

September 28, 2013, as National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week. I call upon all Americans to join me in expressing our heartfelt thanks to the members of the National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers. I also call on State and local officials, private organizations, and all military commanders, to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-eighth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 9023 of September 20, 2013

**National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week,
2013**

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Before the Civil War, an education—much less a college education—was out of reach for most African Americans. There were few institutions focused on meeting the intellectual curiosity and spurring the academic growth of African American students. But as our Union began to heal from the wounds of war, and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments were signed, a freed people demanded a freed mind, and courageous leaders began expanding what we now know as our Nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

More than a century and a half later, we cannot overstate the role HBCUs have played in the narrative of our country. These are the institutions that helped build a middle class and produced some of our Nation’s preeminent thinkers and entrepreneurs, doctors and scientists, judges and lawyers, service members and educators. These are the schools where students banded together in open fields and assembly halls as part of a movement that pushed us closer to true freedom and equality for all. And these are the campuses where generations of students not only gained the education and skills necessary for the workforce, but also cultivated an understanding of history and knowledge of self that are necessary in life.

As we move toward our goal of having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, HBCUs continue to provide pathways of opportunity for students across our country. Ensuring these schools have the resources they need to help students reach their fullest potential remains a top priority for my Administration, and we have taken steps to keep these institutions strong—from providing funding for infrastructure and technology to increasing our investments in Pell Grants.

During National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, we pay tribute to the legacies of these proud halls of higher learning. And as we

Proc. 9024

Title 3—The President

reflect on the past, let us also draw strength from the founders of these institutions and move forward with the work of making sure the doors to a quality education are open to all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 22 through September 28, 2013, as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. I call upon educators, public officials, professional organizations, corporations, and all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that acknowledge the countless contributions these institutions and their alumni have made to our country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-eighth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 9024 of September 26, 2013

National Public Lands Day, 2013

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Atop soaring mountain peaks, alongside bubbling streams, in woodlands and grasslands that stretch over rolling hills, Americans find inspiration in our great outdoors. Just as our diverse and rugged landscapes reflect our national character, the way we care for these open spaces mirrors our commitment to future generations. On National Public Lands Day, we celebrate the lands we share and gather to conserve our natural heritage.

For two decades, Americans have observed this day by lending their time to the restoration of our country's historic places and natural treasures. Across our country, volunteers beautify parks, waterways, and wilderness areas. Through these small acts—from planting trees to carving out trails, removing litter, and curbing the growth of invasive species—volunteers carry forward a long tradition of conservation and public service. Their spirit is at the heart of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative, which is making the outdoors more accessible to all Americans. Since I established this initiative, we have expanded access to recreation, restored critical landscapes, and created urban parks and water trails. We are also working with partners to let young people serve as volunteers in our parks and help returning veterans find meaningful jobs protecting and enhancing America's great outdoors.

As we come together to honor and restore America's public lands, we recognize their role in shaping our history, enriching our lives, and bolstering our economy. Today, as we mark the 20th anniversary of National Public Lands Day, let us pledge to maintain these open spaces. And let us pass forward the opportunity to experience their majesty, connect with our natural heritage, and refresh our bodies and minds.