

Higher Education

Q. *Senor Presidente*, mi nombre is Andrea. I'm a teacher in Rancho Cucamonga.

The President. Yes, I was there. I gave my Social Security speech there.

Q. I'm a professor at Chaffey Community College in Rancho Cucamonga. What is your vision for higher education for all people?

The President. Thank you. First, let me tell you, I am a big believer in making sure our community colleges remain affordable, available, and flexible. And the reason I believe that is that I understand that the best way to make sure people have got the ability to work is for there to be a training—a retraining opportunity. In other words, communities must figure out how to match up a community college system with jobs that actually exist. It seems like to me, in order for America to be hopeful for everybody, we need to have flexibility, at some point, in the higher education system. And the best place for that flexibility to occur is at the community college level.

Technologies race through the country, our economies, but people get left behind. And therefore, there needs to be a system to retrain people for the jobs that actually exist, and the best place to do that, in my judgment, is the community college. I'm not pandering. I happen to believe that.

Now, higher education takes all kinds of—there's all kinds of different ways to achieve higher education. A community college system is one, a 4-year college; there's others. One of the things I think we need to do is expand the Pell grant system to help people afford higher education.

I've got a couple of more, and then I've got to hustle. Yes, ma'am.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. Thank you. You can repeat that if you want to. [Laughter]

The First Lady's Wardrobe/Small Business

Q. Well, like you, Mr. President, I too believe in the American Dream. I am a young Latina entrepreneur who caters to

top-level executive women in their clothing needs. One of my dreams is to design an exclusive garment for the First Lady, Laura Bush.

The President. Yes, well, you've got a very good marketing department, I see that. [Laughter]

Q. How can you, as President, help me realize that dream? [Laughter]

The President. Well, you just helped yourself, which is part of realizing a dream. [Laughter] Secondly, I can take the tape of this show—I'm confident somebody back there is making a tape—[laughter]—and present it firsthand to the First Lady.

But the other thing—the other way to help you on your business and to help you expand is to let you keep some of your own money, so that you can reinvest it, and so that your business can grow. It's one thing to be able to have a good marketing plan—and I appreciate your boldness—[laughter]—but it's another thing to be able to have the cashflow necessary to implement the strategy.

It's important for Government to set priorities, and we're going to set priorities. But it's also important for Congress to realize that one way to put a halt to any economic recovery that's beginning is to overspend, is to keep too much of the people's money. And therefore, one of the interesting debates is going to be, do we let the people keep the money that we promised them or not? And you heard my position on it loud and clear. The answer is, absolutely they get to keep the money—like this entrepreneur right here.

Yes, sir. Yes, sir. You probably think the Marines are the best branch in the service, don't you?

Montgomery GI Bill

Q. Yes, sir, I do. I was a recruiter for 3 years, so I know we are. Sir, the question I have, it goes back to education—[inaudible]—all marines, all soldiers, sailors, and airmen, we pay into the Montgomery GI bill. And there was talk in Congress about