located at the Disability Network, I think there are a couple of things that make it unique. Number one, it's staffed by people with disabilities. Number two, it has a certification program to train more people to use assistive technologies. Number three, obviously, they've made a real effort to begin purchasing technologies like screen readers that will make it accessible for people with disabilities. But it's a resource for the entire community, not just people with disabilities. So it's integrated.

Q Is this topic the main reason for the trip to Michigan?

MR. KALIL: Yes.

MR. SPERLING: Yes. The history of this was that when we were taking our third New Markets trip, which is our focus to try to encourage more mobilization investment on bringing people and communities who weren't fully benefitting from the economy on board, we did it on the digital divide. And then we made a decision during that process whether or not we were going to try to deal with the issue of digital technology and Americans with disabilities. And we decided during that process that we would rather do a separate day on this where we could focus on that. And so we chose to focus more on the poverty aspects in that trip, but we actually announced on that trip that we would do a separate day on this.

But, clearly, we are looking at this as a way of mobilizing both the private sector and the federal government to look at every opportunity, to look at how technology, visual technology can help close the digital divide. And that means looking at, from the beginning processes, how research is done at companies to the research in the

federal government to whether we have the resources to make sure that those technologies are accessible to people regardless of income.

If you think about the shock and surprise at the high unemployment rates in Native American communities in the face of a strong economy, people should feel that same -- they should be equally disturbed by the unacceptably high unemployment rates among Americans with disabilities. So we feel that this is not only the focusing on closing the digital divide for Americans with disability not only equitable and morally the right thing to do, but it really is an economic imperative when one considers the lack of potential being utilized.

I also think that, from the government level, people are going to have to do considerable soul searching as this technology is developed -- if we do not have means of making it accessible to lower income Americans with disabilities. Whatever arguments may exist, whatever incentive arguments people worry about, about devoting significant resources in other walks of life, nobody is going to contest that by having generous funding for assistive technology that it's somehow going to give people a negative incentive or an incentive to become disabled -- that's absurd.

And on the other hand, I think that as you get this technology, I think it's going to be a strain on the nation's conscience to say a disabled person from an upper middle class home can afford something like Eye-Gaze, which has remarkable capabilities, but somebody from a lower-income family simply is told "tough luck" twice.

Q Do you anticipate addressing the tenet that a person -- that acquiring assistive technology would have to be necessarily tied to the willingness to work? There are, for instance, older adults with disabilities who are not going to go back to work who could still use the Eye-Gaze system or any number of other assistive technologies.

MR. SPERLING: Well, think one of the reasons that it's so important for the President to raise this issue is that there has not been a full, or really a partial national debate on that type of issue and the criteria. And certainly people are not even familiar with the full degree of the technologies, but certainly the need for people to have access to technologies that can help them be educated in the first place, and then have productive living in the second place -- one of the things that will be raised tomorrow is we will be raising some inquiries about the degree that key federal programs that have not looked in this area, should. And that could go beyond just the work situation clearly to whether some of these technologies are essential for rehabilitation and independent living.

But I think these are -- because they're resource questions, they're inherently difficult questions. But I think there will be an increasing imperative.

Q Is that Eye-Gaze, is that a brand name?

MR. KALIL: Yes. I actually had a chance to do the demonstration of that, actually in the -- the technology was actually set up at the Vice President's residence during the commemoration of the ADA Act, so I can just tell you as kind of a novice, you're completely still. You look at the screen, a dot moves around. It tracks your eyes.

From there they had the set up to a printer, lights, everything, so that you could look to lights. All you had to do was be able to move your eyeball to the box that said lights, and then it would give a chance to turn it on or off, and if you looked at on, the light

would turn on, and then -- I tried to type with it. It's just a little hard because if you're not used to it, if you're trying to type your name, you hit letters you don't mean to hit. But it was just -- but for one who'd never experienced it before, it was remarkable.

Q Don Joseph from Able TV. Once certification is achieved at one of these centers, is there a plan --

MR. SPERLING: This is Gene. I apologize. I was late because I was with the President following the meeting with the Italian Prime Minister. I have to now pop off. I'll leave Tom Kalil with you, but thanks for getting on the call.

Q Thank you.

Q Earlier you mentioned the President's concern for web accessibility. Has he, or does he plan to release standards for web accessibility?

MR. KALIL: We would anticipate working with the W3C web accessibility initiative.

Q As a voluntary standard?

MR. KALIL: Right. All right, thank you all very much.

Q Thank you.

END 2:55 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 4, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DIGITAL DIVIDE KICK-OFF

The East Room

3:04 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. First of all, Julian, I thank you for your introduction, for your remarks and, mostly, for the power of your example. I find very often when we do these events in the White House, by the time I get up to talk, everything that needs to be said has already been said. And I certainly thank you.

I want to thank you, Senator Barbara Mikulski, for being the first member of Congress to talk to me about the digital divide. And once I realized you were interested in it, I stopped worrying about whether we would address it -- (laughter) -- because no one will ever say "no" to the Senate's spark plug of energy. I want to thank Secretary Herman for her support. And, Secretary Glickman, thank you for being here. Harris Wofford, the leader of our national service movement; and Gene Sperling, my National Economic Advisor, who has pushed this whole digital divide issue so passionately.

I want to thank the members of Congress who are here. Over to my left, Senator John Breaux, my neighbor, from the Mississippi Delta, where we are very interested in the potential of the computer and the Internet. And we just had a large delegation of House members that have come in -- they've been voting and I'm glad they're here. I hope I have all their names, but I'd like to introduce them: Representative Maxine Waters, Representative Bart Stupak, Representative Ellen Tauscher, Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, Representative Silvestre Reyes, Representative John Larson, Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson, Representative Zoe Lofgren, Representative Ruben Hinojosa. Thank you all for being here. (Applause.) Did I get everybody? Thank you. And Elijah Cummings, from Maryland -- he's on the front row.

I'd also like to thank Governor Angus King, from Maine, for being here. He is working to create an endowment fund in Maine to provide portable computers and Internet access to all 7th graders, so they can actually be taken home.

There are many other distinguished Americans here who have worked on this. Bob Johnson, the head of BET, thank you for being here. And I want to acknowledge the presence of former Governor of West Virginia, Gaston Caperton, now the head of the College Board. West Virginia, under his leadership, was the first state to provide computer access to all elementary school students. So we're glad to have you here, sir. And I thank you all for being here.

I want to talk about what we're doing now as we set the stage for the administration's third New Markets tour, which will begin in the week of April the 16th. But before I begin, I would like to acknowledge two very important developments yesterday in America's ongoing fight to protect our children from the dangers of guns falling into the hands of criminals and children -- one of them in Senator Mikulski's home state

of Maryland.

Last night I called Governor Glendenning and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend to congratulate them and the Maryland Legislature for passing legislation requiring built-in child safety locks on new handguns, ballistics testing for new guns, and safety training for gun purchasers. And yesterday, Massachusetts began enforcing tougher consumer product safety rules, banning junk guns and requiring trigger locks. Next week, I'm going out to Colorado to support a citizen ballot initiative there that would close the gun show loophole.

These are all great efforts, and I think it's worth pointing out that they are bipartisan efforts in these states. (Applause.) Colorado, for example, Republican registration has gone up in the last six or seven years, and this ballot initiative today is overwhelmingly in the lead on the ballot. So this should not be a partisan issue in Washington, D.C. if it is not a partisan issue in the rest of the country.

And again, I say, I challenge the Congress to send me the common-sense gun safety legislation by April 20th, the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy. We have to close the gun show loophole and require child safety locks and ban the importation of large-scale ammunition clips that make our assault weapons ban a mockery. It requires national legislation, as well. So congratulations to Maryland and Massachusetts, and I thank the people in Colorado, but we still have to do our job here.

Now, I cannot imagine a better place for us to kick off our next chapter in the New Markets effort than here in the East Room -- for it was in this very room nearly two centuries ago that Thomas Jefferson and his personal aide, Meriwether Lewis, laid maps on this floor to chart the Lewis & Clark expedition.

Today, we are here again to chart a new expedition, to open new frontiers of possibilities for America -- the digital frontiers. Our mission is to open that frontier to all Americans, regardless of income, education, geography, disability or race. This is a fortunate time for the United States. We have the strongest economy in our history; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record; the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years.

But we all know there are people and places that have been left behind. Over the last year I have traveled to many of these places. I have been to Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta, to the inner cities of Newark and Watts, to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Every place I have gone I have seen how we could do more to bring the benefits of free enterprise and empowerment, with private sector and community organization cooperation -- for new businesses, new jobs, new training and education that will make a real difference in people's lives.

I want you to understand that while most people talk about the digital divide -- and it is real and it could get worse -- I believe that the computer and the Internet give us a chance to move more people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in all of human history. That's what I believe. (Applause.) But it won't happen by accident. We'll have to work to make it happen.

On this upcoming New Markets tour, we will focus specifically on how to pool resources to help communities get access to and take best advantage of the tools of the Information Age. We will visit your

hometown of East Palo Alto, a community where 20 percent of the residents still live below the poverty line, to show that even in the heart of Silicon Valley there is still a substantial digital divide -- but that things are being done about it.

We will visit Shiprock, New Mexico, a small town in the Navajo Nation, to demonstrate the unique challenges faced by geographically remote Indian reservations. I will speak at the influential Comdex Conference in Chicago, where I'll talk to representatives of every major computer and Internet company in America, and ask them to join our cause.

And then the following week I will go to North Carolina, where we will discuss the importance of connecting rural America to the same high-speed broad-band networks now proliferating in metropolitan areas.

On all these stops, I will make the case that new technologies can be an incredible tool of empowerment in schools, homes, businesses, community centers and every other part of our civic life, arguing that if we work together to close the digital divide, technology can be the greatest equalizing force our society or any other has ever known.

Imagine if computers and Internet connections were as common in every community as telephones are today; if all teachers had the skills to open students' eyes and minds to the possibilities of new technologies; if every small business in every rural town could join worldwide markets once reserved for the most powerful corporations -- just imagine what America could be.

Let me say -- first of all I see Congressman Jefferson and Congressman Rush and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. There may be other representatives, but as they come in, I'll try to acknowledge them. There's a ton of interest in this.

Let me give you an example. You know, I just got back from India, a country of 900 million people with a per capita income of \$450. We think we have challenges. But I saw what you could do there to close the digital divide, to use technology in an affirmative way.

I went to a little village in Rajasthan called Nayla -- typical low-income Indian village. And in the public building, the village's public building, there is a computer with software where the programs are in both English and Hindi, and can be adapted to other local languages, as the case may be. And the first thing I saw was a mother who had just given birth to a child come in. And they have all the public information from the federal and state government on this computer.

So she goes -- she brings up the Health Department's page on newborn babies. And there's so much visual -- there's such a good visual component to this software that you could be almost illiterate and still work it. And she identifies the instructions that any new mother might want to have, and then she pushes a few buttons, and there's a printer. She prints it out, and she now has information just as good as she could get if her baby were born at the Georgetown Medical Center here, and she were going home.

Then I met with this Women's Dairy Cooperative -- keep in mind, in this little village in India, where every transaction, every time they brought milk in, it was all entered on the computer, what the fat content was, what the volume was, what the price was. And every time the milk was sold, it was entered, so that they got a regular computerized record of not only what they had put in, but what they got out.

Then I went to Hyderabad, which is sort of a high-tech center of India. But in that whole state, you can now get 18 public services on the computer, on the Internet. Nobody goes to a Revenue Office to buy their license anymore; you can get a driver's license on the Internet. Now, Governor, if you do that, you can be governor for life. They'll repeal the term limits, repeal everything. (Laughter.)

My point is that you can see the potential of this for even the poorest people in the world is truly explosive. That's why we want these 1,000 computer centers out there, because we don't want to wait even for all the schools to do this right. We want adults in rural areas, in isolated areas, in poor areas, to be able to come in and access the same sort of services, and use them, and get the same sort of information and access.

The potential of this is truly staggering. We need not see the digital divide as a threat. It is the greatest opportunity the United States of America has ever had to lift people out of poverty and ignorance. (Applause.)

But I will say again, if you look at the whole history of economic development, whenever there's a change in the paradigm, there's a divide that opens, because some people are well-positioned to take advantage of the new economy. It happened when we moved from being an agricultural nation to an industrial nation. Some people are well positioned to take advantage of it, and others aren't. So new divides always open when the dominant way of making a living in any society changes.

But this empowerment tool gives us a chance not only to close the divide quickly, but to actually lift poor people in a way that has never before been possible.

I just got back from Northern California, and I learned that now -- I met with some people from a lot of different computer companies, but the people from e-Bay told me that there are now 30,000 people-plus, making a living just trading on e-Bay, not working for the company, and that many of them used to be on welfare. So it's important that we see this not only for the problem it presents, but for the phenomenal opportunity that it presents.

Important that we see it not only as a way to close a gap so people don't fall further behind, but a way to give people a tool that will enable them to leap further ahead. But again, I say, it won't happen by accident. It requires government, business, educators, librarians, civil rights, religious leaders, labor union leaders -- thank you, Mr. Barr, for being here today -- community-based organizations, foundations, volunteers. Everybody has got to work together.

Today, I want to issue a national call for action on digital opportunity, to help us achieve two vitally important goals. First, to bring 21st century learning tools to every school. That means we have to finish the job of connecting every classroom to the Internet, ensuring that all students have access to multi-media computers, creating more high quality educational software, helping all teachers learn how to make the best use of these tools. And this is very important.

Again, I want to thank the members of Congress here who have supported our efforts in the aftermath of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, to create the E-rate, which has made it possible for the schools, no matter how poor they are, to have access to the Internet. (Applause.)

The second goal is to expand efforts far beyond our schools, to give every citizen Internet access at home, by bringing technology

centers and high-speed networks to every single community; by helping adults to gain the skills to compete for I.T. jobs; and inspiring more people to appreciate the great value of getting on line.

Today is the opening of this national call to action. More than 400 organizations already have signed the pledge, and this is just the beginning. For the rest of the year we will try to inspire hundreds, indeed, thousands, more to sign up. We will work with Congress, across party lines, to build support for budget and legislative initiatives to meet these goals. And you heard Senator Mikulski outline some of them. We have to be willing at the national level to do our part. This is a worthy, federal investment.

During the New Markets tour, we'll have an opportunity to announce many commitments tied to this call to action. Today, I'd just like to review four of them -- all of them vivid illustrations of the kind of visionary partnership and barn-raising spirit that we are working to foster.

First, to rephrase something Senator Mikulski mentioned, AmeriCorps will make an enormous contribution to closing the digital divide by marshalling the power of active citizen volunteers. Thanks to the leadership of Senator Mikulski and Harris Wofford, AmeriCorps is committing \$10 million to recruit 750 new members to serve in a brand-new E-Corps. The E-Corps will be a large battalion of volunteers, trained and devoted exclusively to projects like providing technical support to school systems and teaching computer literacy to adults and children.

The Corporation for National Service will also unleash the power of students helping students by providing funds to allow 90,000 high school students to get involved in digital divide projects as part of their educational curriculum.

Most young people I know can run circles around me and most people my age when it comes to computers and the Internet. AmeriCorps is going to tap their capacity so that they can help others in their communities to close the digital divide.

Second, to help get AmeriCorps' E-Corps off to a running start, Yahoo will donate \$1 million in Internet advertising to attract potential E-Corps members with high-tech skills. Third, in partnership with the YWCA, 3Com is launching an innovative initiative called "NetPrep GYRLS" -- g-y-r-l-s. Currently less than 30 percent -- listen to this -- less than 30 percent of our computer scientists and programmers are women. NetPrep GYRLS will help to right this imbalance offering free computer network training and certification to hundreds of high school girls across our country.

Fourth, the American Library Association has pledged to greatly expand the Information Literacy Programs of its members in at least 250 communities. So this is just the beginning, but I want to thank the people who were involved for these four initiatives. There will be many more, but I thank you very much. (Applause.)

I've heard Harris Wofford -- who worked with Martin Luther King, and who was in Selma with me the other day, and was in Selma 35 years ago when the first march took place -- say that making sure all young Americans share in the opportunity and promise of America is the unfinished business of the civil rights movement.

It is appropriate that we are meeting here on this subject 32 years to the day after Martin Luther King was assassinated in Memphis. He was there working to lift the economic fortunes of disadvantaged people. I

think if he were with us today, he would therefore say closing the digital divide is a righteous cause.

In his last Sunday sermon, he ended with a prayer that said, "God grant us all a chance to be participants in the newness and magnificent development of America." That's what this is all about. We need more people Julian. We need more people like you, not only clapping for people like Julian, but helping them to live their dreams.

We do that when we help young people; when we help seniors in rural America get medical advice over the Internet; when we create tools that allow people with disabilities to open new doors of possibility. We give our neighbors a chance to participate in this astonishing American renaissance, we have done something that would have made Dr. King proud. And the new technology of the digital age gives us a chance to do it for more people, more quickly, more profoundly, than at any time in human history. It's up to us to seize that opportunity.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 3:25 P.M. EDT

**A NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION FOR
DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY**

**YES, WE SUPPORT THE CALL TO ACTION AND ARE COMMITTED
TO TAKING CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD MEETING THE TWO
NATIONAL GOALS FOR DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY.**

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION NAME:

PRESIDENT/CEO:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

FAX:

E-MAIL:

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY MARCH 24th TO:

Jackson Dunn, Office of Public Liaison

E-mail: jackson_dunn@who.eop.gov

Phone: 202-456-2930

Fax: 202-456-6218

FROM DIGITAL DIVIDE TO DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY A NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION

Access to information technology and the Internet and the ability to use this technology effectively are becoming increasingly important to full participation in America's economic, political and social life. While computer and Internet access has exploded in recent years, America faces a "digital divide"—a gap between those who have access to Information Age tools and the skills to use them and those who don't.

America has an important choice to make: we can allow unequal access to deepen existing divisions along the lines of race, income, education level, geography, and disability -- or we can use technology as a powerful tool to help make the American dream a reality for more people. To help create digital opportunity for more Americans, we must create strong partnerships between government, industry, and the rich mosaic of America's civil society -- including educators, labor unions, librarians, civil rights leaders, faith-based organizations, foundations, volunteers, and community-based organizations.

As companies, non-profit organizations and individuals, we are committed to taking concrete steps to meet two critical national goals: (1) Ensuring Access To 21st Century Learning Tools For Every Child In Every School; and (2) Expanding Digital Opportunity For Every American Family And Community. We pledge to support these two goals.

GOAL ONE: 21ST CENTURY LEARNING TOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD IN EVERY SCHOOL

For children to succeed, they need to master basic skills at an early age. A critical element of this is the need for information and technological literacy. To help achieve these aims, we must focus on a comprehensive approach to integrating technology into teaching and learning while recognizing that -- as powerful as technology is -- it is no substitute for an inspiring teacher or a loving parent. Together, we must:

1. Connect every classroom to the Internet
2. Ensure that all students have modern multi-media computer access, ideally at a ratio of 1 computer for every 4-5 students
3. Ensure that teachers are technologically literate and can integrate technology into the curriculum
4. Make available high quality educational software and online learning resources

GOAL TWO: DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY AMERICAN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY To ensure that no family or community is left behind, we must:

1. Set the long-term goal of making home access to the Internet universal
2. Bring technology to every community -- urban, rural, and Native American -- through Community Technology Centers and high-speed networks
3. Give adults the skills they need to use information technology and compete for jobs in the IT sector
4. Motivate and inspire more people to appreciate the value of "getting connected"