

For those of you who are with your families, that is a true blessing. For those of you who are still a little bit far away from home, we hope you had a chance to give them our best and let them know that we love them as well. Michelle and I are looking forward to taking pictures with all of you. And we see a couple of new babies this time. [Laughter] We always get our baby fix and—[laughter]—when we take these photos.

But the main thing I just want to say is keep up the extraordinary work. To Colonel Killeen and the rest of the commanding officers here, thank you for doing such an extraordinary job. And thank you for welcoming us as well. The only problem I've got when I'm here is having to work out with marines in the gym. [Laughter] Because I generally feel like your Commander in Chief is in pretty good shape, and

then I get next to some guy curling a hundred pounds, and it makes me feel small. [Laughter] But that's okay. It gives me some inspiration. I'm going to work harder so I can keep up with you next year, all right?

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:32 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen, T. Sgt. Joseph G. Lemm, S. Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa, S. Sgt. Michael A. Cinco, S. Sgt. Chester J. McBride, and S. Sgt. Peter W. Taub, U.S. Air Force personnel who were killed in a terrorist attack near Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, on December 21; and Col. Sean C. Killeen, USMC, commanding officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

## Statement on the Observance of Kwanzaa *December 26, 2015*

Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to families across the country celebrating Kwanzaa this holiday season. Today begins a weeklong celebration of African American heritage and culture through family and community festivities. Kwanzaa's seven principles—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—are also shared values that bind us as Americans. And in the spirit

of the season, we reflect on the blessings of the past year and commit to building a brighter future for all our children. As families, friends, and neighbors come together today to light the kinara, our family sends our best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

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