

know they'll be leaders not just in Indian Country, but across America. And we've got to invest in them and believe in them and love them, and that starts from the White House all the way down here.

I understand that the Lakota word for "children"—*wakanyeja*—comes from the word *wakan*—"sacred." That's what young people are: They're sacred. They're sacred to your families, and they're sacred to your tribe, and they're sacred to this Nation. And every day that I have the honor of serving as your President, I will do everything I can to make sure that you see that our country has a place for everyone, including every single young person here and all across the Dakotas and all across America, and that you're getting the support and encouragement you need to go as far as your hard work and your talent will take you.

## The President's Weekly Address

June 14, 2014

Hi, everybody. Sunday is Father's Day. If you haven't got Dad a gift yet, there is still time. Just barely. But the truth is, what we give our fathers can never match what our fathers can give us.

I know how important it is to have a dad in your life, because I grew up without my father around. I felt the weight of his absence. So for Michelle and our girls, I try every day to be the husband and father my family didn't have when I was young. And every chance I get, I encourage fathers to get more involved in their children's lives, because what makes you a man isn't the ability to have a child, it's the courage to raise one.

Still, over the past couple of years, I've met with a lot of young people who don't have a father figure around. And while there's nothing that can replace a parent, any of us can do our part to be a mentor, a sounding board, a role model for a kid who needs one. Earlier this year, I launched an initiative called "My Brother's Keeper," an all-hands-on-deck effort to help more of our young men reach their full potential. And if you want to be a mentor to a

young man in your community, you can find out how at [whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper](http://whitehouse.gov/mybrotherskeeper).

That is my commitment to you, to every single young person here.

This community has made extraordinary contributions to the United States. Just look at all these flags. So many Native Americans have served our country with honor and with courage. And now it's up to us to keep strong what they've built, to keep America the place where no matter who you are and what you look like or where you come from, you can make it. And that you don't have to give up your culture to also be part of the American family. That's what I believe. And coming here today makes me believe it that much more.

*Hechetu welo.* Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:58 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Dave Archambault II of Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Now, when I launched this initiative, I said that government can't play the primary role in a young person's life. Taking responsibility for being a great parent or mentor is a choice that we, as individuals, have to make. No government program can ever take the place of a parent's love. Still, as a country, there are ways we can help support dads and moms who make that choice.

And that's why, earlier this week, we brought working dads from across America to the White House to talk about the challenges they face. And in a few weeks, I'll hold the first-ever White House Working Families Summit. We've still got too many workplace policies that belong in the 1950s, and it's time to bring them up to date for today's families, where oftentimes, both parents are working. Moms and dads deserve affordable childcare and time off to care for a sick parent or child without running into hardship. Women deserve equal pay for equal work, and at a time when more women are breadwinners for a

family, that benefits men too. And because no parent who works full time should have to raise a family in poverty, it's time for Congress to follow the lead of State after State, get on the bandwagon, and give America a raise.

Dads work hard. So our country should do what we can to make sure their hard work pays off, to make sure life for them and their families is a little less stressful, a little more secure so they can be the dads their kids need them to be. Because there's nothing more precious in life than the time we spend with our children. There's no better feeling than knowing that we can be there for them and provide for them and help give them every shot at success.

## Remarks at the Commencement Ceremony of the University of California, Irvine in Anaheim, California

June 14, 2014

Hello, Anteaters! That is something I never thought I'd say. [Laughter] Please, please take a seat.

To President Napolitano—which is a nice step up from Secretary; to Fred Ruiz, Vice Chair of the University of California Regents; Chancellor Drake; Representatives Loretta Sanchez and Alan Lowenthal; to the trustees and faculty: Thank you for this honor. And congratulations to the class of 2014!

Now, let me begin my saying all of you had the inside track in getting me here, because my personal assistant, Ferial, is a proud Anteater. Until today, I did not understand why she greets me every morning by shouting, “Zot, zot, zot!” [Laughter] It's been a little weird. But she explained it to me on the way here this morning, because she's very proud to see her brother Sina graduate today as well. So, graduates, obviously we're proud of you, but let's give it up for your proud family and friends and professors, because this is their day too.

And even though he's on the road this weekend, I also want to thank Angels centerfielder Mike Trout for letting me cover his turf for a while. He actually signed a bat for me, which is part of my retirement plan. [Laughter] I will be keeping that. And this is a pretty cool place

Let's make sure every dad who works hard and takes responsibility has the chance to know that feeling, not just on one Sunday, but every day of the year.

Thanks everybody. Happy Father's Day, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 10:45 a.m. on June 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on June 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on June 14.

to hold a commencement. I know that UC Irvine's baseball team opens College World Series play in Omaha right about now, so let's get this speech underway. If the hot dog guy comes by, get me one. [Laughter]

Now, in addition to Ferial, graduates, I'm here for a simple reason: You asked. For those who don't know, the UC Irvine community sent 10,000 postcards to the White House asking me to come speak today. Some tried to guilt me into coming. I got one that said, “I went to your first Inauguration, can you please come to my graduation?” [Applause] That was you?

Some tried bribery: “I'll support the Chicago Bulls.” Another said today would be your birthday. So happy birthday, whoever you are.

My personal favorite: Somebody wrote and said, “We are super underrated!” [Laughter] I'm sure she was talking about this school. But keep in mind, you're not only the number-one university in America younger than 50 years old, you also hold the Guinness World Record for biggest water pistol fight. You're pretty excited about that. [Laughter]

“We are super underrated.” This young lady could have just as well been talking, though,