

## Remarks to the Science Leadership Academy's Graduating Class in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

June 12, 2012

Hello, everybody! Thank you. Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. Well, this is so exciting to have a chance to see all of you. Congratulations on your graduation. I know I kind of messed up graduation a little bit, but it turned out that it was beautiful yesterday. So we had this all planned out. [*Laughter*] We knew there was going to be sun yesterday; it's a little cloudier today. We wanted to make sure you guys looked good in your caps and gowns and didn't get too wet.

Listen, I just want to say to all of you how incredibly proud I am of the work that you guys have accomplished, because some of you may have heard—in between studying, you may have listened to a speech that I've given or remarks that I've made in the past—the nation that excels in science and math and technology, that's going to be the nation that rises to the top in the 21st century. Almost everything we do is based on our capacity to innovate. And America became a economic superpower because we were constantly able to tap into the incredible talents and ingenuity of young people like you who decided, why can't we fly? Why can't we cure diseases? Why can't we make sure that the energy that we use is able to make life a little bit better and a little bit easier for people?

And so throughout our history, we've constantly had innovators who have been able to not only excel in basic science and basic research, but have then been able to translate it into practical things that we now take for granted. And obviously, there was a pretty good scientist here in Philadelphia named Benjamin Franklin, who was able to tool around with kites and keys and all kinds of stuff before he helped to write our Constitution. So you've got a pretty good legacy, here in Philadelphia, of innovation.

And the fact that, as I look around this auditorium, we are tapping into the talents of everybody—women as well as men, folks from every ethnic group, every background—that's

also this incredible strength for the United States, because innovation, brainpower does not discriminate by gender or race or faith or background. Everybody has got the capacity to create and improve our lives in so many ways.

So you guys are representative of the future. This is a great postcard for what America is all about. And as you take your next steps—I'm assuming that everybody here is going to some sort of post-high school education, everybody here is going to be going to college, and some of you are going to continue beyond college. I just want you to know that you are going to be succeeding not just for yourself, and that's important—your parents are going to want you to have a job, so they're very pleased about the fact that you're taking a path that is almost assured to provide you with extraordinary opportunities in the future—but you're also going to be making a difference for the country as a whole.

So my expectation is, is that somebody in this auditorium is going to figure out new sources of energy that help not only make us more energy independent, but also deals with problems like climate change. There is somebody in this room who's going to help make sure that we are defeating diseases like Alzheimer's or cancer. There is somebody in this room who is going to help revolutionize our agricultural sector or our transportation sectors or will invent some entire new industry that we don't even know about yet.

And the pace of change these days is so rapid; I'm reminded when I talk to Malia and Sasha that when Sasha was born, most people weren't on the Internet, and now she knows more about it than I do. And so in many ways your youth, and the fact that you've come of age in this new Information Age, gives you an enormous advantage over old fogies like us.

So the bottom line is, we're proud of you. You are going to succeed. You're well on your way. The last thing I'd ask of you, even as you focus on your chosen field and you are moving

forward, is to make sure that you also give back, that for a lot of you in your neighborhoods there may not be as many kids who are interested in math and science. And you need to make sure that wherever you have the opportunity, you're mentoring and serving as a good role model to the next generation coming up behind you.

For the women who are here, a lot of you know that historically we haven't had as many women in math and science and engineering fields. So, as you succeed, hopefully, you're

going to go back and mentor some people and encourage them to get involved in these fields as well. If you do that then I have extraordinary optimism for the future. And I think that not only will you succeed, but you're going to help your country succeed as well.

So thank you very much, everybody. Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. at the Franklin Institute.

## Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Philadelphia *June 12, 2012*

Hello! Thank you! How's it going Philadelphia? Well, it is good to be back in Philadelphia. It is good to be among so many good friends, including Benjamin Franklin, one of my favorite Founders. [*Laughter*] I have to admit, I had to restrain myself because this is such an amazing facility, and just wandering around, I started reading about all kinds of American history and that the Dead Sea Scrolls were here. [*Laughter*] Staff was saying, Mr. President, you have some other stuff that you have to do.

There are a couple of acknowledgments that I want to make. First of all, you've got one of the best mayors in the country, Mayor Michael Nutter is here. You've got a couple of the finest Members of Congress in Bob Brady and Chaka Fattah. And you've got somebody here who's been one of my dearest friends and one of my favorite people who has always had my back, and he and I share a lot in common. We're both—we both pretend to play basketball, even though we're way too old. [*Laughter*] We both married up and we both have extraordinary daughters. He happens also to be one of the best Members of the Senate that we have. Bob Casey is in the house.

So I'm here not just because I need your help, although I do. I'm here because the country needs your help. When you think back to 2008, a lot of you were involved in that campaign. You didn't get involved because you thought Barack Obama was the odds-on favor-

ite to become President of the United States. Let's face it. That was a long shot. The reason we came together was because we shared a belief in the basic bargain that built this country: the idea that if you're willing to work hard, if you're willing to take responsibility, that in this country you can make it; that you can find a job that pays a living wage and you can save and buy a home. You can send your kids to college so they do even better than you did. You can retire with some dignity and some respect. The idea that no matter where you come from, no matter what you look like, no matter what your faith, no matter who you love, that in America you can make it if you try.

It's that idea that builds the broadest middle class in the history of the world—and that was and has been the strength of America, the backbone of America—is that everybody had a shot. And we felt back in 2008 that those ideals were being lost, that we had taken a wrong turn. We had taken a surplus left behind by President Clinton and turned it into deficits as far as the eye could see, not because we invested in our economic future, but because we gave tax cuts to folks who didn't need them and weren't even asking for them. We put two wars on a credit card. Our economy increasingly was built on financial speculation and a housing bubble. Manufacturing was leaving our shores.

And although a few people were doing really, really well, that broad-based middle class that built this country, that was the essence of