

Our volunteers know that service is one of the best ways to make a difference in the lives of others—and they are proving that Americans at any stage of life can serve. Thousands of older Americans donate their time to serve as foster grandparents, senior companions, and as part of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and other initiatives. As many as 13 million young Americans aged 12 to 17 also volunteer each year, improving their communities, broadening their educational experiences, developing new skills, and increasing their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. This week, during National Youth Service Day, young people across our country will participate in service activities and demonstrate with their good works the power of youth to strengthen our Nation.

Volunteers will become increasingly vital to our society as we enter a new millennium. We cannot rely solely on charitable contributions or government programs to address the challenges we see in our communities. Each of us must find our own role and take action as a volunteer, a neighbor, and a citizen. We must work together to ensure that every child has a caring adult in his or her life, a safe place in which to live and grow, a good school to attend, a healthy start in life, and a chance to serve the community. We must continually strive to bring hope and hard work to bear on the human problems we see every day. With warm hearts and willing hands, we can make a lasting difference.

During this week, let us renew our spirit of community, our sense of idealism, and our commitment to service. Let us also honor the invaluable work of the thousands of voluntary, civic, religious, school, and neighborhood groups across our country that are leading the way by serving their fellow Americans and improving the quality of life for us all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 18 through April 24, 1999, as National Volunteer Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to express appreciation to the volunteers among us for their commitment to service and to encourage the spirit of volunteerism in our families and communities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7187 of April 22, 1999

National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 1999

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

Over the past year, in communities across our Nation, Americans have witnessed with shock and disbelief the painful consequences of hatred and brutality. The beating and murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyo-

ming and the killing of Billy Jack Gaither in Alabama taught us how easily prejudice can erupt into violence. The murder of James Byrd in Texas reminded us in stark terms of the poisonous legacy of racism in America. While the victims of these crimes are known to us because of the particularly heinous nature of the acts that took their lives, there are thousands more Americans unknown to us who become victims of crime each day. Behind each of these tragic statistics is an individual whose rights have been violated, whose life has been taken or irrevocably changed, and whose family, friends, and community have been touched by the shadows of violence and fear.

Recognizing the widespread impact of crime on our Nation, my Administration has worked hard during the past 6 years to strengthen our criminal justice system, to reduce the incidence of crime, and to champion the rights of crime victims. Through such landmark legislation as the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994—which included the Violence Against Women Act, the Brady Bill, and the Community Notification Act—we have put thousands of new police officers into America's communities, given crime victims a greater voice in the criminal justice process, prevented more than a quarter million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from obtaining handguns, and protected women and children from violence and abuse in their homes and communities. With these and other measures, we have provided communities with needed assistance and have helped reduce the violent crime rate in the United States to its lowest level in nearly a quarter century.

But we still have much to do if we are to prevent those crimes motivated by hatred. That is why I have urged the Congress to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999. This proposed legislation would strengthen existing Federal hate crimes law by covering crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability, and by expanding the situations in which prosecutions can be brought for violent crimes perpetrated because of the victim's race, color, religion, or national origin.

As recent events have made clear, we must address intolerance early in life. We are reaching out to students in middle school—young people who are at an especially impressionable age—through a public-private partnership entitled "Dealing with Our Differences." This partnership will develop a program to teach tolerance in the classroom, highlight positive ways in which adolescents are dealing with issues of diversity, and show the harmful impact intolerance causes in the daily lives of our youth. In an effort to understand better the problem of hate crimes and prejudice among young Americans, I have asked the Departments of Justice and Education to include in their annual report card on school safety a new section on hate crimes among our youth, whether they occur in school or elsewhere; and these departments will also collect and publish data regarding hate crimes and intolerance on college campuses.

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, let us remember not only those who have suffered at the hands of criminals, but also those generous men and women who work each day to bring justice and healing to victims and their loved ones. Whether as victims' advocates, counselors, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, or community volunteers, they reflect America's resolve to protect the rights of every citizen and to build a future where our differences no longer make us targets of hatred and intolerance. Let us also remember in our prayers the

people of Littleton, Colorado. While it is still too early to determine the specific circumstances that led to this week's tragic events, it is never too soon to teach our children that violence and hatred are wrong and have no place in our schools or in our society.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 25 through May 1, 1999, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I urge all Americans to remember crime victims and their families by working to reduce violence, to assist those harmed by crime, and to make our homes and communities safer places in which to live and raise our families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7188 of April 23, 1999

National Science and Technology Week, 1999

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

The American experience is deeply rooted in the desire to expand our frontiers and increase our knowledge about ourselves and our world. We stand at the end of a century marked by wondrous advances in science and technology—advances that have immeasurably improved the lives of our citizens. As recently as 100 years ago, space travel, genetic engineering, and telecommunications existed only in the realms of imagination and science fiction. Today, the nascent International Space Station, the nearly complete Human Genome Project, and the flourishing Internet attest to the great strides our civilization and our Nation have made. The scope and speed of our discoveries are truly breathtaking, and each day new applications of science and technology enrich our lives in fields as diverse as medicine, communications, engineering, and the arts.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining America's scientific and technological leadership, my Administration is seeking increased funding in areas like biomedical research and in earth and space sciences. My fiscal year 2000 budget also proposes a 28 percent increase in information technology research to finance a new initiative—Information Technology for the Twenty-First Century (IT2). This initiative will support long-term information technology research that will lead to fundamental advances in communications and improvements in computing.

During National Science and Technology Week, in communities large and small, engineers, scientists, educators, business people, and community leaders will lead observances to help their fellow citizens appreciate the world's scientific and technological wonders. I encourage all Americans—and especially our young people—to participate in the many educational activities taking place across our Nation. The more