over the next 2 to 3 weeks. Thank you for the opportunity.

The President. First of all, I thank Scott for his service to our country. I don't know whether or not the press corps realizes this, but his is a challenging assignment dealing with you all on a regular basis. And I thought he handled his assignment with class, integrity. He really represents the best of his family, our State, and our country. It's going to be hard to replace Scott. But nevertheless, he's made the decision, and I accept it.

One of these days, he and I are going to be rocking on chairs in Texas, talking about the good old days and his time as the Press Secretary. And I can assure you, I will feel the same way then that I feel now, that I can say to Scott, "Job well done."

Press Secretary McClellan. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:39 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama
April 19, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for having me. Mr. President—[*laughter*]—got a nice ring to it. [*Laughter*] I respect President Ben Payton for his commitment to education and his commitment to the United States of America, and I'm proud to be on this campus.

I was telling President Payton that I knew about Tuskegee before I knew about most other universities when I was a kid. When I was growing up, believe it or not, in Midland, Texas, which is way out in the desert, I knew about Tuskegee. I knew Tuskegee was a center of excellence, has been for a long period of time. And I saw firsthand, it is still a center of excellence.

George Washington Carver—you've heard of him; so did I as a young guy. [*Laughter*] Booker T. Washington—when you think Tuskegee, you think Booker T. Washington. And when you hear about Booker T. Washington, you think about Tuskegee—Ralph Ellison, or the music of Lionel Richie. I mean, Tuskegee has been a center for educational excellence and a place for opportunity for a long period of time here in the United States of America.

When I was the Governor of Texas—Governors are heads of the National Guard, and I had the opportunity and honor to name the person that headed our Guard. And I picked a fellow named Danny James—General Danny James. It just turns out his father was a man named Chappie James. As a matter of fact, Tuskegee—I was in the Chappie James Building a little while ago. You named the building after a fine person.

I appreciate the role that Tuskegee has had in the 20th century to break down racial barriers, to provide hope, and to help build a better America. What I'm here to talk about is the role Tuskegee will continue to play in the 21st century, and it is to prepare our students and our kids for the jobs of the 21st century. Tuskegee is a really important part of making sure the United States of America provides hope and opportunity for all people.

I want to thank Dr. Shaik Jeelani, who is the director for the Center for Advanced Materials. I don't know if you have seen that facility before. I'm sure some of you have who work here, but if you haven't, I strongly urge you to go there. It's a really interesting center of the—where you'll see the future being explored and developed. There's a lot of science going on there.

I appreciate being joined by Governor Bob Riley. Riley is a friend. Riley cares deeply about educating every child. I'm going to talk about the No Child Left Behind Act as part of the foundation to make sure every child gets educated, but in case I forget, Riley is willing to set high standards and hold people to account and provide help so no child gets left behind. And I want to thank you for your leadership.

Margaret Spellings is with us. She's the Secretary of Education. I've known her for a long time. I know this: She's committed to the public school system and the higher education system of the United States of America. I look forward to working with her to make sure that every child gets a good education and every child has a chance to succeed.

I appreciate being here with the Congressman from this district, Congressman Mike Rogers. Thank you for coming, Congressman. I appreciate your service. Although he's not here, we better say something nice about Senator Shelby. [*Laughter*] The reason why is, is that he is the chairman of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Committees. And what I'm going to talk about requires appropriations. [*Laughter*] That's why I'm being nice to him. [*Laughter*] Plus, I like him. He's a fine United States Senator—as is Senator Jeff Sessions.

I appreciate all the State folks who are here and the local officials who are here. I want to say something about my friend Johnny Ford. I'm proud that the mayor—there he is—city of Tuskegee mayor. Thank you, Johnny. Thanks for being here. I know you didn't ask me—my advice is, fill the potholes. [*Laughter*] If anybody can get them filled, it's Johnny. [*Laughter*] He's a good man.

Listen, I flew into Montgomery; I choppered over to the airfield. And what I found interesting was, that is the airfield where the Tuskegee Airmen trained. Now, Tuskegee Airmen have led an important part of the reputation of this facility. A lot of people know about the Tuskegee Airmen, and more people are going to know about it when we finish that museum.

With us today is Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Carter, Tuskegee Airman. Where are you, Colonel? Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Did you bring Mildred? [*Laughter*] Oh, there she is. Hi, Mildred. Thank you for coming. And so is Major Carrol Woods, member of the Tuskegee Airmen. Thank you for coming, Major Woods. Proud you're here. Thank you, sir.

I appreciate the members of the Tuskegee Board of Trustees. I want to thank the university leaders. I particularly want to say something about the faculty. I thank you for teaching. Yours is a noble profession, and yours is an important profession, and I thank you for answering the call. And I want to say something about the students. I hope you're proud of this fine institution. And I know you'll bring honor to it by not only studying hard but by going out and being people of accomplishment after you graduate. And so I thank you for having me. It's such an honor to be here.

So here's the problem we face. The problem is this: Can we compete? Are we going to be a nation in which we can compete in a globalized world? Tomorrow I'm welcoming President Hu Jintao of China to the South Lawn of the White House. Last month, I traveled to India to set the stage for new relations with that important country. These countries are emerging nations. They are growing rapidly, and they provide competition for jobs and natural resources. And it's really an interesting thought, when you think about it. The world has really changed, since at least when I was growing up, where competition might have been around, but it didn't really nearly affect the lives of our citizens as much as it does today.

I'll give you an example of the effects of globalization. When India buys more fossil fuels, it causes the price of crude oil to go up, which causes our price of gasoline

to go up. That's an example of globalization. As these new jobs of the 21st century come into being, people are going to hire people with the skill sets. And if our folks don't have the skill sets, those jobs are going to go somewhere else. That's one of the effects of the world in which we live.

And there are several ways to look at the world in which we live. We can say, "We understand the world the way it is, and we're confident in our capacity to shape the future," or, "We don't like the way the world is, and we're going to withdraw and retreat." Withdrawing and retreating is not the right thing to do, in my judgment. America has always been able to compete. As a matter of fact, America should not be afraid of competition; we ought to welcome it and continue to be the leader of the world—the world's economy. We ought to continue to be the leader in research and development. We need to continue to be the leader in higher education. We shouldn't lose our nerve. We shouldn't see the future and fear the future; we ought to welcome the future.

And here are some things we need to do to make sure we shape the future. First is to make sure we're always on the leading edge of research and technology. I saw some amazing things happening today. I was a history major, so maybe they were really amazing because I didn't know what I was looking at. [*Laughter*] It seemed amazing. [*Laughter*] I was at the Center for Biomedical Research—I was really at the Center for Advanced Materials called T–CAM, a sister organization to the Center for Biomedical Research and for the Center for Aerospace Science Engineering. Isn't that interesting, that those three centers exist right here in Tuskegee? I think it's a hopeful part of making sure we're a competitive nation and a confident nation, to be able to say out loud those three centers of excellence, the centers of science right here on this campus.

We spent some time talking about nanotechnology. I don't know if you know much about nanotechnology—[*laughter*]—but I met some students who knew a lot about nanotechnology—Ph.D. candidates who knew a lot about nanotechnology. By the way, Tuskegee produces Ph.D. candidates. I think you produced five last year. You're on your way to five more over the next year or so. That's important.

But also as important is the research that's being done here. It's research that will keep the United States on the leading edge, keep the United States competitive. And that's important for our fellow citizens because so long as we lead, our people are going to have a good standard of living. So long as we're the leader, people will be able to find good work. If we lose our nerve and retreat, it will make it hard for us to be able to provide those jobs people want. The more productive a society is—and by the way, research and development leads to higher productivity—the higher standard of living we'll have. And that's what we want. We want our people to be able to realize their dreams, to be able to get good work.

So here's the first thing that I intend to work with Congress on to make sure that we're on the leading edge of change and technology, and that is to increase Federal support for vital, basic research. I don't know if you realize this, but because of Defense Department spending in the past and because of the research that the Defense Department was doing to enhance communication, to improve military communications, the Internet came to be. In other words, the Defense Department said, "We need to figure out how better to communicate." And therefore, they spent some research dollars at institutions like Tuskegee. And out of that research came the Internet, which has helped change our society in many ways.

Here's another interesting example of where basic research can help change quality of life or provide practical applications

for people. The Government funded research in microdrive storage, electrochemistry, and signal compression. They did so for one reason. It turned out that those were the key ingredients for the development of the iPod. I tune in to the iPod occasionally, you know. [*Laughter*] Basic research to meet one set of objectives can lead to interesting ideas for our society. It helps us remain competitive. So the Government should double the commitment to the most basic—critical research programs in the physical sciences over the next 10 years. I look forward to Congress—to doubling that commitment.

Secondly—and by the way, those centers of excellence I went to are funded by—some of them are funded by grants from the Federal Government on this type of research money. So obviously, it helps your institution flourish, but more importantly, it helps our country. It helps our country in two ways. There's no telling what's going to come out of this basic research. As a matter of fact, I saw nanotechnology applied to what could conceivably be the next airplane wing. Boeing is funding research into nanotechnology here at Tuskegee, which may end up yielding a lighter, more firm material which could become the basis for the new airplanes that you fly in. It's lightweight stuff, but it's really strong. It's right here on this campus that people are making research into this—[*applause*].

But you notice I said Boeing. See, the Federal Government has got a role to play, in my judgment, in basic research. But the private sector spends twice as much money on research and development that the Federal Government does. So I think it's important for us to put policy in place to continue that kind of research. If you were to ask the president and the folks involved with the scientific and the engineering departments here, you'll find that private companies are providing research and development money to help meet certain objectives. And one of the things we got to do is continue to provide incentive for corporate America to make these investments. They spend about $200 billion a year. If we want the country to be competitive, if we don't want to fear the future, and shape it, then there needs to be incentive for corporate America to continue to make these research and development investments.

We do that, by the way, through what's called the research and development tax credit. It's fancy words for saying that if you spend the money, there's going to be a—you'll get a credit on your income. It makes sense to me. It makes sense to a lot of other countries, too, by the way. A lot of countries, in trying to be competitive in this global world, are doing the same thing to encourage research and development, because they know what we know, that if you come up with new products and are constantly on the leading edge of change and innovation, the standard of living for the people in the country in which these investments are made goes up.

The problem we have is that the research and development tax credit expires every year. Now, if you're somebody trying to plan an investment strategy and you're uncertain as to whether or not the research and development tax credit is going to be around for the next year, then you're less likely to be aggressive in your research and development spending. It's logical. It makes sense.

So I think Congress needs to make sure there's certainty in the Tax Code, so as to achieve an important social objective—by the way, and an objective which helps Tuskegee—and that is they need to make the research and development tax credit a permanent part of the Tax Code.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most important way that this United States of America can remain the leader when it comes to economic development and opportunity, is to make sure our education systems work well. And so here are some ideas as to how to set in motion a strategy that says, we

shouldn't fear the future; we ought to welcome it. We ought to be a nation that says, we can compete. And the way to compete in the 21st century is to make sure that our children have got the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

I said earlier—and this is practical—if we don't get the children the skills in math and science and engineering, those jobs are going elsewhere. That's just the way it is. And therefore, we've got to deal with it head on. We can't hope the world changes. We've got to be confident in our capacity to achieve an objective. And it starts with making sure younger children know how to read and write and add and subtract.

I want to describe to you, if you don't mind, the theory and the strategy and the vision behind the No Child Left Behind Act. And here it is: One, I believe every child can learn; two, I believe it is important for people to show us whether or not every child is learning; and three, if a child is not learning early, there ought to be extra help to make sure he or she does not get left behind. That's the theory behind No Child Left Behind Act.

We spend a fair amount of money at the Federal level, particularly on Title I students. It's money directed toward a certain segment of our population, as it should be. But I think in return for money spent, we ought to—we have said to the States, "You develop an accountability system to let us know whether or not a child can read," for example. All the talk about science and engineering and math matters nothing if the children cannot read. The first step toward making sure our children have the skills of the 21st century is to insist upon a solid reading program that works. How do you know whether a program works or not—really depends on whether or not you're willing to measure.

I was the Governor of Texas; I remember the big debates over the—how to properly teach reading. If you've ever been on a school board, I'm confident you were involved in that debate. And it was quite a philosophical argument. The way to cut through all the rhetoric is to say, "Let's measure and—to see." I've heard every excuse why not to measure, by the way. I don't know if you've heard them, but excuses ranging from, "All you're doing is teaching to test." No. My attitude is, when you teach a third grader to read, he or she can pass the test. "All you do is spend time worrying about tests. It makes me nervous, tests." Well, what ought to make you nervous is a school system that simply shuffles children through without understanding whether or not they've got the basics.

I remember being told that testing is discrimination. I said, no, the system that's discriminatory is one that doesn't care and just says, "If you're so-and-so age, you belong here." I believe a compassionate society is one which says, let us find out early, before it's too late, and provide extra money for after-school tutoring or—help to make sure children get up to grade level.

Now, if you believe certain children can't learn, then it's justifiable that you just pass them through. I believe every child can learn. And therefore, our school systems must make sure we focus on individual children. And so we're beginning to see some improvements, by the way, in the public school systems around America. How do we know? Because we measure.

In 2005, America's fourth graders posted the best scores in reading and math in the history of the test. That's positive. People are beginning to learn. African American fourth graders set records in reading and math. How do we know? Because we measure.

The Federal Government, by the way, didn't design the test. I'm a local-control-of-school guy; I don't think the Federal Government ought to be telling you how to run your schools. And one way to tell you how to run your schools is if the Federal Government designed the test. We said to the Governor, "Design your test, but make sure you measure; make sure we

know." It's in your State's interest that people know whether or not the curriculum is working or whether children are learning to read and write.

The Nation's Report Card showed that eighth graders earned the best math scores ever recorded. And that's a positive development if you're worried about making sure our children have the skills to fill the jobs of the 21st century. Eighth grade Hispanic and African American students achieved the highest math scores ever. In other words, there's improvement. It's positive development. But here's the problem: By the time our kids get into high school, we've fallen behind most of the developed world in math and science. In other words, we're closing the achievement gap, and there's improvement in the public school system around America, but what ends up happening is, is that there is a—is we're beginning to fall off. And that's where the challenge exists.

And so how do we make sure that our high school students are coming out of high school so they can go to a place like Tuskegee with a skill set necessary to even go farther, so we remain a competitive nation? Here are some ideas.

First, one of the programs that works well is the Advanced Placement program. I don't know if you've heard of the Advanced Placement program—I hope you've heard of the Advanced Placement program. It is a rigorous course study program. It basically says, it's possible for children from all walks of life to meet high standards. I went to an AP school in Texas, in inner-city Dallas. It wasn't one of these suburban deals; it was inner-city. And there's more children graduating from that high school with—passing AP than any other high school in America—at least, that's what they told me. Texans sometimes, you know, might—[*laughter*]—I believed the principal. [*Laughter*]

But nevertheless, it is important to set high standards, particularly in math and science, and to have rigorous academia. And a good way to do that is through the Advanced Placement program. Therefore, the Federal Government needs to provide money to train 70,000 high school teachers on how to teach AP. In other words, take a system that's worked and see to it that it's spread all across the United States of America.

Secondly, yesterday Margaret and I went to a high school—a middle school outside of DC, in Maryland, and we met two NASA scientists that were there in the classroom exciting these kids about math and science and engineering. There's nothing better than having somebody in the classroom who actually knows what they're talking about, in terms of the practical applications of science and math and engineering, to excite somebody.

I don't know what it's like now, but when I was coming up, it wasn't too cool to be a chemist—[*laughter*]—or a physicist, or science wasn't exactly—it just didn't ring. We need to make it ring for our kids in high school by having people who know what they're doing. Therefore, part of this program to make sure we're competitive is to bring 30,000 math and science professionals to teach in our classrooms. They're called adjunct professors. I think it's a smart way and a practical way to excite children to take the courses that are necessary to make sure this country is a competitive country.

I want to repeat to you again: If we don't have the skill sets necessary to compete for the jobs of the 21st century, they'll go somewhere else. If our kids do have the skill set necessary to compete for the jobs of the 21st century, the standard of living of our country is going to improve.

And that's the challenge we face. So I set up—recognizing that we need to do better in math and in science, I set up what's called a national math panel. It's a way to analyze—we got experts coming together, and they're going to analyze the best teaching methodology for math, the best curriculum for math. We did the same

thing for reading, by the way. We set up a group of experts on reading. And they helped States and local districts understand what works, how best to make sure every child can read. And it's working. I just told you; it's working because we're measuring.

We need to do the same thing for math. We need to make sure that our teachers, our school boards, our principals, our superintendents, our Governors understand what works. You cannot set an objective and achieve that objective unless you have the tactics necessary to do that. And so we're going to call the experts together. They'll be presenting a report to Margaret and myself by January 31st of 2007. It will be a really important study, because, again, it will give—it will help States and local school districts have the methodology, the teaching methods necessary to help achieve an important objective.

And then we're going to implement what's called a Math Now program that will get those recommendations into the teacher's hands. But there's also another interesting aspect of Math Now, which I think is vital, and that is, when we measure and find a child slipping behind in math in the eighth or ninth grade, that child gets extra help. We do that in the third and fourth grades when it comes to reading; we need to apply that same standard of help for a child as they head into the high school.

If you want to deal with the problem of the United States of America falling behind in math and science, you focus on the problem, and you focus on it with what works and money and extra help. And that's exactly what we intend to do to make sure that we begin to lay that foundation for a competitive tomorrow.

I also understand that the Federal Government has a role in helping people go to college, see. It's one thing to make sure the students have got the skill set, but if there's not the financial means to get to a university, then that skill set could conceivably be wasted. And we don't want to waste it. We want to make sure we've got a strategy that works in the early grades and in the high school, and then make it more likely a child can afford coming to a place like Tuskegee.

Of course, we have helped the Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I want to thank the good doctor for serving on the panel. I pledged a 30-percent increase of Federal help to Historically Black Colleges, and we met that commitment. I also said that it's really—the Pell grant system is a very important program. And since 2001, there have been 1 million additional students on the Pell grant program. So there are now 5 million students across the United States of America on Pell grants, which is an important part of making sure our students get to go to a higher education.

I want to talk about a new program that I hope will interest you. It caught the good president's fancy when I described it to him, and it's this. I've always believed that it's—if you have an objective, like encouraging people to take rigorous courses, particularly in math and science, which lays the foundation for our engineers and our chemists and our physicists of the future, then there ought to be incentives to do that. And Congress this year listened and passed a bill which I signed into law, which Margaret is now going to implement, and it's this: There are two new grants associated with Pell grants. This will be a $4.5 billion program over the next 5 years, and here's the way it works.

One is called the Academic Competitiveness grant, which will provide additional money to first- and second-year students, college students, who have completed a rigorous high school curriculum and have maintained a 3.0 GPA in college. There will be up to 750 for first-year students and up to $1,300 for second-year students. The idea is to encourage rigorous courses and to provide incentive. I'm not talking about impossible; I'm talking about raising the standard—saying to somebody, "Here's

your chance. Apply yourself in the fields that we know are necessary to be able to compete in the 21st century, and we'll help you more."

And then third, we've got what's called SMART grants. Now, these grants are for college students, third- and fourth-year college students who have maintained a 3.0 GPA and who major in math, science, or critical foreign languages. What we're trying to do is to make sure that people have got that skill set, and it makes sense to provide incentives for people. And by the way, these grants will be up to an additional $4,000 per person.

So the Federal Government needs to play a vital role. One, a vital role is to set the goals and strategies, to make it clear to the American people we've got a choice to make: Do we compete or do we retreat; do we become isolationists and protectionists as a nation, or do we remain a confident nation and lead the world?

The Federal Government has got a role in making sure that there's research dollars available for places like Tuskegee. The Federal Government has got a role to provide incentive for private corporations to continue to invest in research and development.

I want to remind you that the research being done today in this university will end up somewhere in our society 10, 20, or 30 years from now. That's what's happening. And at the same time, that research is helping a young man or woman realize his or her dream, making sure that person gets the skill sets necessary to become the leaders.

We should never cede any educational territory to anybody anywhere in the world. We need to be the centers of excellence all around the United States. And one way to do that is to continue to provide financial help and to encourage people to take math and science through additional financial help. And another way to do it is to make sure the public school system provides excellent education early in a child's life, laying that foundation for children from all walks of life, all across our country, so that we can continue to be the country of hope.

I am very confident about the future of this country. There's nothing we can't do if we don't put our mind to it. And this is a step in putting our mind to making sure the United States of America is the finest country on the face of the Earth. I'm honored to be at one of the finest institutions in the United States of America to talk about this initiative. Thanks for letting me come. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. in the Kellogg Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Benjamin Franklin Payton, president, Tuskegee University; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for President Hu Jintao of China
April 20, 2006

Good morning. Laura and I are pleased to welcome President Hu Jintao and his wife, Madam Liu, to the White House.

The United States and China are two nations divided by a vast ocean yet connected through a global economy that has created opportunity for both our peoples. The United States welcomes the emergence of a China that is peaceful and prosperous and that supports international institutions. As stakeholders in the international system, our two nations share many strategic interests. President Hu and I will discuss how to advance those interests and how China