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**Clinton Global Initiative University 2008 Meeting
Opening Plenary: Working Together: Students and
Universities Take the Lead on Global Challenges
Clinton Global Initiative University
March 15, 2008**

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[START RECORDING]

FEMALE SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Samuel Anai who attends Truman College in Chicago. [Applause]

SAMUEL ANAI: I just want to say thank you [to] everybody that is here today. I just want to thank President Clinton, the staff that are working with him, and everybody who is attending CGI today.

My name is Samuel Anai. I'm one of [the] Sudanese Lost Boys who was who was a resident here at the beginning of 2002. I am currently a student at Truman College working toward [an] Associate Degree in Business Administration.

I'm also a co-founder of [the] non-profit organization known as Lost Boys Rebuilding Southern Sudan. Today I'm very happy that I'm going to introduce to you the 42nd President of the United States, President Bill Clinton. [Applause] Please join him. [Applause] [Music Playing]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thanks. Thank you very much. I want to first thank Samuel Anai and all the members of the Lost Boys project, who are here in the United States, for reminding us of the ongoing struggles in their native land and for their heroic efforts to make new lives and reminding us of our continuing obligations to people around the world to give them the same chances the rest of us take for granted.

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I thank him for being here and I thank him for what he said. Before we begin, I have a few opening points, just brief ones I want to make but I want to first thank the people at Tulane and thank all of you for coming.

But I want to introduce the Mayor of New Orleans with whom I have worked [with] since Katrina. Mayor Ray Nagin, ran for mayor, like so many of us who run for public office, thinking the job would be one set of challenges and it turned out to be a very different job because of the enormity of Katrina's destruction.

He had to run for re-election in the wake of all that. He won a tightly, hotly contested battle. The people of New Orleans stayed with him and he has continued to work. And it's been my great honor, first to work with him through the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund and to try to help give grants to the colleges and universities in the area and to the mental and other health programs in the area.

And, eventually, to work on a full-time basis; we have two members of the climate change initiative of our foundation working on an ongoing basis trying to help green rebuilding in New Orleans to support the reconstruction of the city as both a more durable and a more green one.

And throughout it all he has seemed to maintain his good humor and composure under circumstances that would prove almost overwhelmingly discouraging to any other public

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official. So, I have come to know him well and to admire his grit and persistence and I'd like to ask you to join me now in welcoming the Mayor of New Orleans, Ray Nagin.

RAY NAGIN: Thank you, thank you, thank you. Ya'll behave ya'lls selves. I don't need much encouragement, especially with all these cameras here. Good morning and welcome everyone. My job is to give brief remarks and welcome to everyone who is here from out of town and to say thank you for the people how have come back to this great city.

First off, let me just say welcome to those who are from out of town, out of the country, to America's, one of America's great, unique creative cities. One of the most interesting cities in the world, in my opinion.

It's the birthplace of jazz. It's the home of Louie Armstrong, of Mahalia Jackson, of Al Hurt, of Jelly Roll Martin, and for you hip hop fans it's the home of Cash Money Records and Lil' Wayne.

So, welcome to the first Clinton Global Initiative [University], to all the university dignitaries who are here, the speakers on innovation, and a big thanks to my friend, this wonderful man who is behind me, Bill Clinton. He has been here since the storm. He was here before the storm and he continues to provide us incredible advice and guidance on what we need to do to move this city forward.

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You young leaders are here and you are truly the hope of the future. Every revolution, every push that this world has taken up has been either driven or taken to the next level by young people like yourselves.

So, this is an incubator. This is—New Orleans is a study house, if you will, for everything that needs to be done. If you want to deal with global warming, we're dealing with it here, trying to rebuild this city green. If you want to deal with equity and economics, we're dealing with it trying to change this city from a city of haves and have not's to one that's more balanced.

If you want to deal with disaster recovery and how to change a city that was 80 percent damaged and every citizen evacuated, you can deal with it here. And, of course, if you want to deal with violence in an urban environment, you can find it right here in New Orleans, as when people were resettling we had turf wars break out in our community that caused us some problems.

So, I want to thank everyone for being here. I look forward to hearing some of the creative ideas and while you're here, all of you who are from out of town, I want you to call back home and crop up those credit cards. Spend lots of money while you're here, loosen up the belt buckles, eat plenty of food, the restaurants are all back. All right?[Applause]

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And I know many of you drove in last night, so you hadn't had a chance to partake of Bourbon Street, yet. So, all I ask is you don't do like the—some of the National Guard who were here right after Katrina—don't take the signs, the street signs home with you, OK?

That stuff needs to stay here. We just replaced it. And, oh, by the way, before you leave, this is the most important thing I'll say before I leave, don't forget to pay your New Orleans taxes at Harrah's Casino before you leave. God bless you.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you very much. Now, in addition to the Mayor, I want to thank the President of Tulane, Scott Cowen, and the Tulane community and I want to thank all of you for coming. Some of you have taken time out of class, some just the St. Patrick's Day weekend, some even your spring break, but some of you have come from all across the world and I thank you all.

In 2005, my Foundation and I invited, at the opening of the United Nations, leading political leaders, business leaders, and non-governmental citizen activists to New York City to talk about some pressing global issues including global warming, global health crisis and poverty alleviation.

It was designed to be a different kind of meeting because we told the people who came they would be asked to actually make a commitment after the process of discussing

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these problems and what to do about them. The commitment could be of resources, of time, of skills, but they had to make an actual commitment to take action in one of the areas.

We've been doing that for three years now and after three years more than 1,000 commitments are under way in 100 nations that potentially will affect 180 million lives. Tens of- [Applause]

Tens of millions, excuse me, tens of billions of dollars worth of commitments have been generated not simply in cash value, but also in the collective value of labor. And there is no way to put a value on the new ideas, which have come together and people who have found each other, matching ideas with people and skills or ideas with resources.

But at last year's meeting of CGI, I realized that while it was really exciting and attracting people of all ages, from all over the world, a disproportionate number of those who were making these commitments and working very hard were 50 years of age or older, which meant that under the best of circumstances, even though a lot of us will live to see 100, many of us had more yesterdays than tomorrows.

Many of us were working on things that we would never live to see fully resolved and, therefore, the younger generation will, in greater or lesser order, inherit these global challenges, as well as the local ones, in a way that I think made it imperative for us to create space, more space,

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for the organizing and galvanizing energy of young people on these issues.

We know now that individual citizens of all ages have more power to make a difference than ever before as private citizens because of the rise of the non-governmental movement; because of the globalization of information and the impact of advocacy on problems that are indefensible; and because we can raise more money by creating new partnerships; and because people of modest means can give more money in a collectively impactful way because of Internet giving.

I have always been interested in finding ways to harness the power of the young. I suppose the thing that I was most proud of in this area, when I was President, was the creation of the AmeriCorps Service Program, [Applause] which has given well over a half million American's a chance to work in their communities or in other communities across our country and earn money for college at the same time.

The largest of the AmeriCorps affiliates, City Year, has been a particular favorite of mine and since we've—Since I left office, we have launched the City Year Program in around Johannesburg, South Africa, one in Little Rock where my library is, and one here in New Orleans in the aftermath of Katrina and I've had several people mention to me, just in the last month, how vital the work done by the young people in the City Year AmeriCorps program was after Katrina.

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So, if any of you are here who have been involved in that, I thank you. [Applause] We just graduated our second class of young people at the Clinton School of Public Service associated with my library. [Applause]

We have engaged about 1,000 young people in the direct work of our foundation through our Millennium Network and the day-to-day work that we do in climate change and in our AIDS initiative which now has more than 1.2 million people on AIDS treatment around the world. A lot of that work is done by young people.

I think those of you who are here are here because you want to change the world and you know you can and if you can do something it imposes a particular responsibility on you. There are 700 young participants here from 40 states, 15 other nations, of diverse backgrounds, cultures, faiths, skills, knowledge, and passions; each with your own vision about how to chart a new course for humanity.

I hope that while you're here and between the sessions you will get a chance not simply to know more about the issues we're all going to discuss, but to know one another better, to share your visions, your dreams, and your hopes. I hope that because I think the most important thing we can come out of this with is an even greater commitment to do more together.

Now, we are going to announce our first set of commitments to get everybody in the right frame of mind and

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then we'll have the opening panel and I'll call them out. But let me first of all invite to the stage Mabi Matzabera [misspelled?], a doctoral student at Mayo Graduate School in Rochester, Minnesota. I was recently there. [Applause]

And this commitment is to facilitate the repair of medical equipment and address the engineering and technological needs of health care facilities in developing countries. The commitment will prepare engineering graduate students with faculty service trips. Teams will hold training sessions in Ghana, in Jamaica, nations where Mayo is already working to train local residents to repair their own medical equipment.

Efforts initially will focus on nations, which have a prior relationship with Mayo, but eventually the project wants to be a model that can replicated and modified for other countries because over 50 percent, listen to this, over 50 percent of the medical equipment in developing countries is not functioning, not used correctly, or not maintained.

As a result, too many patients are turned away from healthcare centers. This commitment will help local healthcare providers to help more people in need. The commitment will also distribute surveys to assess the needs of healthcare facilities around the world, create a database of students and staff interested in employing their expertise to address those needs and, therefore, give other people the tools to do the same thing.

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And let me say, I have personal knowledge of the need of this because our foundation works on establishing healthcare systems in 25 nations mostly—but not exclusively—in Africa, also, in the Caribbean and in Asia and we have done what we could to bring in equipment, but I see this all the time.

One of the major Clinton Global Initiative equipment commitments is by Dr. Bruce Charash, he created the whole foundation called Doc-to-Doc to Dock to get hospitals and physicians to give excess medical equipment to facilities in developing countries, but an enormous number of fundamental medical, technological equipment is actually in place and not functioning and I never thought of this before you came along, which is the whole purpose of this meeting, so, let's give her a big hand.

Now, I would like to ask Tony Anderson and Marcus Penny from Morehouse to come up. [Applause]. Their commitment is to install more than 26,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs in low-income households around Atlanta with the aim of installing a million in poor communities over the next four years.

Field teams will personally install the bulbs and track the sustained use and replacement of them and perform, this is very important, household energy audits and connect under-represented communities with environmental and social justice organizations.

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Let's Raise a Million projects, that's the name of this, Let's Raise a Million, projects that it will save low-income households \$2.4 million in direct savings from lower utility bills while reducing the air pollution equivalence of more than 2,000 cars or offsetting the carbon equivalent of planting 2,250 acres of farm.

If every American home replaced just one light bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb, we would save enough energy to light three million more homes for a year, more than \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent the greenhouse gas equivalent of the emissions of more than 800,000 cars, which raises the prospect of why we haven't been doing more.

And part of this, this whole system needs to be made more user friendly. But I would say in addition to New Orleans, to give you an idea of the potential importance of this, another of the cities that our climate change project works in is Houston where the mayor started his energy efficiency efforts in the lowest income neighborhoods.

And beginning with the lighting and going to other basic things in the neighborhoods they have worked, they have been able to cut their utility bills 20 percent, proving again that saving the planet for our children and grandchildren is the best way you can provide more cash to low-income people and create more jobs for America—at all skill levels, in every region of the country.

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So, I hope that Tony and Marcus are about to spark a real movement and I hope more people will join Let's Raise a Million, and I hope that pretty soon they'll be coming back and telling us they're on their second million, their fifth million, their tenth million. They can change the future. Let's give them a big hand. [Applause]

Oh, I didn't have the commitments but we'll give them to them. I have to give them these, but I couldn't find them. [Laughter]

Now, the third one is Yokam Reock [misspelled?], an undergraduate from Salt Lake Community College. I'd like to invite him to come up here. [Applause]

More than 27,000 Lost Boys were displaced or orphaned during the 22 year long civil war in Southern Sudan. This commitment is to support subsistence farmers who want to go back home there. The commitment will provide them with the agricultural tools and the education their families need to re-establish their livelihoods.

Yokam [misspelled?] has established a non-profit organization that will provide seeds, farming equipment, and pesticides to help these farmers begin to cultivate their land. The commitment will also strive to provide resources to help educate the children of farm families, building school facilities, hiring teachers, purchasing textbooks.

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Himself, one of Sudan's lost boys, Yokam came to the United States as part of our administration's decision to grant them refugee status in the late 1990s and I must say that he has proved it was a very good decision because of the power of his efforts and all those others that have come to our country, enriched America, and given so much back to their native land. Let's give him a big hand. [Applause]

Our last commitment is from—involves Lu Hardin the President of the University of Central Arkansas and I should say, you know, we have a lot of university presidents here today and there will be more to say about the partnership I hope we will have between the university administrations, college administrations and the younger—the students who are, but I would like ask President Lu Hardin to come up.

I did not know until this morning that this was going to be one of my first commitments, but you should know that this man and I have been friends for 35 years. I have known him since he was an infant, young state senator. I think he was the only person ever elected to the Arkansas State Senate before he could vote.

His commitment is to engage the University of Central Arkansas' undergraduate students in research projects that apply successful international poverty alleviation strategies in rural Arkansas and I will explain the significance of that in a minute.

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Over the next five years, the university will mobilize undergraduate students to improve the lives of 200,000 people living below the poverty line in the rural part of Arkansas. Once complete, UCA will share the students' reports and findings with organizations that work to alleviate poverty throughout the state and the entire Mississippi Delta Region.

The research projects will be accomplished by leveraging the strengths of UCA's political science, sociology education, business, and economic programs and students will have a chance to earn credit for participating in the implementation of this research through internships and work study arrangements. The poverty rate in the Mississippi Delta of the United States is 50 percent, 55 percent higher than the national average.

Only some of our Native American reservations have higher poverty rates than the rate in the lower Mississippi Delta region. And the reason I think this is so important is that America, for all of its wealth, has persistent pockets of poverty. They are principally in the poorest of our Native American communities, in the Mississippi Delta, and then in isolated mountain communities like Appalachia and in inner city areas.

There has been, with minor exception, very limited application of the technologies and the practices and the policies that have worked in other parts of the world, to see

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if those things could be adapted in America to reduce poverty. Almost 25 years ago now, well, actually 25 years ago, Hillary and I met Muhammad Yunus and we met him in Washington, DC.

We knew that there was—the Southshore Bank in Chicago has been developed to try to use microcredit to try to re-develop the south side of Chicago. That empowered a lot of Croatian carpenters, I mean Croatian electricians and African American carpenters to work together to save a lot of those buildings. Nothing like that had ever been done in the rural part of America.

And we, mostly she, raised the money for a rural development bank in Arkansas, which now has a branch in Mississippi in the Delta still going after all this time. But beyond that, not a lot has been done to model successful things that have been done in other countries to alleviate poverty and see if they could also be implemented here.

We now have, Grameen just opened their first operation directly in the United States, which is encouraging. But I've always thought that America was a little too hard-headed about borrowing social innovations from other countries. We wouldn't think twice about borrowing a manufacturing strategy from Japan, for example, to try to upgrade our manufacturing capacity.

We should be more open about borrowing social innovations and applying them to the challenges our own people

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face. So that's what UCA is going to do and I am very grateful to my old friend President Lu Hardin. [Applause]

Okay, now, we're going to have the opening session and I'd like to invite our panelists up, the President of Cornell University, David Skorton from upstate New York and our state. A graduate student from right here in Louisiana, Brittany Cochran. [Applause] My friend and international peace advocate and activist, Betty Bigombe. The Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow of the United States Institute of Peace and the Founder and Chairman of the Lance Armstrong Foundation, Lance Armstrong. [Applause]

I want to thank all of our panelists for being here today and I want to thank Lance Armstrong for joining me on St. Patrick's Day weekend and wearing a green tie, which has the corollary benefit of supporting Tulane since the school's nickname or slogan is The Greenwave.

So, I'd like to begin by asking a few opening questions, if I might. First, let's start with Lance Armstrong. One of the things that has happened in America is that not just famous people who've overcome stunning obstacles, as you have, have started foundations, but this is a very interesting thing. There are over one million non-governmental organizations that is foundations in America today, half of them have been started in this decade.

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And a lot of these young people are actually encouraged to start their own new projects and to organize themselves to do it. In fact, I hope that a lot of schools will decide to brand themselves by unique NGOs that belong to the schools in the same way that they're branded by their science faculty or branded by their basketball team or branded by anything else.

So, I believe this explosion of non-governmental foundation work will continue, so, I wanted to ask you a very specific question. Describe if you can, briefly, to this audience exactly what you were trying to do when you started this foundation and how, if at all, your mission has evolved. So, how are they supposed to be on the lookout to both to have a very clear idea, how important is it to have a very specific idea of what you're going to do when you start this work and how important is it to be open to change as you go along?

LANCE ARMSTRONG: Well, I came to my issue because of what happened to me. It wasn't as if I realized, oh my God, I'm a halfway successful bike racer and I'm going to find a cause, because I was a halfway successful bike racer and the cause found me and then after that I became a better bike racer, some would say. [Laughter]

But I mean, I felt obliged and obligated to do something. I was a young man in the state of Texas diagnosed with a very advanced level of disease. And we sat around a four top dinner table at a little Tex-Mex place in Austin and said,

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"God, we've got to do something." And the Lance Armstrong Foundation was started that day, essentially the idea at least.

And we didn't know or expect to really affect change. We didn't expect, I mean, I remember the first time we got a \$200 or \$300 check. We were doing back flips. We thought we had made it and we were reall;, then we thought we'd make a difference. We'd change the world.

We didn't know that the brand would evolve, that the cause would evolve, that the yellow band would come along and sell 70 million pieces. We didn't know that ten years in we'd raise \$270 million. We didn't know that we would do all these things as a young organization in Austin.

And yet the mission has changed. In the beginning, I mean, we were focused probably just because we didn't know any better. We were focused on testicular cancer, which is what I was diagnosed with. And just to give you an example at the time we thought, wouldn't it be great in our state, a very conservative state that took out the diagrams for young people for breast self exams or testicular self exams in our very conservative state, we need to get those put back in. That was an initiative for us.

We not only did that, but we did many other things and the mission evolved because I think we had the potential for it to evolve. So, it went from a very specific cell type, a very specific disease into a broader umbrella of diseases and now

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the whole movement of the disease and how we affect change within the federal government in making this disease, the number one killer in this country, a national priority.

So, it's been an interesting journey, but I must say it came to me. And I think that it's, I don't doubt that in the last decade we've had a million NGOs started and I think a lot of that has to do with people's frustration, because you have in the last decade and, without getting political, you see certain things happen in this country and people stand up and they say, wait a minute, I can do that better. I can do that more effectively. I can affect change in my house, on my street, in my community, in my school, in my state. I can do that better and that's why that's happened, I think. [Applause]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: I want to say a word to Betty Bigombe now, who I know not only because of her experiences and tireless work for peace in her native Uganda, which has had more of its share of troubles, particularly that portion near Sudan, but who has worked all around the world now on these issues. And I wanted to ask you basically, do you believe that young people can have a direct role in what has normally been a highly jealously guarded political process? That is, making peace and breaking the cycle of violence.

How have you done it and what is your advice to all these young people who would like to have a bigger impact on the problems of Darfur, Sudan, or any other ongoing problems

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where children are disproportionately victimized by violence in the world?

BETTY BIGOMBE: Thank you. I totally believe in the youth and I believe that a targeted investment in youth will get, particularly the developing countries, out of poverty and help in prevention of conflict and also reverse climate change, which is taken us all by surprise.

I was driven into this when I actually went to meet the rebel leader, who is believed to have abducted about 8,000 children, turned them into killing machines, and when I went into the jungle, face-to-face to meet with him and I saw all these child soldiers who were guiding me. They had machetes in their hands. They had AK-47, which were much bigger than them.

And it hit me how terrible it was and that they had been robbed of their childhood. Some of them had gone back and killed members of their families and members of their community, so that they would not, they were forced to do it, so that they would not run away.

Now, some of them have come back and they feel they cannot fit in anymore. And at the same time I've seen also in Liberia. I've seen it in Columbia. I've seen it in Sri Lanka. How after their return, that transformation they go through in that period and there is no coherent, comprehensive intervention to turn them around so that they can become protected members of the community.

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To me this is very dangerous in the sense that children who have known only weapons, if they are part of the community they can't turn to weapons anymore. It also has—it's not just—a lot of times the talk is about the right of the child. This problem has more implications than just the right of the child.

It has common implications, if they're not turned around they will continue to be poor and their children and [their] children will continue to be poor. It has security implications in that if they have no means of livelihood, they are bound to go out and rob and take from other people.

So, my effort has been that it's not just children who have participated in war. I realize that Africa has 45 percent of the African population are under 15 and most of them are not going to school.

So, the point is that if nothing is done, proper investment is [not?] done in the youth, and we are talking about youth being our future leaders, what future do we have? That means we will continue to receive aid. That means, as you all know, that poverty also has contributed to conflict, and unless we can uplift their standard of living and get them means of livelihood and education and proper health then the problem will continue and for how long will we continue to be recipients of aid and these are the driving forces.[Applause]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you. Let me just make one observation about this. The rest of the world, I think, has

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been blessed and highly enlightened by a lot of the young people who have left these situations, like the Sudanese Lost Boys. You've heard from two of them today.

They're immensely impressive people and the fact that they want to give something back to their area is important. We've also, I think a lot of us have been blessed by the recent books that have been written by and about people who were child soldiers. They're both chilling and in an odd way reassuring that the most awful kinds of brutality can be escaped and people can begin again.

That's all—that's good, but the reason I wanted to—I was so grateful that Betty agreed to come here today is that in the end, whenever you read one of these things or you see people like these two impressive young men you've already seen today, you have to remember there are many more who are still back in their homeland.

And the work that Betty is doing is important and the work that we might do through these non-governmental groups is important because the ultimate test of success and failure is whether good people like those we clapped for on stage today can live anywhere in the world including where they were born and make it, so, I thank you very much.

I'd like to move next to Brittany Cochran who is a student at Xavier University, one of the most remarkable of our institutions of higher education in America because of its rich

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history and inter-relationships with the African American community. The provisions of huge numbers of professionals that have built the kind of new middle-class in America and professional class, but also the University that suffered a good deal after Katrina and made its own astonishingly quick turnaround.

And I wanted to ask Brittany to talk a little bit about the problems that she's tried to address and how easy has it been to get other college students involved in it? What is the difference between the way young people that she's in school with view student activism as something besides voting and being active in elections?

Do you think there is more of this than there used to be? Are there more people involved in graduates community work than just a few years ago and I'd really—Give us some examples of the kind of things you're interested in and what you're doing.

BRITTANY COCHRAN: I've had such a great experience at Xavier University working with the Deep South Center for Environments of Justice, which was the office on campus when I arrived there as a freshman. And through my work in that office, I've learned that poor people are less likely to have health insurance and property insurance, and in New Orleans's case, flood insurance and they are disproportionately affected by the consequences of climate change.

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And so I'm from a small community in Cancer Alley which is an 80 mile strip between Baton Rouge and New Orleans that has petro chemical plants. So, when I started to learn about these different communities and I realized that I'm from a community that is disproportionately affected by climate change because, you know, the people in my area have health problems and we aren't able to handle the financial burdens of climate change.

I decided to make a difference and I went back home. And I went into my community and I did some work at a camp and I taught Global Warming and Climate Change because I wanted them to bring that message home. And my work has been well received because I think people are noticing that we, as a generation, are very motivated and we're inspired and we're excited to know that the work that we're going to do today is going to be affect[ing] generations to come.

If we don't get involved now, we're going to suffer dire consequences. I feel unlike previous generations where people worked toward our tangible goals, whether it was civil rights or anti-war protests or women's rights, we're working for something that we may not experience in our lifetime. So, I think that's very motivating and very exciting for young people today. [Applause]

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PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: And do you think there are, let me ask you this, do you think there are a large number of people on your campus that see this the same way you do?

BRITTANY COCHRAN: I don't think so. I think being [an] environmental activist is becoming mainstream, but it's still a fringe activity. It's small things that we do that impact other people and I think a lot of people are getting hip to the idea that nothing is wrong with saying you want to protect your planet or you want to protect your community.

And so I think more and more people on my campus are starting; we have small groups but the groups are getting larger and larger. And it may just be issue on small campuses because I go to a University, I think, that has around 2,000 students, but the more the media starts to put things out like this and the more we have more conferences like Clinton Global Initiative the more people are aware of the opportunity they have to be involved.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Well, you know, I think, if I could just follow up just one more. You know, you and the two young men from Morehouse that came here, I think it's—This is, I hope, the beginning of a movement because I remember, you know, 15 or 16 years ago, not long after I took office, Al Gore and the Congressman from Atlanta, John Lewis, who had been, you know, really one of the pioneers in the Civil Rights Movement were the first people who talked to me about how environment

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justice should be a bigger issue in the African American community, because environmental problems were having a disproportionately negative impact on poor people including poor people of color.

And John began pushing this whole notion of cleaning up toxic sites and urban areas and doing all the kind of things that need to be done, not having people disproportionately exposed to dangerous chemical emissions, you mentioned being near a chemical plant. And now that global warming has been widely accepted as a problem, that will compromise the future of all the young people in this audience and the world. I think that the flip side is not yet as clearly appreciated as it should be.

It is also the solution to the problem of sustainable development. That is, I keep telling the people all across America, you cannot name one issue that remotely has the [same] potential [as a] commitment to clean, independent energy future does to generate new economic opportunities and every country in the world, in every region in the world and within America in every state, in every rural area, small town, suburb, big city for people of all ages.

It is the sustainable development issue around which we can organize all of our other efforts. And so I think that having young people who come at this from, if you will, a non-traditional point of view is really important. And I can tell

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you just from my work around the world, we're not going to whip global warming by urging people to do the right thing. We're going to do it by proving that it is the key to making their lives better. [Applause]

And so I think it's just wonderful. I mean, I just think it's wonderful that you're doing this. I think it's great that these guys from Morehouse are and I think, you know, it could really be a great thing if we could build some sort of national alliance here of young people to try to increase the awareness of people that—it actually would be a good deal. You know what's the number one new job project in New York City today?

MALE SPEAKER: Governor. [Applause]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Number one, the biggest new job announcement that's been made lately, the Mayor and I announced that we were going to green the city's housing projects. It's 11 percent of all the public housing in America. Their annual electric bill is \$500 million. We're going to cut it to \$350 million, big savings, right? [Applause]

And that's equivalent reduction of greenhouse gas usage. You train huge numbers of people for new jobs, so, this is a big deal you're doing. So, keep your energy up and once you convince people, you'll turn everybody into a green activist once they realize it's the thing to do.

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In Ethiopia near, I was there a couple of years ago. We have a big healthcare project there and the president told me, he said, it was just occurring to me, Africa should become the first oil free continent when it comes to transportation because then we can stabilize the world oil markets, stop the global warming, and generate a whole new range of jobs for rural development.

I mean people are thinking about these kinds of things all over the world now and we all need to get our minds caught up with reality. So, I thank you. I would also say one other thing.

If you think about the problems of the people, the children of conflict, it's not enough to tell people that they should turn away from destructive behavior. You have to turn them toward constructive behavior and building a whole new post carbon energy future is something that would attract the energies and imagination and commitment and passion of, I think, young people all across the world and it could also help people avoid future kinds of conflicts.

Let me turn and we'll have a few minutes for discussion, but first I want to give our last panelist Dr. Skorton, the President of Cornell, which is a fairly well known, revered university in northern New York [applause] with a global presence now, a reach all across the world. And I would like to ask you, number one, tell us about Cornell's

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global presence, how you've reached out from this venerable Ivy League institution in beautiful upstate New York, Ithaca, to the world.

And two, tell us where you are around the world and why and secondly tell us what you think the university's obligation and potentials are with regard to helping these kinds of long term development issues and also closing some of the inequality issues around the world, the disparity.

We didn't talk about this with Lance Armstrong, but a lot of people get the kind of cancer he had in parts of the world where nobody can even diagnose it much less treat it. So, what are the obligations of the modern university on closing the development, economic divide, closing some of the healthcare and education divides. And tell us where you're doing it.

DAVID SKORTON, MD: First of all, why do I have to go after Brittany? Why do I have to follow her? You can answer that later? That's all right. And the other thing I want to say before I answer the question is: students rule. Students rule. [Applause].

They do and I actually have the best job in the world because I get to interact with people like this all the time and I want to congratulate all of you for doing what you're doing and urge you, including you, as the President, said to

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keep it up because this is our future, so, good for you for being here.

Keep going on it. That's great. I think that all the colleges and universities in the country, President Clinton, all 4,000 of them, have an obligation to work in the public interest. We're tax exempt entities, but even the private schools get billions and billions of dollars of public money.

At Cornell University, out of a \$2.8 billion budget, almost a billion of those dollars are public dollars because of all the federal research grants. We get money from the state of New York for being a land grant university. Some of our students get federal student aid, so I think we all have an obligation to society to do something about it. That's one.

Secondly, we have the capability of the doing things that my fellow panelists have been talking about, of doing direct action on the ground like you all are going to be doing tomorrow morning. There is a group of masters students from Cornell, from the City and Regional Planning Department, who have been working with the Ninth Ward and other areas in New Orleans since about two weeks after Katrina as part of their professional obligation, not just to get MRP, Master of Regional Planning Degrees, but to use that in the public good. So, I think we have the societal obligation and we have the means to do it.

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We can do it in three ways. We can do direct action or outreach. We can educate and we can do the research that makes it work. And that's the way I would answer your question about where Cornell is and a lot of other schools including Tulane, where we're sitting, around the world. We have educational facilities in many places. Cornell has the first American Medical School to give an MD overseas in Doha Qatar in the Persian Gulf.

We've been, proud to say, we've been in India for over half a century working in agriculture. But I want to focus a bit on Africa, not only because of the distinguished panelists, but because of the extraordinary needs of a continent that was the cradle of human kind.

We are working with 217 other U.S. universities, an organization of the state universities and land grant schools is called NASULGC, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. All 50 states are in this organization. And what we're doing is focusing on Africa, working with two or three dozen African counterparts.

And we're focusing this effort and a lot of the Cornell efforts are focused on listening to international partners, real partnerships, not American academics going into a community, or a country, or a culture, or an area and saying we know what's good for you. We know what works in upstate New York, or New York City, or New Orleans. You must do this in

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your society. No, we're asking questions and listening and saying, "You tell us what you think might work."

And in the case of a very broad generalization of sub-Saharan Africa, because people like you, there has been such enormous investment in the K through 12 educational system that there is now an enormous, enormous cohort of college ready students in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, that they need seats go to higher education institutions.

They need to build the capacity in those areas and American universities and other universities in the developing world are ready and willing and able to go to those places and say, we're here to partner as you think it's needed; as you think it's needed to get those college ready students through higher education, to learn things, to get problem solving skills, to solve their own problems and to stay in those societies. That's what we're trying to do.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you. I want to—we have a few more minutes but I am going to ask a question. I am going to start with Lance Armstrong and then give everybody else a chance to ask it because I keep trying to think of things I can ask them that will apply to what you are interested in, whatever it is.

And so let me just say, because I deal with this all the time in my foundation. You start one of these foundations, you have a mission. You immediately see that there are some

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things that have to be done by national governments or international organizations or at least state and local governments or whatever. They have to at least get out of the way in order for you to do what it is you want to do, but usually you need their partnership, their friendship, their goodwill and sometimes a change of policy.

A classic example is we first needed a new UN resolution on Darfur. Now we need to be able to implement it and we need—All this politics of the Olympics is playing up to trying to figure out how to get this new UN force in Darfur. That's a start example.

But I promise you if you get into this, the young men from Morehouse had the simplest of ideas with enormous power. Right now they can go do this and it doesn't matter who the Mayor of Atlanta is or the Governor of Georgia or the President of the United States or what the policy is. You can just go do that, but at some point you will run into the fact that you want to deal with climate change, right?

And you might want to help in retrofitting houses, then you've got to have some government help or you might want the economics of this change. Then you need national legislation on global warming. Do you see what I'm saying? So, the same thing is true here if you decided that you wanted to change the standards for chemical emissions or whatever.

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So, each of us who does this work, at some point you have to decide how do you divide your time, your attention, and your resources between trying to change what the government does, because they've got a lot more money than we do, even Bill Gates, right and the rest of us, and or you need government change because it needs to be a framework change in the law and how much time do you try to spend just turning your good intentions into real changes in other people's lives?

And I can tell you, you know, the older you get the more you worry about being able to keep score at the end of every day. You want to know if you've changed lives. You want to know if you've really done what you set out to do. So, let's start with Lance because I know he's got—I've been to your banquet. We've talked about this before, but talk to them about how you decide to allocate your time and efforts between the direct work of the Armstrong Foundation, the investments you make in research, and the lobby[ing] you do in the federal government and let's just go down the line and give everybody a chance to comment on that.

LANCE ARMSTRONG: Well, I would say that, I mean, personally this is a massive investment of time for me because it's a personal issue. I don't want to deal with it again and I don't want my kids to or my grand kids to. So, this is not something that we spend a few days a year on. We spend almost every day on it.

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I mean if you want to do that, that's a huge time commitment and a huge commitment of passion. Our issue is complicated. It's much more complicated than a lot of things that you'll hear about these days or this year. The disease of cancer is something that everybody can easily sit back and say, "Let's just cure the disease." But it's not that easy.

This is a very complicated disease. I mean, outside of the word cancer you have these different subsets of types of disease, the cell types of those types of disease, on and on, and on.

The perfect proof is why am I sitting here right now, eleven years [ago, I] won the Tour de France a bunch of times, seemingly perfectly healthy, meanwhile I am sure people in this room have lost loved ones, and friends, and neighbors to the disease because they're so different.

So, for me, I think the best thing for me is to just simplify things and you said, you said it when you talked about the guys in Atlanta. Just a simple solution, so, I mean I think our society because it is, although it's not as old as many others, it's a lot more complicated than the other ones.

So, if I look at my disease and I say, wait a minute. What the hell is going on here? How do we start to fix this thing? Well, I mean, you can look at [it] in many different problems around the world. You can look at bike crashes and say

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why did that person pass away? Well, they didn't have a helmet on. They could have prevented that if they had a helmet on.

Why did my mom die of lung cancer at 52? Well, she smoked for 30 years. We could have prevented that. So, prevention is a huge issue and that's not just an issue in this country. It's an issue all around the world, especially when we start talking about China and Asia and the tobacco epidemic there.

We're going to be met with, I mean, I saw a statistic the other day that China is prepared to lose a billion people in the 21st century because of tobacco related disease. That's a huge number and we could prevent all of those deaths.

The other thing is for our issue, and for cancer specifically, is healthcare in this country. If you look at the approximately 600,000 deaths that we suffer in the United States alone—and that number globally is seven million—the 600,000 deaths in the United States of America, 200,000 of those, a full third, could be prevented if we gave them healthcare. The same level of healthcare that all of us will receive, a lot of you guys will receive, to every American, a full third of them if they had the level of care that we got, we'd save a third of those lives.

So, I sit back, [applause], I look at that and I say that's an easy solution why aren't we doing that? And if you, there's some—you can go on and on and on with all of these

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problems, but let's do the easy stuff first, the easy stuff first, the stuff that we know works. Let's not complicate these things. Let's not try to outsmart ourselves. Let's just, I mean, when I wake up in the morning, I put [on] my shoes, I tie them, I know I do that first. Do the easy stuff first and fix massive amounts of problems.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you. I want Betty to talk about this. We'll go down the line, but I just do want to say Lance is somewhat too modest. So, he spends a lot of time advocating for basic healthcare and for certain kinds of cancer research. But this foundation also does a really great job of helping families afflicted with cancer to try to develop the attitudes and the practices and build the connections necessary to survive once they are infected.

So, they do have a balancing act between how much time they spend advocating for different government policies and how much time they spend trying to empower the people they're trying to help, but I think that you heard his answer to this question.

So, Betty, go ahead. How do you decide how much time you spend trying to get people, governments to change their policy and how much time do you try to say just saving people and helping individuals to advocate for peace?

BETTY BIGOMBE: That's difficult to answer. Difficult to answer because I'm dealing mainly with people in developing

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countries; dealing with government that is more inward looking than looking out broadly at what is happening.

And sometimes, when you walk into an office trying to inference or change their minds, somebody turns to you, looks at you like you're coming in from Mars and speaking a language they don't quite understand. I'm also dealing with people who have competing needs, who are trying to prioritize survival. Does that make—I'll give you a simple example.

And with your help in my country, Uganda, we started immunization of children for the six killer diseases and the campaign went on and the team would go out to reach community in rural areas. The information is given out on a market day a team is coming to immunize children on day A. But comes that day a woman who has to walk maybe ten miles to go to that center for immunization [she] looks at herself, that day she's got to look for food, that day she's got to walk miles to get some water.

On the one hand, the child she's supposed to take for immunization looks healthy, so she has to make that choice and, of course, the child is not sick, so that is not a priority for that day. The priority becomes maybe food and getting water for the family.

So, when you embark on a mission like this it requires patience, it requires resilience, it requires, it's a process because it's both the government is trying to deal with their

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priority needs, the people are also trying to deal with their priority needs.

And sometimes, let me say this, I turn to the youth. I turn to the youth because they will come out and speak about it. They will talk to their parents. They'll talk to their teachers. They'll talk to members of their community to bring it home that this problem if it's not dealt with now is going to affect all of us in the future. So, it's a big challenge in the developing world where communication system is still very weak, where high tech is still, it's like going to the moon. But the whole thing is, it's a strong commitment that it can actually happen if you are totally committed into making that change.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Thank you. [Applause]

So, Brittany, I'll ask you as specific a question as I can. You've tried to raise environmental awareness and activism among young people. How much time do you now spend, how much would you like to spend on mobilizing people to argue for new legislation like legislation against climate change and mobilizing people to actually do things to make their communities greener? Do you want to do both and what do you think the sensible thing for you [to] do is from your current perspective?

BRITTANY COCHRAN: Well, I like to think that I represent the average student. I go to school. First and

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foremost, I am an employee. I'm a sorority member. I'm involved [in] my professional organizations. I try to do environmental activism and it does take a lot of my time.

But what I like to do, I like to do a little bit every day. If I have to do a community service requirement for a service learning course, or for any requirement for school, or just on my own, I'll choose to do a green community service project. I'll choose to build environmentally friendly homes with Habitat for Humanity.

And I also like to take every opportunity that I have to interact with different people, to share and engage in ideas and find out what things are important to them and share with them the things that are important to me.

And I think as college students, even when we're removed from the college atmosphere, when we don't have any more clubs or organizations to guide our way through the work that we do, we should incorporate environmental friendliness, which is what's important to me.

But whether, you know, you're into poverty alleviation or global health or any other things, you should incorporate something like that into your daily life. For me, since I'm environmentally conscious, I'm going to invest in hybrid cars. I'm going to invest in tankless hot water heaters or energy efficient appliances.

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So, even when you feel like you don't have the time to do it—in my situation, I'm in professional school, I'm nearing graduation, and my academics take a lot of my time—you find something to do that's effortless but still powerful.

[Applause]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: So, David, I think that it's obvious that most of what you do as a college or university president you're doing things, but what's your take on this? Like, as you teach this, how should we ask our university students to think about this?

Should we ask them to think about activism still traditionally in terms of getting governments and international organizations to change their policy or should they learn about that as an incidental practice to changing the world themselves or is it a bogus or can you even seriously do one without the other? How do you look at this?

DAVID SKORTON, MD: It's a really important question. I want to hark back to what Lance said earlier. Part of, and I agree with you Lance, part of the reason there has been such an explosion of interest in NGOs, people want to do this stuff themselves in conditions in which they can at least control their own actions.

So, I think that's the key infrastructure for what we're talking about. I think that's exactly right. But I'm

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going to talk to the audience and urge you to think about the following four step process in your own activism.

First, listen. Listen and learn about what the problem is so that you know everything about it and you've listened to what other people are doing. Secondly, commit yourself to some sort of a plan. Don't be afraid to write it down. Don't be afraid to share it with other people who have like interests and take some friendly fire about it, so you have a plan, a roadmap.

Thirdly, do as much as you can yourself and then fourthly, go to other places including local, state, and federal government or other organizations in a regulatory or financial means or the donor community when you've done the first three; when you've listened, when you have a plan, and when you've done everything you can do on your own, and that's what I think most of us have learned to do over time.[Applause]

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON: Well, I want to thank all of our panelists and I hope they've given you at least a way to think about this, about what you're doing now, about what you might do in the future. We're now going to go to our smaller sessions and, again, let me remind you that the whole purpose of this always, always, always, is to have people learn a lot about the challenge being discussed in each of these areas and have it take them right to where you want to do something.

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What can you do? What can you do? So, we'll see you again during the course of the day. And I thank you very much. Give our panelists another hand. Weren't they great? [Applause] Thank you.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, the plenary session has now concluded. Please make your way—

[END RECORDING]