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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND COMMUNITY AT
CHELTENHAM HIGH SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM, PENNSYLVANIA
OCTOBER 3, 1996**

[Acknowledgments: Joe Hoeffel; Joseph Rodgers, Jr., principal; Ted Weinstein, teacher; Emily Greenberg, School Board president; Jonathan Vogel, William Piper, seniors]

It is a pleasure to be at Cheltenham High School, a school that has so much to be proud of. These walls have nurtured some very distinguished alumni who have made their mark in so many different fields. And I understand that Cheltenham High School boasts a graduation rate of 98 percent and that 90 percent of your graduates go on to college.

These wonderful accomplishments are possible because of the extraordinary learning environment that all of you -- the students, faculty, administrators, parents, and community leaders -- have worked together to create here at Cheltenham High School.

When I talk about what it takes to help young people make the most of their lives, I often refer to an old African proverb: "It takes a village." This is exactly the kind of village that comes to mind.

We live in an extraordinary time in history. Most of you who are students will live the bulk of your lives in the 21st century. You will have the opportunities that no generation before you has ever known. But you will also face new challenges and uncertainties in a fast-paced, competitive global economy.

How our nation prepares you to meet the tests of a new century -- and how you help prepare yourselves -- will determine the future of our country and society for generations to come.

No issue is more crucial to our present and future as Americans than the quality and strength of our system of public education. My husband never forgets that he got where he is today because people believed in his potential, and because he had the benefit of good teachers and good schools.

That's why he has fought so hard to make sure that the opportunity of education begins at birth and lasts a lifetime.

He has fought hard to expand Head Start. To help communities enforce attendance and reduce gang and drug-related violence through school uniforms and curfew policies. To raise school standards and give parents more choices over which schools their children attend, and give communities more say in how they run their schools.

The President is committed to making sure that every eight year old in this country can read on his or her own. That's why he's hoping to send reading tutors and volunteers to help children across our country. He's working to make sure that every 12-year old will be able to log on to the Internet. And he's committed to giving every 18-year old who is willing to work hard and take responsibility a chance to go to college.

As the mother of a senior myself, I know that many of you in this audience are going through a very exciting and stressful time -- you are in the midst of taking the SATs, sending away for college brochures and applications, writing personal essays, checking out job options, and figuring out how to pay the bills for college next fall.

The President is committed to making sure that college is not a question of if you go, but a question of when and where you go. He has streamlined student loans, expanded work-study programs, and Pell Grants. He is proposing the Hope Scholarships, a tuition tax credit that will make community college education free for anyone who maintains a B-average and stays off drugs. He is working to make sure that families can deduct \$10,000 in tuition costs every year. And he wants to help families who are thinking ahead by establishing tax-free IRAs for college tuition.

This is an exciting time to be an American. I believe that we are on the right track to the 21st century. The President's economic policies have created more than 10 million new jobs, cut the deficit by more than half, and lowered the combined rate of inflation and unemployment to the lowest point in 27 years. That's good news for those of you who will be taking your college degrees into the job market in the coming years.

The workplace is a little bit friendlier now because the Family and Medical Leave Law, the first piece of legislation my husband ever signed, allows workers to take time off to care for sick children, parents, or spouses without fear of losing their

jobs.

And our streets are safer because the Brady bill has prevented hardened criminals from buying guns and committing violent crimes in our communities. The President has put more police officers on our streets. They are getting to know the communities they serve and stopping crime before it happens.

And our country is finally taking on the tobacco lobby, making it clear that the health of American children should not be sacrificed on the altar of corporate greed. The President is working hard to make sure that tobacco companies act responsibly in marketing and advertising a product that is clearly addictive and dangerous.

Over the last four years, I have had the chance to travel to schools all over our country, listening and talking to students, teachers, and parents about their aspirations and concerns. And everywhere I go, whether it's an inner city neighborhood in Philadelphia, or a small town in Minnesota, I realize that our children need the same the things to thrive. They need our love, our attention, our discipline, our commitment, our time, and our energy.

I have sat across a table from elementary school children and middle and high school students and they've all said the same thing: "Mrs. Clinton, we are good kids. We are tired of the bad kids getting all the publicity. Somebody has to give us a chance."

The President believes that if we work together, all children will have the chance to make the most of their lives and to make our country even stronger and greater in the 21st century.

We will only cross that bridge to the 21st century if we come together as a people. As Americans. As citizens united in the ideals of hard work, responsibility, opportunity, and community.

[Bosnia]

This is what America is all about. By coming together and around our common aspirations and concerns, we can rise to any challenge. We can make progress. And we can build that bridge

to the 21st century.

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