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Audience members. Yes!
The President. Until the job is done?
Audience members. Yes!
The President. I promise. Say it!
Audience members. I promise!
The President. Let's go to work.
God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. at Marcus Foster Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia; Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his wife, Alma; and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter.

Remarks on Presenting the President's Service Awards in Philadelphia
April 27, 1997

The President. Thank you. I like that version of "Hail to the Chief." Maybe the Marine Band could pick it up. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, these President's Service Awards are traditionally presented at the White House every year, but Hillary and I are profoundly honored to be here this evening with President and Mrs. Bush, General Powell, and all others who are part of this very important ceremony.

As all of you know, we're here along with President Ford, President and Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Reagan, here in Philadelphia where our great democracy began, for the first Presidents' Summit for America's Future, to mobilize every community and challenge every citizen, to give our young people a chance to live up to their God-given potential, and to ask our young people to become citizen servants, too.

So tonight we're going to give these awards, very appropriately, in the categories that have been set out for the challenge to America, the categories that General Powell talked about in his moving opening remarks. And I'm going to have the honor of recognizing the caring adults. I'm pleased to be joined tonight by a man who has dedicated his entire life to meeting the challenge of service, Harris Wofford.

[*At this point, Harris Wofford, Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service, made brief remarks.*]

The President. You know, you might have guessed that before he headed our Nation's citizens service effort and the corporation for national service, Harris Wofford was in politics—[*laughter*]—the Senator from Pennsylvania. But before that, he was a college president; before that, a founder of the Peace Corps; a top aide to President Kennedy; a friend and ally of Dr. Martin Luther King. Hardly any American living today better personifies citizen service than Harris Wofford, and I thank him for that.

As I said, we begin by recognizing that every single child needs a caring adult in his or her life to teach and guide them. Every child needs to know that he or she is profoundly important to some grownup. The three Americans we honor now have devoted themselves to meeting this challenge.

Marjorie Klein knows that parents are our children's first teachers, and she's doing everything she can to help them. At 20 inner-city schools throughout the Philadelphia area, PACT, or Parents And Children Together, the organization Marjorie founded, brings parents into the classroom to read to the children and to help their children learn to read. At the same time, parents can improve their own literacy and tutoring skills, and they can even earn college credit. We salute Marjorie Klein and PACT for their tremendous commitment to families and our children.

[*The President presented the award to Ms. Klein.*]

The President. Earl Phelan deeply believes that mentoring is the key to young people's success. Through B.E.L.L., or Building Enterprises for Learning and Living, the organization he helped to found, he has given hundreds of African-American young adults the chance to be role models and tutors to inner-city elementary school students throughout the greater Boston area. Under their tutelage, those children are thriving, their futures are brighter, and therefore so are ours. Tonight we honor Earl Phelan for his remarkable contribution to our American community.

[*The President presented the award to Mr. Phelan.*]

The President. Pat Esparza learned early in life that confidence and pride can make all the difference to a young girl's future. A single mother of three by the age of 19, she worked her way through school and devoted herself to helping at-risk girls. She founded Las Mariposas as a dance studio, but for the people of El Paso, Texas, it is a community treasure. At Las Mariposas hundreds of young girls have learned to dance and to value themselves and their culture. We honor Pat for giving the young girls of her community the confidence and pride they need to succeed in life.

Congratulations.

[*The President presented the award to Ms. Esparza.*]

All of them have helped to make sure that more of our young people do, in fact, have a caring adult to give them the support they need to build positive futures. Your work is an inspiration to all of us. I thank you for doing it, and I hope all of us will now be more willing to follow your lead. God bless you.

[*Former First Lady Barbara Bush, assisted by actor John Travolta, presented the second group of awards. Former President George Bush, assisted by actress Brooke Shields Agassi, presented the third group of awards. Hillary Clinton, assisted by movie director Rob Reiner, presented the fourth group of awards. Following the award presentations, singer Patti LaBelle performed.*]

The President. Thank you, Patti LaBelle, for giving us all a second wind. [*Laughter*] I want to apologize to all of you for having to spend so much time tonight watching me walk up and down stairs. But as you know, I need the practice. [*Laughter*]

I want to say that this last award in some ways may be the most important, because we're recognizing young people who, themselves, are serving in an extraordinary way. And one of the elements of this summit is the proposition that every young person should serve, and that, in so doing, we hope to expand the definition of what it means to be a good citizen in this country so that when we ask young people in years to come, what does it really mean to be a good American, they'll say, "Well, you have to be in school or work, you have to obey the law, and you have to serve."

I'm joined now on stage by a young public servant, Jahi Davis, an AmeriCorps volunteer from north Philadelphia. Like a lot of high school students, this young man paid more attention to his social life than to his future. Then he nearly lost his life in a serious accident. He says now he wouldn't have finished high school without the guidance of a tutor who helped him keep his grades up while he was in the hospital. When he recovered, he decided to do for others what had been done for him. He joined AmeriCorps in 1995, and since then, he has tutored children, started a mentoring program in his own neighborhood, and rehabilitated houses for low income families. He's planning to attend Temple University, where I know he'll continue to give back. Please welcome him up here with me. [*Applause*]

When 21-year-old Na'Taki Osborne learned that Carver Hills, Georgia, a low income African-American community, was the most environmentally polluted area in Fulton County, she didn't just become concerned, she got involved. She got 200 community volunteers involved, too. And together they spent hundreds of hours cleaning up Carver Hills, making it a safer and more beautiful place for the entire community to enjoy.

Thank you, Na'Taki Yatascha Osborne, for caring enough to change your community for the better.

[*The President presented the award to Ms. Osborne.*]

The President. Amber Lynn Coffman is only 15 years old, but she's been volunteering to help disadvantaged people since she was 8. Her mother taught her that even one person can make a real difference, and for most of her still-young life, she has tried to be that one person and to encourage her friends and schoolmates to do the same. Working together as a group called Happy Helpers, they make over 600 box lunches every week for the homeless and the hungry. Thank you, Amber Lynn, for your wonderful commitment to your community.

[*The President presented the award to Ms. Coffman.*]

Across America, more and more businesses believe that good citizenship is also good business. More and more, they're encouraging their

employees to give something back. Target Stores is a perfect example. Through the Family Matters Program, started by Points of Light, Target Stores is the first national company to involve its employees and their families in community service.

Last year, nearly 5,000 Target employees and their families volunteered. Working alongside their parents, young people learned firsthand about the importance and the joy of giving back. We thank Target stores for helping so many young children start early on a lifetime of service.

With us tonight to represent Target is Julie Hennessy.

[*The President presented the award to Ms. Hennessy.*]

The President. As Oprah said earlier, the 16 award winners with us tonight represent volunteers all over our country who are committed to helping us all build a better and stronger future. In honoring their contributions, we celebrate the spirit of service that has sustained America in times of trouble and united us with common hopes and dreams.

At the dawn of a new century, let us all resolve to join hands to do it more. Remember what this summit is all about. These people were doing all this before we gathered. Ninety-three million Americans already volunteer. What we're saying is that in every community in America, more people must do it in a systematic way, and everyone must do it if America is going to have the future it deserves and our children are going to all be like those whom we honor here tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in Exhibit Hall A of the Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; former First Ladies Rosalynn Carter and Nancy Reagan; and television talk show host Oprah Winfrey.

Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia

April 28, 1997

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, I want to begin by thanking Matthew and Teevee and Christina and Jamil and Christy for introducing the Presidents and Mrs. Reagan. They reminded us of what this summit is all about.

I thank President and Mrs. Bush, President and Mrs. Carter, President Ford, Mrs. Reagan, Vice President and Mrs. Gore for their devotion to this endeavor. I thank Harris Wofford and Bob Goodwin, the president of the Points of Light Foundation; Henry Cisneros and Lynda Robb; and all the others who have worked for this day. I say a special word of thanks to all the public officials who have come from all over our country, Members of Congress, Governors, Lieutenant Governors and others.

But particularly, I want to thank General Colin Powell. At our last meeting, when he was about to retire as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I asked him if there was another mission which might bring him back into public life. He said he wanted to help children who didn't have what they needed to succeed in life and who needed the chance to serve America. Well, General, this may be your most important mission, and I want to thank you for reenlisting. Thank you.

I thank my friend Mayor Rendell and the wonderful people of Philadelphia, Governor Ridge and the people of Pennsylvania who have made us feel so welcome.

We come here before the house where America was born, the place where we, the people, took the first step on our centuries-old journey to form a more perfect Union. On the last day of the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin walked out of this hall and encountered a woman anxious to know what had gone on inside. She asked him, "Well, Doctor, what have we got, a monarchy or a republic?" Mr. Franklin replied, "A republic, if you can keep it."

For more than 200 years, we have struggled to keep this Republic. It is an enduring and