

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

**City Year 10th Anniversary
Boston, MA
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City Year 10th Anniversary Celebration

Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

Boston, Massachusetts
June 4, 1999

Thank you so much. Thank you, Jamie Lee, for your service and for your introduction. I am deeply grateful for the honor that you have bestowed upon me today, but I'm even more grateful for the work you do every day and the example you set. I want to applaud all the members of Boston City Year who have given so much to this community. And besides that, you can perform, you can recite, you can work, and you can set all of our hearts just bursting with pride and gratitude.

As I was watching Lauren and Rosa and as I was seeing what they have done for us today, I thought of all the City Year members I've met all over this country, wearing your red jackets, usually with big smiles and with more energy than I can possibly keep up with. And I want you to know how important what you're doing here is for our country.

You are honoring three of us today, and it is a great honor for us to be with you. It is also an honor to be here with the Governor who has supported City Year, and I am very grateful also to Mayor Menino for his support of City Year and the leadership of many from this city and this Commonwealth. It is literally transforming the streets and neighborhoods where people live and work. I've often thought that if we could just ignite the spirit of City Year and national service and AmeriCorps, we would see such a revolution sweep our country. Well, indeed, that is what is happening. From the early ideas and vision that Michael and Allen brought to City Year along with their colleagues, to this day 10 years later. I believe we are seeing the deeply held effects of what you and others like you are doing.

It takes a long time to change a heart. It takes a long time to change a culture. But that is what is happening. And it's hard to imagine a better place to celebrate this tenth anniversary than here, in this historic hall. A place where Samuel Adams rallied the citizens of Boston for the cause of independence. Where George Washington toasted the nation on its first birthday. Where people have always gathered to replenish our commitment as Americans to liberty, justice, and citizenship.

Now City Year is keeping those values alive. You are carrying forward the vision that brought people here in decades and centuries past: to unite in a common purpose; to celebrate our diversity; to stand for the idealism that has always been the hallmark of America's best days.

I want to thank all of you who are part of this extraordinary and very worthwhile effort. Let me start by recognizing the two men who, along with all of you, have really made this day possible. Allen and Michael had an idea and, as social entrepreneurs, they were able to act upon that idea. They recruited many leaders like Executive Director Robert Lewis, who throughout

our country and at every City Year site has similarly inspired the spark of social entrepreneurship and city involvement.

There are many people in this hall today who have worked to make this day possible. I know that many are good friends and supporters of City Year. I want to congratulate my co-honorees, because I know that Dean Jones, as he's often referred to, is not just the Dean of Education but the Dean of Social Justice, and is not just an example of honor here, but someone who is looked to around our country for his leadership.

I know that the Swartz family has a fine tradition of city involvement in this community. And now by spreading out and enabling City Year to grow even stronger, their contributions are more important than ever. Leaders like one of your City Year trustees, a friend of mine, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, who takes the work that she does every day at the Harvard Business School and checks it into City Year to keep that spirit of change and action going. But there are many of you who are really responsible for what we celebrate today. As energetic as all of you who are currently corps members happen to be, we have to continue to reach out to our fellow citizens on behalf of the goals of City Year.

When my husband and I began to think about the millennium and the change of the century, we wanted it to be a time for America to take stock and perhaps spend a few reflective moments considering what it is what we want for our future. One of the themes we adopted was to "Honor the past; imagine the future." Honor the past by bringing forward those values and aspirations that are the best of America, but imagine an even better future that leaves no American out.

What you are doing is really fulfilling that need to honor the past because you keep faith within a loving community. You understand the need for "Big Citizens" in our time and you are literally helping to transform the country and to build, I'd imagine, a better future. Giving gifts to the future is what you do every day when you visit an elderly person, or help plan a community garden, or work at a community soup kitchen, or tutor a child who needs help, or become a friend or mentor to another child, or open a school vacation camp where kids would otherwise have no other place to go, or help change neighborhoods that used to be warzones to places that are once again filled with happy playing children. You have mentored and tutored in the last 10 years almost 400,000 children. You've worked on the front lines for the city disaster victims. You have helped immigrants prepare to become citizens. You've taught students how to resolve their problems peacefully. You've helped in infinite ways to engage middle school and high school students in service themselves. And because you have done all of that for 10 short years, you have helped to launch a national movement that will make service a common expectation and experience on every young person growing up in America.

Too often today, we have a very distorted view of our young people. Look at the stereotypes when you hear the stories of tragedy and disaster. I know that that is not in any way representative of the young people I meet every day, everywhere in America. I know that there are young people in this generation who are doing as much if not more than anyone has ever done before to help build a better, more peaceful, helpful America. I know that young people

today often have a more difficult time navigating to adulthood than the people I grew up with, that it seems much more difficult to sometimes find your footing. That is why what you're doing here -- what the Governor said is an anecdote to allowing the other problems to besiege our society -- it is not only life changing for those of you who participate, but it can be completely life changing for our entire nation by helping to shatter stereotypes.

You have helped to bring people together from every segment of American society. And you know, and I'm sure that Allen and Michael have told you, that my husband and I looked to City Year when he was elected President as a model for the kind of national service program that we hoped could fill the entire country with the same kind of energy and enthusiasm that is brought to you now that the City Year Corps members wear the AmeriCorps emblem on your signature red jackets, because you are part of the huge growing national network of service.

This fall, we will all celebrate the fifth anniversary of AmeriCorps, and I hope you are all once again with us at the White House. Because since the President swore in the first corps members in 1994, more than 100,000 young Americans have served in AmeriCorps -- including 40,000 serving this year alone, representing every part of America and serving in 4,000 communities in every state.

Now that it's up to us to make City Year and AmeriCorps a permanent part of the fabric of America's civil life, I'm pleased that the President has proposed to expand AmeriCorps to 100,000 members each year by 2002. And I hope the Congress supports that request. Because when, in the wake of Littleton, we ask ourselves, "What can we do?" Well, one answer is, "Let's provide service opportunities for every young man and woman in America so that they can live and work together side-by-side in common purpose to make this country all it should be."

But we know that government cannot -- and should not -- shoulder that burden and that mission alone. We all have to be part of making service live in our lives. And towards that end, it is my great pleasure and honor to announce the creation of the first-ever endowment fund for City Year. This fund will enable thousands more young people to serve in their communities.

Now most of us, when we think about endowments, we think about universities and hospitals and museums, and in helping them endure into the future. But now we also must ensure that our civic institutions are equally supported. We have to take seriously the call to service and create continuing commitments to that call. What deTocqueville called "the habits of the heart" are what we need to be sure our youth are nurtured in every generation to come.

You know, at the end of the last century, people came together here in Boston and around the country to create enduring civic institutions like Boys and Girls Scouts, the YMCA, and the Urban League. Well now it is up to us to endow youth service and civic engagement to help to make sure that as we go into this new century, we are equally committed to the kind of future we want to make.

And I want to recognize those who have contributed to this beginning endowment who have already helped to raise \$6 million. I want to thank the following for their legacy gifts: Bank of Boston and CEO Chad Gifford; Bain Capital and Mark Nunnally; Timberland and CEO Jeff Swartz. There have been numerous individuals who have also given generously: Holly Davidson; Paul and Phyllis Fireman; Sidney and Judy Swartz. I would like personally to thank Sidney and Judy who have dedicated this gift, the civic innovation initiative, in the President's and my name. And I hope that it will serve to spur all of us on, to do even more to find new ways to engage young people in national service. And finally, I want to thank Compaq Computer Corporation and Hans Guetsh for their national sponsorship of City Year. Now we often talk about a "wired world." Well that has several meanings – these are wired people. You know the energy that comes from these young people is something that we must awe moving forward.

I know that we will be able to reach the goal of \$10 million because of the public/private partnership that this represents. And I know that as we do, we're going to be even more committed to making City Year available in every community around our country.

I started today with my husband in the Roosevelt Room in the White House speaking with young people; speaking about what we can do in the wake of Littleton and other violence that strikes our streets and takes too many of our children too soon. We talked about a lot of different things. We talked about trying to get some sensible gun control measures. We talked about the culture of violence and what we needed to do to convince those who control the media – from the Internet to the movies and everything else – to understand the impact that has on children. We talked about how to make our schools smaller and to give more opportunities for adults to have meaningful interaction with every individual child, and for peers to mediate and avert problems and avert violence. We talked about how important it was for parents and other adults to spend real time with children and young people -- to listen; to respond; to help be part of making the aspirations, the fears, the hopes of all of our young people understandable so that we can manage our own.

Now, in a way, I think that what you are doing here is one of the best answers that we can give to what we as a nation have to do to respond. We've made progress in so many areas in the last 6 ½ years. It is not just enough to end the violence that taught and molds our children by just saying "No" to them. We have to give every other person a chance to say yes and a chance to contribute, a chance to make a difference, a chance to serve. We, every one of us, has a stake in the healthy development of every boy and girl in America. And each of you understands that because you're turning that into helping lift up even young people. There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be fixed by what is right in America. That's something my husband has said over and over again.

Well, I want to say to all the corps members here that to your 40,000 colleagues around our country, you are what's right in America. And I thank you for what you do every day and for helping us to imagine a better future. I love that saying: "For every one of me, there are a thousand of me." Let's keep going until every one of those thousands can be reached, and every one of them can have the same experience that you had -- to serve, to give back, to grow, and to

be part – to make America what it should be. “Imagine, recruit, transform, and inspire.” Those are not only good words for City Year – those are good words for America in the 21st Century.

Thank you all.