

Remarks by First Lady Michelle Obama at a Women's Luncheon, San Francisco, California, January 31, 2014

Thank you all.

Well, it is truly a pleasure to be here today with so many of you. Let me start by asking you a question: Where are we today? Where is America today? The truth is that in our country there are still too many kids with such big dreams and so much promise, but kids who never get an opportunity; kids who have the potential to be anything in the world -- surgeons, teachers, engineers, and yes, even President of the United States, but no one is willing to invest in them. And when we fail to invest in our young people, that just doesn't limit their future, it limits our country's future as well. And that's why Barack and I are and will be working so hard to help more of our young people afford college.

I'm thinking about the story of one of those kids; a young man named Troy Simon who Barack and I met just a few weeks ago at the White House. Troy grew up in a struggling family in New Orleans. And for years, he, like so many kids, spent his days skipping school and getting into trouble on the streets. That's why at the age of fourteen, Troy still couldn't read. Troy couldn't write. Troy couldn't even count very well. But then Troy made a decision. He decided that he wanted to set a better example for his brothers and sisters. So he decided he wanted to own his future and commit to his education. Today, Troy is about to graduate in American Literature. And he is a phenomenal young man. There are so many kids just like Troy all across this country -- young people who've had a tough start in life, but are so hungry to succeed.

And that ultimately is why we're here today. That's why we need to work so hard between now and November **midterm elections**. And if during this time you ever start to get tired, if you ever think about giving up, I just want you to think about all those young people like Troy who deserve a shot at their dreams, all those families who are struggling to build something better for their kids. We need to pour everything we have into these elections so that they can have the opportunities they need to build the future they deserve.