

THE WORK CONTINUES  
CLINTON  
PRESIDENTIAL  
CENTER

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A Collection of Essays

TEN YEARS OF THE  
CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL CENTER  
2004 - 2014

# AN IMPACT THAT ENDURES

By Chelsea Clinton

When my family left the White House, my father faced a set of questions and opportunities about how to continue the work he had long championed through elected office as a private citizen. As he has said, while President, he confronted a seemingly endless horizon of challenges on any given day. Through the Clinton Foundation and its various initiatives, by necessity and deliberate choice, he has focused on tackling those urgent challenges which can be addressed outside government and on which he, and now our whole family, can have the most significant impact. What has not changed is what has always motivated my father—will people be better off when he's done than when he started. I am grateful he hasn't stopped yet—and has no plans to do so.

The collection of essays that follows offers a window onto the various ways in which my father has served, in and out of elected office, and in the United States and around the world. Common threads emerge, in addition to how he keeps score of his own life, including a fearlessness to take on ostensibly impossible issues, a determination to see things through until the end and a belief that every success only contains another challenge to do things better next time. Because, as my father knows all too well, all too often there is a next time.

The latter half of 2014 has been momentous in our family as Marc and I welcomed our daughter Charlotte into the world and my parents (finally) became grandparents. As the following essays make clear, my father has been driven in every frame of his life to tackle humanity's toughest challenges while always remembering his family, his friends and those with whom he shares a common purpose, common work and a common vision for our future. I am grateful Charlotte will grow up with Bill Clinton as her grandfather and in a world continued to be made stronger through his ongoing work.

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# CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE AND THE POWER OF PUBLIC SERVICE

By Erskine Bowles

You couldn't have mistaken his facial expression for anything but pure joy. It was late in July of 1997, and by that point President Clinton and I had been through a lot together. We'd had good days as well as bad. But when I came into the Oval Office to tell him we'd struck a grand bargain to balance the budget, he wanted to know about one thing: whether we'd gotten agreement from the Republicans in Congress to establish a program to provide health insurance for poor children. I simply nodded: "Mr. President, we got health care for five million kids." It was a moment to savor.

This, after all, was why he'd wanted to be President—public service for him was about moments like this one. Even as vicious barbs were being thrown between Democrats and Republicans, he was perpetually determined to make sure he was making a difference for those struggling to get ahead. And with the handshake agreement I'd finally struck with the House Speaker and the Senate Majority Leader, we both knew we'd made real progress. The State Children's Health Insurance Program was all but established.

It hadn't been easy—and the outcome had hardly been assured. Indeed, the groundwork laid before we could set up what's now known as "CHIP" was as politically treacherous as most could imagine. In the first year of the Clinton Administration, the President had spent enormous amounts of political capital putting the nation back on a sustainable fiscal path. The Economic Plan of 1993, which had dramatically slashed the deficit while making smart long-term investments, marked tough sledding for many Democrats, and the public punished the White House by voting many of the President's allies in Congress out of office. But the political sacrifice worked. By the time President Clinton began his second term, the Administration's efforts to keep interest rates down had spurred new investments in the private sector, so the job growth—22 million new jobs over the course of the longest economic expansion in the nation's history—had already begun.

As the Administration's chief budget negotiator, it was my job in 1997 to protect the rewards of that sacrifice. We didn't know in early 1997 that the budget would be brought into surplus as soon as it was. But we knew then that the Administration's economic agenda was working. And the question was what Washington would do with the savings.

The answer to that question varied widely across party lines. Republicans, who had campaigned on a promise of scaling back the size of government, wanted tax cuts. Most notably, they were in favor of cutting the rates for capital gains, namely the taxes paid by those who made money off their investments. Because they'd garnered such large Congressional majorities, they had a strong hand to play, so there was no way for the White House to push a progressive budget through without cutting a deal.

The President's priority—and my charge—was entirely different. At the beginning of the President's second term, he and I assembled a working group designed to think hard about what ought to define the nation's agenda. We made what were essentially two principled decisions. The first was that we were going to put the country's fiscal house in order. We weren't going to let Washington return to the gimmicks and borrowing that had put us in the hole in the first place.

The second, however, was that we weren't going to balance the budget on the backs of people who were struggling to make their way into the middle class. He had worked hard to bring the budget back from the brink. And the spoils of that hard work needed to be invested in those who had previously been left behind—people like the millions of poor children living without health insurance.

Washington in the mid-1990s wasn't as polarized as it is today, but it wasn't a picnic either. In particular, the House leadership had shown its true colors when they'd shut the government down just a few months before: Newt Gingrich, Dick Armey, Tom DeLay and their allies were prepared to play nothing short of hardball. But so was the President.

We spent endless hours over countless weeks trying to set up a deal—and no one put in more elbow grease than the President. We listened and cajoled. We worked collaboratively where we could, but we set our limits. And in the end we crafted a comprehensive deal that, while giving the Republicans something (namely a cut in the capital gains rate), accomplished exactly what we'd set out to do: balance the budget the right way.

The CHIP program doesn't get a lot of attention today. It's not flashy or well understood. But for millions of children who have been able to get health coverage over the last decade-and-a-half, there's little doubt that it was nothing short of a godsend. More than that, it was the result of something that's particularly special: a tough-minded governing philosophy grounded in an ethos of creative collaboration.

No one who enters into a contentious negotiation gets everything they want. The 1997 Budget Agreement is a case in point. There were elements of the agreement that neither the President nor I would have included in a perfect bill. But what we got—health insurance for millions of poor children—was unquestionably worth the cost.

I'll never forget the elation on his face when I told him we'd reached an agreement. It bore out the whole reason he'd decided on a career in public service—to empower people, as he says, to live their best life stories. It's too rare in politics that you are able to point to a precise moment when something you did made a huge difference. For President Clinton—a man who has had more than his share of moments like that—our conversation on that July day in the Oval Office is surely a sterling example.

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Erskine Bowles was the White House Chief of Staff from 1997 – 1998. He is the President Emeritus of the University of North Carolina.

# OUR SAVING GRACE

By Deborah Bredbenner

It all started one afternoon after I'd picked up our three-year-old son Bryant from his babysitter. Anne told me that Bryant had begun that afternoon to suffer from a very dry cough. She wondered whether he was catching a cold. I took Bryant straight home, and while at first he seemed to be playing normally, things took a sudden turn for the worse. Out of the blue, our son started running back and forth over and over as if he was fleeing from something. We'd never seen him behave like that before. I asked him what the matter was. He seemed very confused and then started crying out, "Make it stop Mommy, make it stop!" He became increasingly hysterical before collapsing onto the couch. I called my husband to tell him I was taking Bryant to the emergency room.

Much to our disbelief, the doctors at the hospital concluded that our son had suffered a severe asthma attack. Worse still, until we could get Bryant equipped with a plan to control his asthma over the long haul, we'd have to revisit the emergency room again and again to keep him breathing. It was a frightening period for all of us. While waiting months on our appointment at the Children's Hospital's pulmonary department, the scope of our family's upcoming challenge started to come into focus. We were committed to doing whatever it would take to help Bryant. But we knew that whatever we did was going to require some hard financial choices—and that some options might simply be out of our reach. We were told Bryant's asthma was not a temporary, but rather a lifelong condition.

Then it happened. Our saving grace—the CHIP program.

This essay is about what the Clinton presidency meant to us. I will tell you that it has meant everything. It was the turning point for our family. Why? As part of the balanced budget deal of 1997, President Clinton created a program to ensure that all American children would have access to health care. Both my husband and I worked hard to make ends meet each month. And without the CHIP program, we would have likely found it impossible to avoid choosing between helping our son and fulfilling our family's basic needs, both for us and for our daughter who is three years younger than Bryant. Thanks to the hard work of President Clinton, the First Lady and his Administration, they got it done!

I know that so many other families like us, every day, can thank the CHIP program for helping their children get everything from regular check-ups to emergency care without the crushing guilt of sacrifice. It has been a godsend for more than eight million children over the past decade and a half, and it has helped us, and millions of families like us, breathe a little easier. We all have President Bill Clinton to thank for lightening our loads just a bit, so parents—as it should be—don't have to worry about their children being turned away for lack of insurance.

Today, my family is doing just fine. Bryant is currently in his third year of college and Melissa is just starting her college application process. They are happy and healthy thanks to access to great health care.

Throughout the years, I have advocated to every mother I have come across while waiting in emergency rooms or doctors' offices about the availability of the CHIP program to working families. I routinely take out my card and give out the phone number. President Clinton gave me the honor of speaking to the nation's Governors about the CHIP program in the Rose Garden, and then again at the opening of his library, alongside four living Presidents and First Ladies and five other Americans whose lives were changed by the Clinton Administration. I am still so honored to have done this and continue to be blessed to have been chosen. But most importantly, I am forever in his debt for being there for my son Bryant.

Thank you President Clinton.

Deborah Bredbenner

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Deborah Bredbenner is employed as a manufacturer's retail representative. She and her family live in Milton, Delaware.

# YOU DON'T HAVE TO ASK WHY

By David Crane

A decade after he left the most powerful and prestigious elected office on the face of the earth, Bill Clinton accepted a job offer. Far from the public eye, he became the U.N. Secretary General's Special Envoy for Haiti.

Why would he do such a thing?

Why would he take a job with no pay, no staff, and minimal prestige focused on a tiny and obscure country blighted by natural disaster and decades of misrule? Why would a man whose former opponents often accused him of being too political spend so much of his time and energy on something that offered less-than-zero opportunity for domestic political gain?

I don't know for sure, because I have never asked him. I haven't needed to because, having been with President Clinton in Haiti several times, I haven't felt it necessary.

Spend a day following Bill Clinton around Haiti and you will get it. He cuts across the urban and rural landscape from revitalized hospital to fish farm to start-up coffee plantation to agricultural cooperative to various cottage industries seeking to harness Haiti's unique culture and rich artisan tradition. Always, he asks some variant of the same question: "What more do you need in order to do more?"

That's where "Clinton World" comes in. The vast array of contacts, friendships and other relationships Bill Clinton has developed over his wide-ranging life are called upon to bring their diverse passions and talents to assist in Haiti. Celebrities, like Sean Penn, Ben Stiller, and Matt Damon, artisans from the fashion world like Donna Karan and Petra Nemcova, each with their own desire to help, are called upon to lend a hand.

And then there are the CEOs with the immense resources and expertise of their companies at their fingertips. President Clinton knows these companies can materially assist in building out the critically necessary infrastructure of the country. He could just ask for donations, and being Bill Clinton, he probably could get quite a lot. But he knows that, for the corporate donor, traditional charity is an entirely evaporative experience—it's over the minute you write the check. So he leads mission after mission of CEOs to Haiti, letting them feel the challenges up close, tapping into their basic humanity and showing them that a little bit of their companies' charitable resources, judiciously applied, can go a very long way in Haiti. Bill Clinton recognizes that most CEOs are problem solvers who got where they are by "getting sh\*t done" and that is what Bill Clinton wants for Haiti—to get sh\*t done, not tomorrow, but right now.

Being on the road in Haiti with Bill Clinton you may experience, for a little while, a small touch of what too many Haitians face every day, which is hunger. This is because President Clinton has so much to do, he rarely stops to eat. If he does take time for a meal, it often is driven by his desire to catch up with Haiti's President or Prime Minister. Of course that means that President Clinton, himself, doesn't actually get to eat. He is off in a corner deep in conversation with the Haitian leaders. It's a private conversation but it's obvious from their body language that the local dignitaries are very receptive to tips on good governance and economic development from the most successful American president of the modern era.

Back on the road after lunch with President Clinton, you can count on visits to schools as part of the itinerary. Haiti has no history of public schools but the Haitian people believe, like most Americans, that education is the path to a better life for their children. Indeed, it is said that hunger in Haiti is worst in September as Haitian parents skimp on food purchases in order to generate the fees necessary to send their children to whatever private school there is in the area.

Unfortunately, there are not enough schools, particularly after the earthquake. Where there is a school it is often woefully deficient in the resources necessary to prepare children for the modern world. The network of NGOs, corporations, and personal benefactors, formed by President Clinton into a group called the Haiti Action Network, often acting in alliance with each other, since the earthquake have built—and now operate—hundreds of schools across Haiti.

In a place called Cite Soleil—the poorest neighborhood in the poorest capital city in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, devastated by earthquake

in 2010 and left on the back burner by a Haitian Government forced to perform triage post-earthquake—a sparkling new school has arisen that not only educates but also feeds their desperately hungry students. The school is the product of a few heroic Haitian citizens critically aided by the forces for good that President Clinton has brought to Haiti, including the Clinton Foundation itself.

On this day President Clinton, the force-for-good-in-chief, is dropping in for a visit. He inspects everything about the school compound—the water treatment, the sanitation, the solar energy system, the garden and, of course, the kitchen. He asks detailed questions about the education and nutrition programs. He notes with approval the various organizations that have donated various facilities making a mental note to thank them. It is not a “fly by” visit of the type expected of politicians.

As he nears the end of the inspection, he beckons to me and I hurry over, hoping for some words of praise. He surveys the squalid shacks surrounding the school perimeter and asks three questions:

“How many students do you have enrolled here?” 250, I answer.

“How many school age kids live in this neighborhood?” Roughly 500.

“What’s it going to take for you to double the size of this school?”

I have no immediate answer, but I am struck by how urgently Bill Clinton feels about giving kids a chance. Not some of them, but every single one of them.

Lastly, tentatively, Bill Clinton approaches the classrooms themselves. He does not want to disturb the kids in their studies. He wishes no ceremony. But it can’t be helped. They flock to him. Children who just 18 months before had every reason to believe that the world had forgotten them are now being looked in on by the most illustrious man in the post-Mandela era. They gather around him and he engages with them in a way only Bill Clinton can. The teachers, having momentarily lost control, quickly organize the students into a welcome song. You see what it means to the kids in their eyes. You also see it in his.

And then I know why he does it.

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David Crane is the Chief Executive Officer of NRG Energy.

# A CALL TO SERVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

By Mara D'Amico

As millions around the world can attest, the legacy of President Clinton has been both far-reaching and profound. Like many millennials, I came to understand what leadership through public service looked like while President Clinton was in office, and was fortunate to be a child during a period of relative peace and prosperity while he was President. Although I couldn't fully understand at the time, he was crafting policy and creating programs that would shape the course of my life. As a young person who served two terms as an AmeriCorps member, graduated from the Clinton School of Public Service, and was awarded a fellowship in Secretary Clinton's name to continue her work supporting women's rights around the globe, I can say with certainty that my life would be completely different without the influence of President Clinton. My classmates from the Clinton School and I are now part of his ever-growing legacy.

In 2011, I was serving as an AmeriCorps Public Ally in Miami, and was looking for a graduate program that would embody the philosophy of public service that I had come to value. During a conversation about graduate programs, a close friend suggested I look into the Clinton School, as it seemed to be a good fit for me. I wanted a program that was firmly grounded in community-based work. That paired academic rigor with real-world application. That cultivated a diverse and tight-knit group of classmates with a wide range of public service interest areas and proven leadership. That gave students the opportunity to do international fieldwork. That didn't burden graduates with excessive levels of student loan debt. That gave access to some of the best thought leaders and public servants in the world. And that didn't shy away from working to address the toughest social issues facing our world today. I found all of those things and more at the Clinton School of Public Service. Although it was hard to say goodbye to Miami, Florida, I knew that the Clinton School was the right fit for me.

The mission of the Clinton School is "to educate and prepare professionals in public service who understand, engage and transform complex social, cultural,

economic and political systems to ensure equity, challenge oppression and effect positive social change.” At the Clinton School, we learn theory and concepts in the classroom—ranging from program planning and evaluation to research methods to ethics of public service—and apply that knowledge through three major field service projects. The first is a team public service project called Practicum, in which students work to address a need in the state of Arkansas. The second is the International Public Service Project, in which students spend a minimum of ten weeks abroad working to solve problems or build the capacity of an organization or community. Finally, students complete a culminating Capstone project in their second year of the program, which can be completed anywhere in the world, from Little Rock to Lagos to Lima. For me, this was the main draw of the program—to be able to directly apply the concepts that I learned in the classroom.

I completed my Practicum project with Lewis-Burnett Employment Finders in Little Rock, working with a team of classmates to survey the Little Rock service community about their capacity to meet the needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, create a service directory specifically for that population, and write a white paper of analysis and recommendations for how the service community could be better organized to meet the needs of those individuals.

For my International project, I travelled to Ometepe Island in Nicaragua, where I worked with a health clinic to create a curriculum of educational and support groups to start discussions in the communities there about topics related to violence against women.

For my Capstone project, I worked with the Women’s Foundation of Arkansas to research and author a strategic plan for its Policy and Research Committee so it could be better positioned to create research and effect change for women and girls in Arkansas.

These field service experiences gave me a more intimate look at the issues impacting the lives of people across the state of Arkansas and around the world. I gained new skills, learned a great deal, and made real contributions to the organizations where I worked. All of these experiences taught me skills and knowledge that I continue to apply on a regular basis.

Students at the Clinton School have numerous opportunities to be involved in a variety of academic and leadership pursuits. We can listen to countless speakers at the renowned public program series, learning from leaders like Al Gore, Buzz Aldrin and Rachel Maddow. Because the Clinton School is located on the grounds of the Clinton Presidential Center, we also have the chance to become engaged in the vibrant community that Little Rock offers. I enjoyed taking full advantage of my time there, getting to know the Natural State through the Hope Watermelon Festival, trips with classmates to the Buffalo River and Pinnacle Mountain, and finding the best pie from Helena to Hot Springs, and from Eureka Springs to El Dorado.

I also found some truly incredible friends in my classmates. I learned more than I could have imagined from classmates who were working to address climate change through training women to install solar panels, others who were focused on improving health through walkability, and still more who worked with women seeking refuge from the conflict in Syria. At the Clinton School, you are surrounded by true public servants who are passionate about and committed to cultivating positive social change. I look forward to seeing the collective impact my classmates will have over the course of our lives.

Upon graduation from the Clinton School in May 2014, I was named the Hillary Rodham Clinton Communications Fellow for the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security in Washington, D.C. My time and experiences at the Clinton School directly prepared me for the work I'm doing now, and I am thrilled to have the chance to build upon the legacy started by Secretary Clinton in working for the world to see women's rights as human rights, once and for all.

My life has been shaped by the work and legacy of President Clinton. I have directly benefitted from the policies and programs he has shaped and implemented, which are represented at the Center in the Library, the Archives, and at the School, and it is my responsibility to pay that forward. I have committed to a life of public service—a life of working to find community-based

solutions to pervasive social problems, of fostering inclusivity and thoughtfulness, and of operating at the intersection of theory and practice. I look forward to the bridges I will continue to build through the legacy of President Clinton.

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Mara D'Amico is a graduate of the Clinton School of Public Service, and is the Hillary Rodham Clinton Communications Fellow at the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.

# A WAVE OF WELLNESS WASHES OVER THE DESERT

CLINTON FOUNDATION PROPELS HEALTH FORWARD  
IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY

By Lauren Del Sarto

The Coachella Valley is often described as “Heaven’s waiting room” or “martini mecca” by outsiders, but those in our natural health community have always considered it a place of healing.

Upon moving to the desert eight years ago, I was surprised to learn just how advanced the practice of natural modalities was locally, working in the shadow of a vast and well-respected medical community. Then I began to see where the two were converging and decided there needed to be a medium to promote their union, and the practice of “whole person” care. *Desert Health, News from the Valley’s Integrated Health Community* was born and immediately embraced by the industry—including the valley’s major hospitals which also saw wellness and integrated care as the medicine of tomorrow.

*Desert Health* encourages readers to take their health into their own hands. We feature educational information by local practitioners from top medical and naturopathic doctors to yoga instructors and acupuncturists. But most importantly, we celebrate the individuals and organizations throughout the valley practicing and promoting positive health.

Two years into our venture, a similar effort of greater magnitude came to town: President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Health Matters Initiative (CHMI). They started at the top with government officials, educators and industry leaders and challenged the Coachella Valley to rise to the occasion as the first region to prove that systems can be instilled in a community to change the overall health of that population.

Meetings were held, a blueprint of action was created, and excitement grew. All of a sudden the conversation of health was propelled to the forefront in the Coachella Valley, and everyone was asking, “How can I get involved?”

There are only a handful of people in the world who could unite an entire community and instill the confidence that an effort of this magnitude—which aims to alter human behavior—is indeed possible. President Bill Clinton is one of them. The positive energy, worldwide respect and influence, and the long list of accomplishments demonstrate a human being who truly cares about making the world a better place for all. And that dedication—along with the never-ending determination to try—is contagious.

The Coachella Valley has risen to the challenge. In our coverage of the progress and accomplishments of CHMI over the past two years, I have yet to hear “It can’t be done.” Our community embraced the effort, creating unprecedented change and results that have surpassed even the Foundation’s greatest expectations. “We are constantly in awe and inspired by the cohesion that you have around this work,” stated CHMI CEO Rain Henderson. “You all have fabulous day jobs, and a lot that you are doing, and the amount of energy and investment you have committed to working with us on this initiative is truly special and unique.”

With the help of the Foundation’s Alliance for a Healthier Generation, all 80 of the valley’s public schools have joined the effort. Cafeteria and vending machine foods have been improved; wellness committees of both students and staff have been formed; early morning running clubs and afterschool activities are taking place (being led by volunteer teachers and parents); and health fairs and school vegetable gardens are being incorporated. A few of our local schools were even honored nationally for their exceptional efforts.

Thanks to President Clinton’s vision, wellness is everywhere in our community. The La Quinta Senior Center will soon re-open as the La Quinta Wellness Center, and the City of Palm Springs was recently awarded 5 gold medals in First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! Initiative. Over the Halloween weekend, the

second annual Run with Los Muertos 5K race took place on Dia de los Muertos in Coachella. Embracing the local culture, valley native Tizoc DeAztlan launched this event to encourage the area's large Hispanic population to not only celebrate those who have passed, but also to celebrate life. Last year, he saw many first-time runners shedding tears of joy and exhaustion at the finish line, so he created a free six-week training program leading up to the event called "Por Vida!" He enlisted the help of local naturopathic doctors to work with runners, and encouraged high school student Johnny Flores to blog about his experience.

"My friends and family think I am crazy," he told us; his blog was aptly entitled "Not Giving Up!"

Our most significant achievement may be the successful funding of CV Link, a 50-mile multi-use path that will connect the valley from one end to the other offering a scenic and auto-free place to bike, run, jog, and inline skate. While plans for the project preceded CHMI, incorporation into the blueprint has generated additional support, team work, and funding. \$85 million of the estimated \$100 million budget has been raised, and a 2016 groundbreaking is planned.

President Clinton also reminded us not to forget about those in our community with the greatest needs. CHMI strives to address disparities for all residents and to bridge the gap. Playgrounds and wellness parks have been constructed in the east valley and a "Clean Up Coachella" day with Chelsea Clinton had a lasting impact on all. *Desert Health* pledged to help increase the number of medical volunteers at the valley's only free medical clinic and our media campaign has helped increase staff, and thus the number of patients that Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine can see.

The Foundation also encouraged non-profit organizations such as FIND Food Bank and Hidden Harvest to join forces to reach a greater population; their joint effort was rewarded by a significant local grant, and more of our valley's hungry receive fresh fruits and vegetables.

Many of these community efforts, large and small, would not have taken place without the vision, support and facilitation of the Clinton Health Matters Initiative.

On behalf of the Coachella Valley, I want to thank you, Mr. President, and your tremendous team at the Clinton Foundation for guiding us down this path of

enhanced health and wellness. Thanks to your support and encouragement, we are doing it for ourselves, and for the greater good of our community. *Desert Health* will continue to publish our achievements in an effort to inspire others to take part.

You can count on us as your “model community.” Our work will continue, and we promise not to let you down.

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Lauren Del Sarto is Founder and Publisher of *Desert Health, News from the Coachella Valley's Integrated Health Community*, which strives to educate and inspire readers on health and well-being.

# TRUE PARTNERSHIP: WORKING TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN HEALTH SYSTEMS IN ETHIOPIA

By Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Ph.D.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs for Ethiopia

Well before I had the honour of meeting President Clinton almost ten years ago, I had already sensed that there was something distinct about the approach of the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI). Since its establishment in 2002, CHAI (formerly known as the Clinton HIV/AIDS Initiative), had quickly built a reputation as a forceful negotiator of reduced HIV/AIDS drug prices, whose successful efforts were dramatically improving access to life-saving HIV treatment in developing countries. But aside from this strong track record, I was particularly struck by how all the CHAI principals I met spoke about their work. Their message was as simple as it was consistent, and went something like this: These are our specific areas of expertise and experience. How can we partner with you to help you achieve your objectives? Our commitment is to add value to your plans, so if you do not see a clear fit, please let us know, so that we can consider contributing elsewhere.

I was inspired by the clarity of purpose that had brought together such a remarkably accomplished, committed, and principled team of professionals to advance CHAI's mission. CHAI's commitment to supporting country-led plans was clear and unparalleled, and our special partnership with CHAI has served as a model for strengthening our collaborative ventures in many other spheres. It is thus with immense appreciation and pleasure that I welcomed this special opportunity to tell this story about the far-reaching impacts of President Clinton's leadership in Ethiopia and the extraordinary achievements of our enduring partnership.

When CHAI established an office in Addis Ababa in 2005, Ethiopia was embarking upon a major transformation of its health sector—an exciting and

challenging time. Our country faced massive health challenges on many fronts. Meeting our health Millennium Development Goals (MDG) would require dramatically improving all of our key health indicators—a tall order that would not be possible without a radical overhaul of our national health system. But the enormity of these seemingly insurmountable challenges was also matched by the sheer determination and commitment of our Government. We had a bold and unwavering vision to bring about lasting change in the health and development of our people. And we also knew that with the unprecedented support we were receiving from the international community, we had a historic opportunity before us to realize this vision.

Ten years on, the progress we have achieved together with all our partners has simply been tremendous. Today, Ethiopia is poised to meet almost all of its MDG targets by the 2015 deadline. We have already exceeded our targets for reducing under-five child mortality; malaria deaths have been slashed by more than 50 percent and continue to plummet; HIV/AIDS prevalence amongst our adult population has dropped significantly below our MDG target; and we are well on track to achieving universal access to HIV treatment as well as attaining our targets for tuberculosis (TB) detection and treatment. These dramatic gains would not have been possible without the substantial international resources made available to fight against these major killers, the steadfast support of all our partners, and our prioritization of primary health care delivery, mainly through our flagship community-based Health Extension Program (HEP).

Through HEP, we trained and deployed more than 38,000 health extension workers who now constitute an integral part of our civil service health workforce.

And today, in each and every village across our vast country these health extension workers—the large majority of them young women—continue to empower and mobilize local communities to further expand on and sustain the dramatic health gains we have achieved over the last decade.

But beyond expanding primary health care services, there was the dire need to strengthen our hospital systems. We were convinced that building up the management capacities of our public health hospitals was the key starting point for improving tertiary health care services. Clearly, this was not the most exciting or attractive of projects, as it promised no “quick wins” or sensational public health breakthroughs. On the contrary, it would require substantial long-term investments, the returns of which were not likely to be realized for many years to come. CHAI was the only partner that stepped up to support our expressed needs and objectives on this front.

This commitment was all the more remarkable given that CHAI did not, at the time, have any specialized expertise in hospital management. But the will was certainly there, and so we were confident that we would find a way. We first agreed to engage a third partner and identified a dynamic team from Yale University who brought the necessary technical and strategic expertise. Together, our three teams tackled the complex task of appropriately scaling the project to ensure measurable impacts. The project also entailed legislative work to establish a new Chief Executive Officer position as part of our civil service, as well as planning and implementing the intensive training of this new cadre of professionals, and developing a comprehensive “Blueprint for Hospital Management in Ethiopia,” which set the necessary standards and processes for strengthening key hospital functions. Today, well-trained CEOs and management teams are in place in all government hospitals throughout the country, with early evidence indicating that this new cadre of managers is successfully leading significantly improved tertiary health care services.

Our partnership with CHAI has also yielded significant systems improvements and results in other areas. As a result of CHAI’s partnership with our Government’s Pharmaceutical Fund and Supply Agency (PFSA), all Ethiopian children requiring HIV treatment have access to first line treatment today. PFSA’s fully-stocked pediatric HIV supply chain system is now one of the most developed in Africa. CHAI also helped build up our capacities for early diagnosis of HIV in infants, and accelerated the introduction of ready-to-use therapeutic foods for the

treatment of HIV-positive children with severe and acute malnutrition. More recently, working closely with the GAVI Alliance and other partners, CHAI played an instrumental role in helping us accelerate the introduction of the pneumococcal vaccine, thereby saving the lives of tens of thousands of children from pneumonia. Key to all of these successes has been CHAI's unwavering commitment to helping us improve our health systems and service delivery capacities.

In closing, I would like to share a warm memory from President Clinton's visit in 2005. Towards the end of his visit, while addressing a room full of Ministry and CHAI staff and other partners, President Clinton was suddenly interrupted. A boisterous toddler had somehow escaped his minders and ran up to join the President. Not in the least bit shy, the little boy approached the President as though he were about to join in on the conversation. Before anyone could figure out how to manage this awkward interruption, President Clinton simply paused to welcome the little boy warmly, and with his characteristic grace and wit, promptly turned the situation into a humorous diversion that only served to further captivate his audience. That little boy was my youngest son, Brook. Now an 11-year-old, Brook was, of course, far too young to remember the incident. But he certainly enjoys hearing the story every time—especially the part where President Clinton told him that he would grow up to accomplish extraordinary things and that he had every potential to become a great leader someday. For me, that memory will always have special significance—as a reminder of the exceptional character of this distinguished world leader who I am profoundly proud to call a friend, but also as a symbol of our enduring partnership—a true partnership which has saved and transformed the lives of scores of young children throughout my beloved country.

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Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Ph.D., is the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Ethiopia. He also served as the country's Minister of Health from 2005–2012.

# BILL CLINTON AND NORTHERN IRELAND

By Senator George J. Mitchell

It was 8:15 on the morning of Friday, April 10, 1998. I was at my desk in Stormont, Northern Ireland, just outside of the capital city Belfast. I was exhausted. For the previous two weeks I had chaired an intense series of meetings among the British and Irish governments and the ten political parties of Northern Ireland. The negotiations to bring peace to that troubled land, which had begun nearly two years earlier, were rushing to a dramatic conclusion.

Two weeks earlier, in desperation, I had set a final deadline of midnight, Thursday, April 9. We had failed to meet the deadline and were now driving hard, all night and all day, to get it done before midnight came again. For two weeks I had been engaged in what seemed like an endless round of meetings and phone calls.

*The phone rang and I picked it up.*

*“Hello.”*

*“Senator Mitchell?”*

*“Yes.”*

*“The President of the United States is calling.”*

*My mind snapped to alert.*

*“George?”*

*“What are you doing up so late?” I asked. It was 3:15 am in Washington.*

*“I can’t sleep. I want to know what’s happening. I want to help.”*

*“Besides,” he added, “you’ve been up all night.”*

*“That’s true, but I’m not the President of the United States. This is all I’m working on right now. You’ve got the whole world to worry about.”*

*“Well, right now what I’m worried about is getting a peace agreement in Northern Ireland.”*

We talked for about a half hour. I reviewed the status of the talks and described the sticking points. We discussed each of the key participants and what he might say to them. It didn’t take much briefing on my part. He knew each of the negotiators so well that he called them all by their first names, and he was already well aware of the issues. He then phoned the prime ministers of Ireland and the United Kingdom, and then several of the Northern Ireland political leaders—David Trimble, John Hume, Gerry Adams, and others. The calls were very helpful. The delegates knew the president well from their prior meetings with him. They knew how well he understood the issues. They were impressed that he would stay up all night, to follow the negotiations, to talk with them. I too was impressed, but not surprised. I already had plenty of experience with the President’s legendary work habits, including many late-night phone calls.

I was the Senate Majority Leader during the first two years of President Clinton’s first term. We worked together on many major issues. There were successes, like his budget and economic program which resulted in balanced budgets, remarkable economic growth, and the creation of over 22 million jobs during his presidency. There were failures, like the effort to reform our health care system.

But, for me, one of the most emotional and least well-known of his many accomplishments took place after I left the Senate in 1995. Shortly thereafter I travelled to Northern Ireland, at the President’s request. He told me it would be for only a few months. It ended up taking five years, but it was well worth it.

Two years before the Good Friday Agreement I had gotten a good sense of just how intense his personal interest in Northern Ireland was. In late July of 1996 I received a telephone call from a member of the White House staff. The president and his Republican opponent, Senator Bob Dole, had agreed to two nationally televised debates, to be held in October. The president’s staff

wanted me to return from Northern Ireland to the United States for a couple of weeks in early October to play the role of Senator Dole in the mock debates that would be the centerpiece of the preparation.

For the six years I served as majority leader of the Senate, Bob Dole was minority leader. We were and are friends. We had many political disagreements, but to this day no harsh words ever passed between us, in public or private. Our relationship was based on mutual respect and the recognition that, whatever our political differences, we had to work together for the Senate to function. We had debated each other often, in public and in private. The Clinton team thought that I knew Dole's mind and mannerisms better than anyone else. They also told me that they wanted someone who would not be afraid to say unpleasant things to the president, and they thought I would do that.

For me, it turned out to be an enjoyable experience. When I arrived at the site chosen for debate preparation, a conference center in Chautauqua, New York, I was invited to have dinner with the president. For the first hour he grilled me about Northern Ireland. Here he was, facing his first debate as an incumbent president, and he wanted to talk about Northern Ireland!

The president did very well in both debates. He possesses the skills needed for a great debater. He is extremely intelligent, has a natural curiosity, and an inquiring mind. He knows the issues better than any public official I have ever dealt with. He has an uncommon ability to describe complex issues in clear, understandable language. Those qualities also served him well in Northern Ireland.

President Clinton was the first sitting American president ever to visit Northern Ireland, the first ever to place resolution of that conflict high on the American agenda. His knowledge of the history of the conflict was immense, his interest high. Thanks to President Clinton's courage, persistence and leadership, the people of Northern Ireland enjoy a peace they did not have for many, many years. For that result he is held in the highest esteem by people from all over Ireland and the United Kingdom.

I travel there often and people frequently say to me: "When you see President Clinton, thank him for us." Of course, the President has often been thanked. But I think it worth doing again, on behalf of those now living who haven't been able to do so personally, and those yet to come, all of whom will lead lives that

are more safe, full and meaningful because of his efforts. So, Mr. President, on their behalf, thank you, may God bless you and the country you so ably led, the United States of America.

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Senator George J. Mitchell served as U.S. Senate Majority Leader, as Chairman of the Northern Ireland peace talks, and as Special Envoy for Middle East Peace. He is now Chairman Emeritus of the international law firm DLA Piper.

# A SEAT AT OUR TABLE

## BUILDING BACK STRONGER IN HAITI

By Maryse Pénette-Kedar

When the earthquake struck in January 2010, Haiti was inundated with foreign aid workers. Organizations that had never worked here before opened emergency mail boxes and packed up as many employees and volunteers as they could muster to rescue the trapped, treat the injured, and bring solace to more than one million internally displaced individuals.

We knew that the earthquake had shaken to the ground an infrastructure weakened by decades of neglect. With our limited infrastructure reduced to dust, we needed to rebuild a more just and sustainable Haiti. What was needed was a long-term plan, a paradigm shift, and a bold departure from the past, one that could only come from us. Haiti after the earthquake had become the epicenter of rescue efforts, and as the relief workers began to leave the country, it became clear to us that the road to rebuilding our shattered nation and our traumatized psyche would be a long and arduous journey, one that would only be possible with the support of trusted friends and allies.

Among the ranks of those who stayed for the long haul were former President Bill Clinton and his colleagues from the Clinton Foundation. President Clinton was not a newcomer to Haiti. He had been intimately involved with Haiti and its development for many years, first as President of the United States and more recently as the U.N. Secretary General's Special Envoy in 2009 when Haiti had been devastated by four consecutive hurricanes.

Furthermore, since he began his involvement with our country nearly four decades ago, he has been deeply invested not just in emergency relief, but also in the kind of aid we need the most: investments in our economy, in our human capital, and most importantly in developing solutions for a sustainable future.

President Clinton believes strongly in the transformative power of opportunities for gainful employment for Haitian citizens. As such, he has leveraged his extensive network to open doors that might otherwise have been unattainable. Through the work of the Clinton Foundation, he vigorously promotes Haiti, and attracts investors of all stripes to our country.

President Clinton was also the Co-Chair of the Haitian Reconstruction Fund, through which he has advocated for and overseen many large-scale development projects. Among them was the completion of the University of Haiti's teaching hospital in Mirebalais, which is now the largest medical facility in the country, employing and training Haiti's next generation of world-class medical personnel. As a result of this hospital, Haiti is reducing its reliance on the international community for the delivery of health care services.

One of the most important roles President Clinton has played in the reconstruction and development of our country is as the U.N. Special Envoy to Haiti. He was perhaps most recognized for rallying the international community to our aid after the earthquake, yet he also included the voice of the Haitian Diaspora community during that critical time. Many of the members of President Clinton's envoy team were of Haitian descent. Today, President Clinton continues to promote investments in Haiti's economy, particularly with targeted efforts at job creation through the Clinton Global Initiative.

As the President of the Board of PRODEV, one the few Haitian-led foundations focused on education, I feel strongly that our future relies on solutions from within the Haitian community. Yet, with limited resources, there is a place for international partners at our table. President Clinton occupies that place with grace and resolve, and works both with and for the Haitian people in our quest to build a strong and proud nation.

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Maryse Pénette-Kedar is president of PRODEV: Progress and Development Through the Youth of Haiti, and is Senior Consultant to Royal Caribbean and President of SOLANO, its affiliate in Haiti.

# BILL CLINTON: THE WISDOM OF THE HEART

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
CLINTON PRESIDENTIAL CENTER

By Shimon Peres, President of Israel, 2007 – 2014

The Bible describes King Salomon, the wisest of men, as a man who possesses a wise heart. I remember the first time I met President Bill Clinton, I was struck by his resemblance to the biblical description.

Bill really presided over our hearts without trying to preside over our minds.

The moment he entered the White House, many of us felt as though his house was our home. Bill is probably the most humane President in the history of the United States. A President for each of us and for all of us.

His unmatched charisma would have been enough were it not for his understanding, his compassion, the height of his intellectual capacity, and his outstanding memory. Bill has the exceptional ability to see the forest and remember every tree.

His vision is wide-ranging and spans over the long term. It encompasses persons, events, old history, and modern science. With an unsatisfied curiosity, he sees from afar what is happening and what is arising from distant horizons. Yet he administers daily and pragmatic calls with great talent, always leaving time and room for innovations, for surprising ideas and new guests.

Bill knew that a President should not follow but lead. While paying attention to the wishes of the many, he knew to steer them in the right direction. He offered a vision to his people.

By respecting the values of history, and welcoming the dreams of tomorrow, he combined trust and reform under the same roof.

He is a leader and a dreamer, travelling the globe geographically and intellectually, exporting the American Dream to the world.

Bill's administration had a vision to reform and readjust to the future's demands, never escaping the need to implement pragmatic and real changes. When he found an opportunity for peace, no matter its location on the map, he was there. And when he thought there was a need to stop evil, he was a Commander in Chief.

Though he took his country by the horns, he knew that trumpets are but converted horns.

Bill remains a President in the eyes of millions of people, even after leaving office. He felt that he had departed from his post, but not from his mission. What he does outside of the White House for people all over the world is much more than one can believe, never considering any contribution to the global community too small or too demanding.

He promised to make the world a better place for all people. His promise turned into a daring prophecy, and became a hopeful reality.

He has always kept in mind that a person is as great as the causes he serves.

To overcome poverty is a great cause.

To overcome discrimination is a great cause.

To overcome violence is a great cause.

To overcome illness is a great cause.

To overcome ignorance is a great cause.

To overcome indifference is a great cause.

Bill is each of those causes and all of them.

He served two terms as the President of the United States and an additional one as a willing and loving representative of the many.

The mark left by the Clinton Global Initiative is evident in many corners of the earth. The outstanding activities of the Clinton Presidential Center as well as the Clinton Global Initiative are an inspiration to all who seek to better and enrich the world. It is a true *Tikkun Olam*.

What Bill has created speaks to his unbelievable ability to bring people together and offer them the most precious gift of all—a hope for the future.

I remember the day when Bill opened his library. I looked around at the books and I looked at Bill's face. The books seemed to me as musical instruments and Bill as the conductor. I liked the music and I was charmed by the conductor. Enchanted by the melody of the pages, I was delighted by the library and taken by an exceptional conductor.

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President Shimon Peres is one of Israel's most distinguished public servants. He was the President of Israel from 2007–2014, and served at times as the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs during the 1990s.

# STANDING WITH THE PEOPLE OF COLOMBIA

By Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia

It is not often that a man is hailed as a hero in a foreign land. But then again, not every man is William Jefferson Clinton.

Colombians have a special relationship with the forty-second president of the United States. It's a deeply emotional connection that dates back more than 15 years and speaks to the transformational power of his leadership and vision.

In the late 1990s Colombia, ravaged by years of drug wars, assassinations, massacres, terrorist attacks, and armed conflict, was considered in danger of becoming a failed state by several influential experts and policymakers. There was a generalized sense of pessimism in Washington, D.C. about what the future held for the third most populous country in Latin America.

But one man believed that Colombia could be turned around. One man understood that the Colombian people only needed a partner by its side in order to wage a fight that was in both countries' national interest.

Rising above the political fray, he worked with both Democrats and Republicans in Congress to craft what has arguably become the most successful bipartisan foreign policy initiative in recent U.S. history: Plan Colombia.

In May of 2000, 386 Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives, and 96 Democrats and Republicans in the Senate joined together to pass the historic legislation that would help change the destiny of a nation.

At the signing ceremony, President Clinton said the following: "As Colombians fight to build their democracy and block the illegal drug trade, they are fighting for all of us. If they are willing to take up the fight, we should be willing to take on some of the cost. I am proud to sign legislation that commits us to doing that."

In August of that year he visited our beautiful city of Cartagena, accompanied by a high-level bipartisan Congressional delegation, in order to send a powerful

message to the Colombian people: the United States stands with you.

When he stepped off Air Force One it was love at first sight. We still have memories of President Clinton talking to ordinary people, dancing with local youngsters and artists, and sharing surprising emotional moments such as comforting widows of our policemen and soldiers killed in action.

All Colombians know the story of the Colombian flag bracelet that was given to him by a children's Vallenato musical group. He has never taken it off his wrist. Not even when he underwent surgery.

Here was a U.S. president who wasn't afraid to connect at a human level. He saw us as equals, he believed in us.

I was Minister of Finance during those days. Most people probably do not remember that besides our grave security problems, Colombia was also in a deep economic crisis and on the verge of default. President Clinton assisted us greatly on this front, directing his Secretary of the Treasury Larry Summers to work with us and with the World Bank to put a financial package together that planted the seeds for Colombia's economic prosperity today.

Over the years, as I became Minister of Defense and then President, I have witnessed a tireless champion of Colombian causes and a pragmatic leader who has made a difference on a wide range of issues important to us, from helping with the passage of the Free Trade Agreement between our nations to supporting countless social projects that have changed the lives of so many of my fellow citizens.

A few months ago, we shared the stage at a conference in Cartagena that focused on the Third Way as a centrist, successful model of governance. As the issue of our current peace negotiations emerged in the discussion, I was struck by his insightful analysis of the moment in which we find ourselves as a nation.

As he effortlessly connected his experiences in Northern Ireland to the Colombian reality, I couldn't help but realize that he's long wanted this peace for us, and that it is as much his as it is ours.

President Clinton represents to the world what is best about America. He is a visionary and capable man who believes that we are all one people, one human

race, and as such we can only resolve our biggest challenges by working together, even with those who oppose us.

Colombia is very fortunate indeed to have such a mentor, confidant, and friend.

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Juan Manuel Santos is the President of Colombia.

# WHAT'S RIGHT WITH AMERICA

## HOW AMERICORPS AND CROSS-SECTOR STRATEGIES ADDRESS THE NATION'S CHALLENGES

By Shirley Sagawa

During his campaign, President Clinton pledged to enable young people to do a year of service in exchange for money for college. And in September 1994, he made good on that pledge, swearing in the first AmeriCorps members who would serve their communities while earning money for college or to pay back loans.

Through AmeriCorps, President Clinton was not just betting that the energy and idealism of young Americans would create a steady stream of recruits. He was also banking on the resourcefulness of the nonprofit sector to put them to use.

As it turned out, people did want to serve and agencies did want to sponsor them. Today, nearly a million Americans have served and the supply of applicants far outstrips available positions. Demand from organizations wanting to host AmeriCorps members similarly goes well beyond the number of positions that can be funded by the federal government. Many organizations provide 50 or even 100 percent of the funding needed. In the cases of both organizations and individuals, interest is high even with little advertising in more than a decade.

While the demand to serve and to host members is striking, what AmeriCorps members have done for our country is even more remarkable. Thousands of corps members in JumpStart, Minnesota Reading Corps, Reading Partners, and other programs have helped young students read at grade level. Thousands of City Year corps members have helped reduce the high school dropout rate to a record low. College Possible members and those in similar programs have helped thousands of low-income youth apply to and succeed in college.

Thousands of others helped New Orleans recover after Katrina, New Jersey and New York after Sandy, and Joplin, Missouri, after deadly tornadoes.

Still others have played important roles in conservation, built housing for low-income families, offered free legal assistance to struggling families, and helped people navigate the health care and social services systems when they had nowhere else to turn.

Many corps members have had a multiplier effect—hundreds of thousands of AmeriCorps members have recruited and led millions of volunteers to work alongside them, boosting the impact of nonprofits.

Less well understood is the role that AmeriCorps has played in fostering social innovation—that is, the process of identifying new solutions to challenges, testing them, making adjustments and then taking them to scale. The challenge that social entrepreneurs typically face is a combination of financial and human capital. So it is not surprising that innovative organizations from Harlem Children’s Zone to Habitat for Humanity have identified the idealistic human capital that comes with AmeriCorps funding as a scaling strategy.

It’s equally compelling that AmeriCorps alums have gone on to become social entrepreneurs in their own right—from Teach for America alums Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin who founded KIPP Academy to Volunteer Maryland alum Rhonda Ulmer, a community college graduate who turned around her own children’s school by founding Parent University.

AmeriCorps was the first in a long list of strategies the Clinton Administration used to leverage and support private sector solutions to solve America’s biggest problems.

The first ever White House Conference on Philanthropy, organized by First Lady Hillary Clinton, explored the future of charitable giving in the new Millennium

and laid out an agenda that foreshadowed today's important trends in giving, from crowd funding to social investing. At the event, President Clinton announced the creation of a White House Task Force on Nonprofits and Government to inventory best practices for cross-sector partnerships. The Task Force released its report at a second conference, just days from the end of the Clinton administration, highlighting partnerships between the federal government and the nonprofit private sector, including:

The National Campaign for the Prevention of Teen Pregnancy, launched in response to the President's 1995 State of the Union Address in which he challenged the country to come together in a national effort to reduce teen pregnancy. The non-profit Campaign enlisted the help of the media and advertising experts, and built an effective grass-roots movement that brings together public, private, and nonprofit partners in states and local communities. It met its initial goal to reduce the teen pregnancy rate in the United States by one-third over a 10-year period, and has moved on to address unplanned pregnancies for unmarried adults.

The First Lady's Save America's Treasures partnership, which sought to preserve and protect historic buildings, arts, and published works through a public-private partnership between the U.S. National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a result of this work, dozens of American icons were preserved, including the Star Spangled Banner, Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, and Mesa Verde National Park.

The Food Recovery and Gleaning Initiative, created in 1996 when President Clinton directed federal agencies to work in partnership with nonprofit anti-hunger groups to increase the "recovery and gleaning" of excess food for distribution to the hungry, and signed legislation to free producers from liability should the donated food cause any harm, as long as it was donated "in good faith." Since that time, gleaning has become a common practice, providing millions of tons of fresh produce to the hungry.

The 1997 President's Summit for America's Future, organized by the Corporation for National and Community Service in partnership with the Points of Light Foundation, gathered three Presidents and Nancy Reagan to increase the nation's commitment to young people. The America's Promise Alliance was founded to carry out this work and has grown to become the nation's largest multi-sector alliance focused on the well-being of young

people. It has been instrumental in a national effort to increase the high school graduation rate, now at an all-time high of 80 percent.

The Welfare to Work Partnership, founded after President Clinton signed the Welfare Reform Act to lead a national mobilization of private-sector employers to help people move from public assistance to jobs. In response, more than 20,000 additional companies signed on, pledging to hire welfare recipients without displacing existing workers. As a result, member companies hired an estimated 1.1 million former welfare recipients.

In the foreign policy arena, Vital Voices shows that partnerships can cross international boundaries. Launched in 1997 with the leadership of the First Lady and Secretary of State to amplify and support the voices of emerging women leaders around the world, Vital Voices built on the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Today, it is at the forefront of international coalitions to combat human trafficking, equip women with the skills to help provide for their families, and enable women to become change agents in their governments, advocates for social justice, and supporters of democracy and the rule of law.

The report issued by the White House Task Force in 2000 underscored that nonprofit organizations are vital partners of the federal government. However, the full potential of these cross-sector approaches has yet to be realized. The White House Conference took place after eight years of unprecedented economic growth. Today the need for partnerships is even more urgent.

As President Clinton said in his 1993 Inaugural Address: “There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be fixed by what is right with America.” There are few big challenges facing the U.S. that can be solved by government alone. Finding ways for public policy to leverage private action ought to be a central strategy of leaders at every level of government, not as an excuse for government inaction, but rather as a way to powerfully extend its impact.

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Shirley Sagawa served as Deputy Chief of Staff to First Lady Hillary Clinton, Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, and founding Managing Director of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Currently, she serves as Chief Service Officer for the Service Year Exchange and Senior Policy Advisor to America Forward.

# INVESTING IN AMERICA'S MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE

## A LEGACY OF HEALTH AND HOPE FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN

By Donna E. Shalala

Childhood should be a time filled with learning and playing, laughter and daydreaming, all taking place in a safe, nurturing environment. But for too many children in the U.S., their potential for growth and development—physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially—has been overshadowed by the ubiquitous afflictions of poverty, illness, racial disparities, and undocumented immigration status.

The reality is that the American Dream of happiness and prosperity is often out of reach for our youngest and most vulnerable dreamers. Viewed as a continuum beginning with prenatal development to infancy, adolescence, and finally, young adulthood, the need to provide integrated and comprehensive support systems for children and families is fundamental to our government's responsibilities to its citizens.

Too often, what is right is not politically expedient or viable. However, President William Jefferson Clinton saw beyond the blinders of partisanship and into the heart of a disenfranchised and disadvantaged segment of our population. He made it his administration's mission to secure America's future by investing in its most precious and at-risk resource—children. His legacy is evident in the many successful federal programs and state partnerships he introduced and expanded to improve children's access to health care, education, and vital support for their families.

The establishment of the State Children's Health Insurance Program provided a critical safety net for millions of uninsured children of low-income families who did not meet the eligibility requirements of Medicaid on the one hand, but could not afford private health insurance on the other. Providing well-child care and immunizations helped stem the devastating tide of preventable childhood illnesses. Efforts to reduce infant mortality through better pre-natal care for mothers

contributed to a decline in premature births, especially with regard to respiratory distress syndrome (RDS) often related to low birth weight. When combined with record high vaccination rates of 91 to 94 percent for children under three, all these actions helped to reduce gaps in health outcomes based on racial, ethnic, and economic disparities in these areas. Focus on children's and families' mental health also played a pivotal role in the administration's overall strategy to improve the lives of children and their communities and to help overcome the stigma of mental health disorders as a barrier preventing people from seeking needed treatment.

A greater emphasis on nutrition, exercise, and making good life choices was a critical part of outreach initiatives for children and their families. In 1997 the CDC issued Guidelines for School and Community Programs to Promote Lifelong Physical Activity Among Young People. Programs targeting tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use in children helped create a national dialogue on not only curbing risky behavior but looking at the ways media and popular culture provide tacit and even sometimes explicit support for this behavior in advertising, television, music, and films. In 1997, the Administration launched a \$195 million National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, which used the power of mass media to educate young people, parents, teachers, and mentors about the dangers of drugs. Working in conjunction with the Justice Department, the Administration helped provide a strong framework of strategic responses to the often related issues of juvenile violence and criminal activity at the community, city, state, and national levels.

The Clinton Administration focused on education from pre-school to post-secondary levels, but its greatest impact was on the youngest of learners. Funding for pre-school and early childhood programs more than doubled, providing working parents with expanded options for their children to learn and explore

in safe and stimulating environments. For the first time ever in 1995, the federal government created an office focused solely on child care which streamlined child care program operations so parents and providers could obtain the best care possible for their children. Early Head Start was launched to provide the youngest children and their families a unified set of supports and services to maximize opportunities for healthy development and prepare them for future success in school. Ensuring that schools had access to the latest technological advances, and provided safe learning environments, and after-school activities were all positive steps in enriching the student learning experience and improving educational outcomes.

Strong families with caring adults provide children with the financial support and emotional care they need to ensure sound development. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 provided American workers with job protection when their families needed them most to welcome a new child or help provide care to a loved one during an illness.

President Clinton inherited an economy in deep recession as well as a colossal federal deficit, and getting Americans back to work and reducing welfare dependency were crucial to turning the nation back on course. To do this, the Clinton Administration helped seed and grow support systems for low- and moderate-income families including access to health insurance, increases in the Earned Income Tax Credit and child tax credits, subsidized child care, as well as housing and transportation supplements. By implementing welfare-to-work incentives together with a limitation on the amount of time welfare recipients could spend out of the workforce without looking for a job, welfare reform meant families were better off working than on welfare, bringing unemployment to its lowest point in three decades.

The Clinton Administration took innovative and aspirational ideas and turned them into successful programs by investing and maximizing resources, thereby creating goodwill and enthusiasm for proven results. By building a framework of high-quality support combined with high expectations for children and their caregivers, the Clinton Administration provided states, communities and families the tools and capacity needed to sustain them.

The administration also created policies that reached beyond the traditional silos of federal departments, bringing together a strategic network of agencies and states to collaborate and maximize their resources. With the growing proliferation

of the Internet and the World Wide Web, the Administration pushed for greater access to and coordination of technology and communications, creating integrated information systems that were particularly effective in determining the health status of children and mothers and ensuring that key services were delivered at the local and state level.

President Clinton's overwhelming legacy to America's children, and, therefore, its future, is indeed profound and lasting.

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Donna E. Shalala served as the Secretary of Health and Human Services from 1993–2001. She is President of the University of Miami.

# A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW: ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

## PRESIDENT CLINTON'S INITIATIVE ON RACE

By Judith A. Winston

On June 14, 1997, President William Jefferson Clinton, speaking at the University of California at San Diego, announced his intention to implement an unprecedented White House initiative focused on race and racism in America. He asked the American people to join him in this great national effort to:

*“...perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build a more perfect union... That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America.”*

In the speech, the President summarized his reasons for launching this 15-month effort and established a seven-member Advisory Board on Race to assist him in carrying out the goals of the Initiative. The Board was led by the esteemed and nationally recognized historian John Hope Franklin who served as its Chairman. In elaborating on the mandate given to the Advisory Board and the nation, the President said the following:

*“Can we be one America respecting, even celebrating, our differences, but embracing even more what we have in common? Can we define what it means to be an American, not just in terms of the hyphen showing our ethnic origins but in terms of our primary allegiance to the values America stands for and values we really live by. Our hearts long to answer yes, but our history reminds us that it will be hard. The ideals that bind us together are as old as our nation, but so are the forces that pull us apart. Our founders sought to form a more perfect union; the humility and hope of that phrase is the story of America and it is our mission today.”*

The President set out the following objectives for his One America in the 21st Century Race Initiative:

Promote a constructive national dialogue to confront and work through the challenging issues that surround race.

Increase the nation's understanding of our recent history of race relations and the course our nation is charting on issues of race relations and racial diversity.

Bridge racial divides by encouraging community leaders to develop and implement innovative approaches to calming racial tensions.

Identify, develop, and implement solutions to problems in areas in which race has a substantial impact such as education, economic opportunity, housing, health care, and the administration of justice.

Many commentators wondered why President Clinton would take on this contentious and long pervasive “hot button” issue of race in America at a time of relative prosperity and in the absence of any racial “crisis” of the kind that had confronted other U.S. Presidents such as the riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or the Detroit race riots and highly publicized incidents of racial injustice. Those Presidents sought racial reconciliation under pressure. In 1997, there was no such crisis and no reason to raise voluntarily issues related to race and racial disparities. However, unlike Presidents before him, President Clinton recognized the importance and urgency of improving race relations as we approached the beginning of a new millennium. He believed strongly that every effort needed to be made to bridge the gap in understanding and opportunities that has historically prevented many Americans from realizing their full potential. President Clinton was determined through the One America Initiative to lend his leadership skills and the prestige of his office to moving the nation forward to a more unified community in the 21st century,—one that

would share common aspirations and values where neither race nor ethnicity is considered a barrier to achieving a good education, a fulfilling job, financial and personal security, adequate and available health care, and fairness in the administration of justice.

The President and his Advisory Board used dialogue as a tool for finding common ground. Through One America Conversations, the Campus Week of Dialogue, Statewide Days of Dialogue, tribal leaders' meetings, and publication of the One America Dialogue Guide, the Initiative sparked dialogue across the country. Through these dialogues, the President recruited a cadre of leaders in the corporate, religious, and youth sectors of the country who also led discussions and provided examples of "Promising Practices." These practices were defined by the President's Initiative as efforts or programs intended to increase awareness of racial issues, improve the lives of individuals who are affected by past and/or present discrimination, or eliminate racial prejudice and discrimination from societal institutions such as workplaces, schools, or retail establishments. Three hundred "Promising Practices" were initiated or identified across the country ranging from mentoring and tutoring support for students to innovative ways communities were banding together across racial lines to solve community problems and promote racial reconciliation.

One America Conversations took place in 39 states with over 17,000 people participating in 89 cities. The Campus Week of Dialogue involved students, faculty, and administrators on nearly 600 campuses across the nation. Statewide Days of Dialogue involved 110 communities, governors of 39 states and 2 territories and 25 mayors.

Meetings between the Advisory Board and/or the President's Initiative staff and 600 tribal leaders from around the country took place during the 15 months of the Initiative to discuss race and sovereignty as they affected Native Americans. This included special meetings, conferences, and visits to the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota and the Lummi Reservation in Washington State.

President Clinton readily acknowledged the challenges he and the country faced as he launched the One America initiative. He knew that honest dialogue would not be easy and that there would be defensiveness and fear, that emotions would sometimes be rubbed raw. He was right. However, in 1997, he saw the Initiative for what it was and could be: a beginning. A beginning that would take years and, perhaps decades, to move to substantial fruition, if not a conclusion. He

saw One America—an American community united in its appreciation and embrace of racial and ethnic diversity—within our reach in the 21st Century. He understood that the challenges and opportunities of race in America are all about caring—caring to know people for who they are and what they can contribute if given the chance to do so. It is about seeing potential greatness for ourselves and our country in the success of others. It is about instilling in our young people a love and understanding of the principles that have made this country invincible—but moving beyond that understanding and converting the promise of those principles into action in our everyday lives. We each have to determine what we can contribute individually and by joining with others. These principles were at the heart of One America in the 21st Century.

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