

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:05 p.m. on January 31 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on February 1. The

transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 31, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 1.

Statement on the Death of Joan Adams Mondale *February 3, 2014*

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to former Vice President Walter Mondale and his family on the passing of Joan Adams Mondale. America first came to know Joan through her husband; she was his devoted partner in public service, from Minnesota to Washington. A lifelong patron of the arts, Joan filled the Vice Presidential mansion with works by dozens of artists, including many unknowns, and later did the same at the U.S. Embassy in Japan during her husband's tenure as Ambassador. Through her contributions to the Feder-

al Council on the Arts and Humanities and the Kennedy Center, she passionately advocated for the role of art in the life of our Nation and the promotion of understanding worldwide. Our thoughts and prayers are with Vice President Mondale and his family today as we remember with gratitude "Joan of Art" and her service to our Nation.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

Remarks at Buck Lodge Middle School in Adelphi, Maryland *February 4, 2014*

Hello, everybody. Thank you so much. Well, can everybody please give Nelson a big round of applause for the outstanding job that he did? So Nelson just told me backstage he plans to be on—plans on being a Navy SEAL. So I was really nice to him now so he doesn't mess with me later. [*Laughter*] We are very proud of him, proud of all the students who are here today.

I want to thank Principal Richardson for the great job that he's doing. And I want to thank all the wonderful teachers who are here at Buck Lodge Middle School. Go Vikings!

I brought along some people who very much care about the future of these young people. We've got America's Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, in the house. We've got the FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler and two of his fellow Commissioners who are here, doing great work. Congressman Steny Hoyer is in the house. County Executive Rushern Baker is here. And we've got some business leaders who've made some very big commitments today, because they know that your education is

the very best investment that all of us can make in America.

Now, last week, in my State of the Union Address, I spent some time talking about opportunity for everybody, which is at the heart of this country, the idea that no matter who you are, no matter what you look like—if you have a chair feel free to sit down. [*Laughter*] That wasn't actually my line, but I thought—[*laughter*]. But at the core of America, the essence of it, what makes us exceptional, is this idea: No matter what you look like, where you come from, what your last name is, if you're willing to work hard, if you're willing to live up to your responsibilities, you can make it here in America.

But each generation has to work hard to make sure that dream of opportunity stays alive for the next generation. And the opportunity agenda that I laid out last week will help us do that. It's focused on four areas: number one, more new jobs; number two, training folks with the skills to fill those jobs; number three, making sure our economy rewards hard work with

decent wages and economic security; and number four, the piece I'm here to talk about today, guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education. Every child. Not just some, but everybody.

Now, I'm only standing here today because my education gave me a chance. I'm not so different than a lot of these young people. I was raised by a single mom, with the help of my grandma and my grandpa. We didn't have a lot of money, and for a while, my mother was working and going to school at the same time as she was raising a couple of kids. And there were times where times were tight. But with a family who loved me and with some hard work on my part—although it wasn't always consistent, as my mother and my grandparents would point out—and then ultimately, with the help of scholarships and student loans, I was able to go to college. I was able to go to law school. And an entire world of opportunity opened up to me that might not otherwise have been available.

So the country invested in me. My parents invested in me, my grandparents invested in me, but my country invested in me. And I want America to now invest in you, because in the faces of these students, these are future doctors and lawyers and engineers, scientists, business leaders. We don't know what kinds of products, services, good work that any of these students may do. But I'm betting on them, and all of us have to bet on them.

So, 5 years ago, we set out to change the odds on all of our kids. Our Race to the Top challenge has helped raise expectations and performance in States all across the country. Our high school graduation rate is the highest that it's been in more than 30 years. That's an achievement. The dropout rate among Latino students has been cut in half since 2000, really big deal. We reformed our student loan programs so that more young people are able to afford to go to college, and now we've got more young people earning a college degree than ever before.

Teachers and principals across the country are working hard to prepare students like you with the skills you need for a new economy,

not just the basics of reading and writing and arithmetic, but skills like science and technology, engineering, critical thinking, creativity, asking, what do you think about that idea and how would you do things differently?

Now, we still have more work to do to reach more kids and reach them faster. And some of the ideas that I've presented will require Congress to act. But while Congress decides what it's going to do, I said at the State of the Union—and I want to repeat here today—I will act on my own. Wherever I have the opportunity to expand opportunity for more young people, wherever I have a chance to make a difference in their lives, I'm going to act. *[Applause]* I'm going to act.

So, in this year of action, we're going to work with States and communities to help them make high-quality pre-K available to more young children. We know it's a good investment. We want to keep working to partner high schools with colleges and employers to offer real-world education experiences that can lead directly to jobs and careers. And we want to do more to make sure no middle class kid is priced out of a college education and obviously no poor kid is priced out of a college education. That's got to be a priority for us.

But today we're here to announce some big strides that we're making to put the world and outer space at every child's fingertips, whether they live in a big city or a quiet suburb or in rural America.

Last year, I launched something called ConnectED, a new initiative to close the technology gap in our schools and connect 99 percent of America's students to high-speed broadband Internet within 5 years. Now, this is something we can do without waiting for Congress. We do need some help though. So we picked up the phone, and we started asking some outstanding business leaders to help bring our schools and libraries into the 21st century. Today, thanks to the leadership of some of these companies, we've got some big announcements to make.

But first, I want you to know why it matters that we make sure technology is available to every child. Technology is not the entire answer, by the way, when it comes to educational

excellence. We've got to make sure we've got outstanding teachers. We've got to make sure that parents are doing what they need to do. We need young people to make the effort and to have high expectations for themselves. But technology can help; it's a tool, it's just one more tool.

So today, the average American school has about the same Internet bandwidth as the average American home, but it serves 200 times as many people. All right? Think about it. So you've got the same bandwidth, but it's a school, it's not your house. Only around 30 percent of our students have true high-speed Internet in the classroom. In countries like South Korea, that's a hundred percent. Now, we shouldn't give that kind of competitive advantage over to other countries. We want to make sure our young people have the same advantages that some child in South Korea has right now. In a country where we expect free Wi-Fi with our coffee, we should definitely demand it in our schools.

Now, here at Buck Lodge, you are showing how we can use technology to teach our young people in innovative ways. And by the way, the principal told me that part of how this got started was some of the stimulus dollars that we put in place almost 5 years ago now. But every student here has access to their own iPad. And you don't just write papers or take tests; they're animating movies, they're designing blogs, they're collaborating on multimedia projects. In the word of an eighth grader, Annie Gomez, she says, "You can learn even more, you can take in more, and then you know more about the world."

And new technologies are helping teachers. So in Mr. Jeter's science class, students take quizzes on their tablets; he then can check the answers in real time, and he can figure out who needs extra help. In Ms. Galinat's language arts class, students learn vocabulary not just with flashcards, but with online video. In Ms. Stover's math class—I was just over with Ms. Stover—students bring their tablets home to watch lectures about concepts like ratios and rational numbers and then use the next day's classroom time applying those concepts to the

real world. So technology allows teachers here to spend more time being creative, less time teaching to the test, giving continual feedback, being able to pinpoint where a young person is having trouble because they're able to see their work right away in a pretty efficient way.

And I will say, when I was just in a classroom, there was a lesson plan that was organized around the *Curiosity* rover on Mars. And these—the young people there were doing some amazing stuff, making their own iBooks with video and multimedia. And I was—as I was walking out, I was talking to Steny Hoyer about how I remember using glue sticks—[laughter]—and scissors to cut stuff out, and it didn't look very good. [Laughter] These guys were making books you could publish. [Laughter]

But it makes learning exciting; it makes it interesting. If you're studying science and you are actually seeing the engineers who built rover talk about what it is—or the *Curiosity* rover—talking about what they're doing and how they did it and being able to see the rover on the Martian landscape, it makes vivid and real math and science in a way that is more interesting to students, which means that they're more likely to be engaged and can potentially do better.

And this is how it should be for every student and every teacher at every school and library in the country. That's how it should be for everybody, not just some.

Today, almost 8 months after we launched ConnectED, we can announce some very big commitments that are going to go a long way towards realizing that vision where every child has the access to the technology that they can use to help them learn. So, under Tom Wheeler's leadership, the FCC is announcing a downpayment of \$2 billion to connect more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students to high-speed broadband over the next 2 years—[applause]—15,000 schools, 20 million students. It won't require a single piece of legislation from Congress. It won't add a single dime to the deficit.

And even better, some of America's biggest tech companies have decided to join this effort, with commitments worth than—worth

more than three-quarters of a billion dollars. So let me just give you some examples.

Apple will donate a hundred million dollars' worth of iPads, MacBooks, and other products to schools across the country. That's an enormous commitment. Sprint will provide free wireless service for up to 50,000 low-income high school students over the next 4 years so their 21st-century education isn't confined to the classroom. AT&T will donate over \$100 million worth of wireless service to middle school students so that they can continue to do homework when they get home.

Autodesk will make its 3-D design software available for free to every high school in the country. Microsoft will offer products like Windows to students and teachers at a deep discount and provide 12 million free copies of Office to our schools. O'Reilly Media and Safari Books Online will donate more than a hundred million dollars' worth of eBooks that will help students learn technology skills like coding and web design. And finally, because no technology will ever be as important as a great teacher, Verizon will expand a program to help train educators to use all these new tools in all 50 States.

So I want to thank all the business leaders who are here today for stepping up. Why don't you stand up? Let's give them a big round of applause. We're very proud of them. Thank you. [Applause]

Now, this is an extraordinary commitment by these business leaders, but they're business leaders, so they're not just doing it out of the goodness of their heart. They want the country to do well, but they also understand that they want educated customers. They want customers who are able to get good jobs, who are going to be using these tools in the future. They want that next young architect coming out of here to be familiar with using that iPad so that they're designing buildings and using their products.

They know that the entire economy will be lifted if more of our young people are doing better. So they're doing good, but it will also help them succeed from a bottom-line perspective by this kind of participation. They are

united in their support of young people like you, even though sometimes they compete against each other, because all of us have a stake in your education and in your future.

And that's why we have to build on this progress together. Later this year, I'm going to ask Congress to do its part and give teachers using cutting-edge technologies the training they deserve, because it's important. As I said before, technology is not a silver bullet. It's only as good as the teachers who are there using it as one more tool to help inspire and teach and work through problems.

And although I've noticed that these days when I visit schools, most teachers are much younger than I am—[laughter]—I'm getting on in years, obviously, which means that I'm not always as familiar with iPads and technology as I need to be—we want every teacher in every school to understand, from soup to nuts how, you can potentially use this technology. And that oftentimes requires a training component that makes sure that the technology is not just sitting there, but is actually used and incorporated in the best way possible.

So I'm going to ask every business leader across America to join us in this effort. Ask yourself what you can do to help us connect our students to the 21st century. Ask yourselves what you can do to support our teachers and our parents and give every young people every shot at success.

And we can make this happen. And just imagine what it will mean for our country when we do. Imagine what it could mean for a girl growing up on a farm to be able to take AP Biology or AP Physics, even if her school is too small to offer it, because she's got the access to technology that allows her to take those classes online. Imagine what it means for a boy with an illness that confines him sometimes to home where he can join his classmates for every lesson with FaceTime or Skype. Imagine what it means for educators to spend less time grading tests and papers, more time helping young people learn. Imagine more businesses starting here and hiring here because they know for a fact that the young people here are going to be

equipped with the skills that are better than anybody else on Earth.

That's the future we're building. That's what these companies are investing in. And if America pulls together now—if we do our part to make sure every young person can go as far as their passion and their hard work will take them, whether it's to Mars or to the bottom of the ocean or to anywhere on this planet where you've got an Internet connection—if we commit ourselves to restoring opportunity for everybody, then we can keep the American Dream alive for generations to come.

That's our main project. That's our main obligation. That's why I ran for President. That's

what I'm going to be working on for the next 3 years.

Thank you for all the work that you're doing here at this outstanding school. God bless you. God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:37 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Nelson Romero and Annie Stefanny Gomez-Marroquin, students, Buck Lodge Middle School; Jessica Rosenworcel and Ajit Pai, Commissioners, Federal Communications Commission; and Rushern L. Baker III, county executive, Prince George's County, MD. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng.

Statement on Representative Robert E. Andrews's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

February 4, 2014

In his 23 years in the United States Congress, Rob Andrews has served the people of southern New Jersey with tenacity and skill. He helped put into place key workplace protections for hard-working Americans, pushed to improve education for American students, and fought for clean energy programs to foster America's energy independence. More recently, Rob was an original author of the Affordable Care Act and has been a vital partner in its passage and implementation. The grandson of

shipyard workers and the first in his family to attend college, Rob has worked hard to preserve the American Dream for future generations. Michelle and I thank Congressman Andrews for his service and partnership, and we wish him, his wife Camille, and their two daughters the very best.

NOTE: The statement referred to Josie and Jacqueline Andrews, daughters of Rep. Andrews.

Statement on the Accelerating Medicines Partnership

February 4, 2014

Today my administration is taking action to accelerate the development of lifesaving drugs and to help identify new treatments and cures for diseases like Alzheimer's and diabetes. This new public-private partnership, the Accelerat-

ing Medicines Partnership, combines the considerable resources of America's Government with the innovation of our private sector companies in an effort to find new answers to today's domestic and global public health challenges.

Statement on Senate Passage of the Agricultural Act of 2014

February 4, 2014

Today, in a strong bipartisan vote, the U.S. Senate came together to pass a comprehensive farm bill, legislation that will build on the his-

toric economic gains in rural America over the past 5 years, create new jobs and opportunities, and protect the most vulnerable Americans.