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that means that, as Wintley goes national, the National Government ought to go with him and help him all across the country. But it also means that we have to continue our efforts for smaller classes, for better school buildings, to make sure all our classrooms are hooked up to the Internet, to make sure every child who needs it has access to an after-school or a summer school program, to make sure that all kids have access to preschool programs, to make sure every low performing school has the resources it needs to turn around. Because I believe that intelligence is evenly distributed throughout the human race, opportunity is not, and we need to give them a chance to do it.

I believe every child from a disadvantaged neighborhood should have access to a mentor who can say to that child, "Look, if you take these courses and do this well, you can go to college. Here's the proof of it. Here's the money. Here's the scholarships. Here's the loan. Here's the aid." We need to make sure that all kids can do it, and then when they're of age, we need to make sure the doors of college are open to all of our people. Money should never keep anybody from going to school.

One of the things that I'm proudest of is that since I've been President, we've had the biggest expansion of college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago. And if we get the provision passed that I've asked this Congress to adopt, we'll allow every family to deduct up to $10,000 of college tuition from their income tax every year, and that will be good.

One other thing I'd like to say—I'm sure you never have it here—but I've noticed in my own home that the children sometimes know more than the adults, even the teachers, about the technology. I'm sure you've never seen that here. [*Laughter*] But we just have provided over $120 million to make sure that nearly 600,000 teachers are properly trained to make the most of this Internet technology, because I think that's important.

What I came here today to say is this: Number one, I am grateful to God that somehow 10 years ago I ran into Wintley Phipps, who didn't know who I was, but I determined I'd never forget who he was; number two, I am grateful to him and to all of you who have done the U.S. Dream Academy; number three, I want to support you, but I believe what you do for these children, somebody should do for every child in the United States.

And finally, again, I want to say to the American people through our friends in the press, this is not just a feel-good program; this works. Every person who ever amounted to anything in life did so with a dream. We need to make all of our kids believe they can dream and that their dreams are just as worthy as anybody else's dreams and that, if they're willing to work at it, their dreams are just as possible as anyone else's dreams.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in Mitchell Hall Auditorium at Ferebee Hope Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Lester Jones, principal, Ferebee Hope Elementary School; and gospel singer Wintley Phipps, founder and director, United States Dream Academy, a pilot program designed to help children of imprisoned parents acquire basic learning skills, incorporating mentoring and on-line academic support. The President also referred to NFL, the National Football League.

Remarks at a Reception for Mayor Anthony A. Williams of the District of Columbia

June 15, 2000

Thank you. You know, when the Mayor said he was going to run for Mayor, he was absolutely terrified about making a political speech. I think he's about got the hang of it, don't you? [*Laughter*] I thought it was great.

I want to thank him and Diane for their willingness to serve. I want to thank Greg and Kathy and the others who put on this event tonight, and Ron and Beth for opening their home once again for an imminently worthy cause. I want to thank Senator Dole or President Dole or Bob—[*laughter*]—for being here and for speaking, and Jack Kemp who came and left. And Judge Webster, thank you for being here.

I'd like to thank all the Republicans and Democrats and the independents who are here in support of our Nation's Capital tonight. I will be very brief but, I hope, to the

point, because I'll be moving out of Washington in a few months. But when I moved here, I had very rich memories because I had gone to school in Washington, and I lived in Washington for 4 year in the mid-sixties. So I was here when the city burned. I was here when the city's main thoroughfares were often full of empty stores. I've seen it at its best, at its worst, and at its in-between.

When I came back here and Hillary and Chelsea and I moved into Blair House in the 3 weeks before I took office, one of the first things I did was to walk down Georgia Avenue and meet with the merchants and talk to them. And I always wanted to have a chance to be a good citizen of Washington, DC.

I worked with Senator Moynihan and others who were rebuilding Pennsylvania Avenue and was proud to be there at the dedication of the Reagan Building, which I think has been a wonderful addition to this great city. I went with Steve Case not very long ago to a high school here to talk about how we could improve the quality of education with technology.

I was, just today, with Reverend Wintley Phipps, whom a lot of you know, at the U.S. Dream Academy here in Washington, doing wonderful work giving kids from very tough backgrounds a chance to have a better life. I love this place. And I was honored that we had a bipartisan big block of support for the legislation to revitalize DC.

Essentially, what we did was, we took—the Federal Government assumed the functions that the DC government was having to pay for, that no other city in America had to pay for because all the other cities had a State to pay for it. We've also provided big tuition support for DC students to go out of State to school as in-State students and tried to provide some initiatives to encourage more private investment here, as well as to have the Government do more directly. And we've got a lot more to do, and I hope in the next 6 months, working with Speaker Hastert and others, you will see a big bipartisan initiative which will lead to more investment in the District of Columbia. So I hope that will happen.

But you know, it has been my great honor on your behalf to travel to over 60 other countries. Senator Dole and I did an event the other night, and he said he was glad that the event could be scheduled on a night when I was visiting America. [*Laughter*] And I took it pretty well, considering I was jet lagged. Actually, I thought it was pretty funny.

But I've been to all these other capitals. You know, I've been to Paris. I've been to London. I've been to Moscow. I've seen the billion-dollar restoration of the Kremlin, which is breathtaking, if any of you ever get a chance to see it. But there is no capital city in the world as beautiful as Washington. And there is no city now that is any more diverse.

Yes, we've still got a lot of these problems, but what Tony Williams did was to prove that the Mayor's Office was a job, a very important job, a job that required vision and leadership as well as management skills, but a job where arithmetic still counted, a job where it still mattered if you showed up for work and really worked hard, all day, every day, a job where it mattered if you treated everybody just the same, whatever their race or political affiliation. And because all of us love the District of Columbia, he enlisted in an overwhelming response by being extraordinarily good at doing what he'd be the first to tell you he simply should have done.

And now that we have the kind of leadership that he has given our city, I want to ask all of you, when I'm gone from here and I'm no longer a citizen of this city, it will always be a big part of my childhood, always be obviously the major part of my adult life and service, but we can make this city in every way the finest capital in the world and a good place for all the children who live in it. And ironically, in order to do one, we have to do the other.

We owe it to this man to help him, not just with contributions but every day. No one could ask for more from a Mayor than he is giving us. We have to be willing to give whatever he asks from us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:39 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Williams' wife, Diane Simmons Williams; event cochairs Greg Earls and Kathy Kemper;

reception hosts Ronald I. Dozoretz and Beth Dozoretz; Steve Case, president and chief executive officer, America On-Line; former Senator Bob Dole; former Representative Jack F. Kemp; and gospel singer Wintley Phipps, founder and director, United States Dream Academy.

Interview With Matt Lauer of NBC's "Today Show" in New York City

June 16, 2000

"VH1 Save The Music Today"

Mr. Lauer. Mr. President, good morning, nice to have you here.

The President. Good morning, Matt. Thank you.

Mr. Lauer. I don't think I'm betraying any confidence when I say that I checked with the VH1 people and I said, "How did you get the President involved in this campaign?" And they threw their arms up and they said, "He kind of volunteered"——

The President. That's true.

Mr. Lauer. ——"I mean, he's called many times and said, 'What can I do?'" Why is this so important to you?

The President. Well, Hillary and I both spent a lot of time on this, and it's important for two reasons. One is, I was in music when I was the age of these children, and I know what it can do. And secondly, I've been very disturbed over the years—over the last 20 years, more and more, as schools have come under financial pressure, they have tended to drop their music programs. You know, the principals have a lot of problems. They have a lot of challenges they have to meet, and many times the money is not there. And the school districts have cut a lot of these music programs out all over the country.

And when I heard what VH1 was doing, I did kind of volunteer to get involved. I wrote John Sykes a letter and said, "Look, I'm for this, and I think we've got to get music back into these schools." A lot of young children—we know that a lot of our young children learn better if they have access to music education. Not everyone learns in the same way. Not everyone's brain is stimulated in the same way. And the schools that have vigorous music programs tend to have higher academic performance.

Mr. Lauer. What do you say, though—I mean, let's say, devil's advocated for a second—I'm a member of the local school board, and I sit down, and I look at the budget, and it's shrinking. And I say, I've got choices. I have to make cuts. I've got school lunches over here. I have books for the library here. I have music education over here. How do you stop me from cutting music education?

The President. It depends on what your options are. But very often there are some options. And that's what that wonderful movie about music education here in New York City, "Music of the Heart," was about. But what this program tries to do is to encourage the schools to put some money into music education by giving them extra help with instruments and sometimes with other support.

And what we've tried to do at the national level, with the National Endowment for the Arts and the President's Commission on the Arts and Humanities that Hillary's the honorary chair of, is to constantly support music education, to emphasize that the schools that have good music education programs see positive, other academic advancements as a result of it, and of course, try to get some more funds for the lower income schools out there.

Mr. Lauer. But is the message getting out? I mean, you had music education as a kid; so did I. We took it for granted. We're now in a time of unprecedented economic prosperity, and still today, only 25 percent of schools across this country offer music education as a basic part of the curriculum.

The President. See, what a lot of people don't know is, over the last 20 years and particularly in the last decade or so, while our school populations have been growing again, a smaller percentage of property-tax payers have kids in the schools. And an awful lot of our schools are funded primarily through the property tax. So the schools have had all kinds of financial problems. Their energy bills go up. A lot of them have substandard physical facilities. They have the need to hire more teachers to teach various academic requirements that may have come in. And they don't want to stop any of their competitive athletic proposals. So the two things that