

## Statement on the Death of Former Deputy White House Counsel Cassandra Q. Butts

*May 27, 2016*

To know Cassandra Butts was to know someone who made you want to be better. And Michelle and I were fortunate enough to count her as a friend for most of our adult lives.

Cassandra and I met as law students, and we quickly discovered a shared passion for jazz—and for public service. It was a passion she'd chase for the rest of her life: on Capitol Hill, at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, at the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and as an adviser of mine, but above all, as a citizen, always pushing, always doing her part to advance the causes of opportunity, civil rights, development, and democracy. Cassandra was someone who put her hands squarely

on that “arc of the moral universe” and never stopped doing whatever she could to bend it towards justice.

We lost her this week, at far too young an age. But along with all her friends and family, we find comfort in the knowledge that all the good she did for so many lives on. She made America better. She made so many lives better, including ours. We admired her so much. And we will miss her deeply.

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

## The President's Weekly Address

*May 28, 2016*

Hi, everybody. Right now there are American troops serving in harm's way and standing sentry around the world. There are veterans who have served honorably in times of war and peace and often came home bearing the invisible and visible wounds of war. They may not speak the loudest about their patriotism; they let their actions do that. And the right time to think of these men and women, and thank them for their service and sacrifice, is every day of the year.

Memorial Day, which we'll observe Monday, is different. It's the day we remember those who never made it home, those who never had the chance to take off the uniform and be honored as a veteran. It's the day we stop to reflect with gratitude on the sacrifice of generations who made us more prosperous and free and to think of the loved ones they left behind. Remembering them—searing their stories and their contributions into our collective memory—that's an awesome responsibility. It's one that all of us share as citizens.

As Commander in Chief, I have no more solemn obligation than leading our men and

women in uniform: making sure they have what they need to succeed, making sure we only send them into harm's way when it's absolutely necessary. And if they make the ultimate sacrifice—if they give their very lives—we have to do more than honor their memory.

We have to be there for their families. Over the years, Michelle and I have spent quiet moments with the families of the fallen: husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters. They've shared their pain, but also their pride in the sacrifices their loved ones made under our proud flag.

It's up to the rest of us to live our lives in a way that's worthy of these sacrifices. The idea to set aside a Memorial Day each year didn't come from our Government, it came from ordinary citizens who acknowledged that while we can't build monuments to every heroic act of every warrior we lost in battle, we can keep their memories alive by taking one day out of the year to decorate the places where they're buried.

That's something that so many of our fellow Americans are doing this weekend: remembering.