



## OBAMA INAUGURATION SPARKLES WITH DREAM STARS FROM KIDS ACROSS AMERICA

JANUARY 8, 2009 / Legacy Project / – Kids across America want Barack Obama to "remember his promises" and "do his best." They dream of a "peaceful future where people and governments can fix problems without being violent." They think Obama should definitely work on the economy so that "more people can get jobs and take care of their families." And he should reach out to kids because "we're the ones who will be doing important things later. We're part of America, too." The idea of educator and Legacy Project Chair Susan Bosak, children and teens are blanketing the nation with Dream Stars and sending messages to Obama for the inauguration as part of a Web of Dreams initiative. A non-partisan, educational project, there are also free online activities for families and schools to help children better understand the historic event taking place on January 20.

"The Web of Dreams gives children a voice and a way to participate in the inauguration," says Bosak, who works with schools across the country. "As we all face tough times, we should listen to the dreams of children. They can remind us of hopes we may have forgotten or assumed impossible as adults."

Since Indianapolis was the last stop on Obama's campaign trail on election day, a school in that city was chosen as the **Honorary First School** in the Web of Dreams. St. Monica School serves a diversity of students from kindergarten to grade 8. Its theme this year is "Teamwork Makes The Dream Work." Inspired by her school's theme, 11-year-old student Sophia VanderKooy says, "My dream for America is that we all work together to make our country a better place to live."

To **participate** in the Web of Dreams, young people decorate Dream Stars with their dreams for themselves and America. The Dream Stars are being displayed for the inauguration in schools and homes from coast-to-coast to inspire everyone who sees them – other young people, as well as teachers and parents. They submit their total number of stars on the Legacy Project website along with a message for Obama.

The eight- and nine-year-old students at J. Stanley Sullivan School in North Adams, MA acknowledge that Obama has "a lot of work ahead of you because our country is in a sad state of affairs." **Students at Hilldale School in Daly City, CA dream of a "clean environment to help us and the Earth."** The nine- to thirteen-year-old kids who are part of the CitySongs youth group in St. Paul, MN promise that "we will do our part to make these dreams come true and are counting on you, President-Elect, to do your best to make them happen as well." And the eight- to eleven-year old children at Albert Farine Elementary School in Irving, TX challenge Obama to "dream, believe, and imagine a better America. Remember to take risks."

The Legacy Project also has free online activities with dozens of ideas to help children understand the significance of the inauguration, and to encourage them to set and achieve their own personal and community goals. In Club of Dreamers, children choose a historical hero, perhaps someone like Abraham Lincoln (the bicentennial of his birth happens to fall on February 12). The Power of Words has them engage with the words that have changed the world, from Gandhi to King to Obama. And One Thing helps them explore the one thing they can do, whatever that may be for them, to make a difference in their own life and their community.

Many of the activities are inspired by Bosak's bestselling book *Dream: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom & Wishes*, which is illustrated by 15 top children's illustrators and has won 11 national awards, including a Children's Choice and a Teachers' Choice. The book is about achieving hopes and dreams across a lifetime.

"For me, this story begins almost three years ago, at an education conference in Chicago," says Bosak. "Two teachers rushed up to me excited about using my book with their students. They also said that they needed another copy for someone else. They were volunteering on a campaign, they explained. They were helping this man. He was going to be the next President of the United States. They asked me to sign a copy of *Dream* for him. When they told me his name, I asked them to spell it – slowly. It was an unusual name. And then I wrote the inscription using a line from the last page in the book: To Barack Obama, Be a Dreamer."

In the context of Bosak's book, a Dreamer is someone like Albert Einstein or Martin Luther King, Jr., someone who has the determination and courage to make a difference.

"Every child should have dreams and goals – and the confidence and opportunity to pursue them. This is a way for parents and teachers to encourage children and help them become involved citizens in the future," says Bosak.

For more information on participating in the Web of Dreams, the free online activities, and to read the dreams of kids across the country, visit [www.legacyproject.org](http://www.legacyproject.org).

Here are messages from across the country. The Web of Dreams is a way for children and teens to share their dreams, and to understand and participate in a significant historic event by sending a message to President-Elect Barack Obama for his inauguration on January 20, 2009. Find out how you can participate.

### **The Hilldale School – Daly City, CA 35 Dream Stars (8-9 years old)**

**Dear Mr. Obama,**

**We are a small class of five students. As a class we each wrote seven of our dreams for a total of thirty-five dreams. Our dreams are displayed in our classroom. There were three dreams that we had in common. One of our dreams is to have peace in the world and that all the wars will stop. Another dream we share is to have good health. We want to stay healthy. Our last dream we have in common is to have a clean environment to help us and the Earth. We hope that you can help make our dreams come true.**

**Thank You,  
The Third and Fourth Graders at the Hilldale School,  
Krystal, Gabbie, Sebastian, Jordyn, Kabir, and Ms. Forsiak**

### **CitySongs – St. Paul, MN 30 Dream Stars (9-13 years old)**

We, the youth of CitySongs choir in St. Paul, MN would like to let you know some of our dreams for the future:

1. We dream of a future with less pollution and a cleaner environment that is safe for people and animals. For example, garbage in the ocean needs to be cleaned up and more waste products need to be recycled.
2. We dream of a peaceful future where people and governments can fix problems without being violent.

3. We dream of a future where everybody has a place to live that they can afford so that nobody will have to live on the streets.

4. We dream of a future where energy is clean and affordable.

5. We dream of a future where people get along with each other and people everywhere are treated equally so all people can enjoy freedom at home, school, and work.

We will do our part to make these dreams come true and are counting on you, President-Elect, to do your best to make them happen as well.

**H.B. Rhame, Jr. Elementary School – Columbia, SC  
425 Dream Stars (5-11 years old)**

Dear President Barack Obama,

We the students of H.B. Rhame, Jr. Elementary School want to thank you for pursuing your DREAM. Congratulations!

We had a mock election at our school and you won by a landslide!

We are glad that you are interested in helping our communities. Thank you for wanting to change health care in our country.

Our mascot is the Saint. We want you to know that we are praying for you and your family. Stay healthy, strong, and faithful. You have a tough battle ahead of you. The Saints of H.B. Rhame, Jr. Elementary School are cheering for you. You should hear us in D.C.!

You represent change to us. You Rock, President Obama! We know dreams do come true now because of YOU.

Take care of your family and take care of our country. May God continue to BLESS the USA.

Sincerely,  
The Saints of H.B. Rhame, Jr. Elementary School

**J. Stanley Sullivan School – North Adams, MA  
14 Dream Stars (8-9 years old)**

Dear President Obama,

Congratulations on being elected president! We are very excited about your becoming our 44th president. Many of our parents voted for you. On November 11th, we held an election in our classroom and most of us voted for you too! We spoke with our families and want to let you know what we think is important for our country.

Our names are Chris, Megan, Tyrese, Brianna, Robert, Aliyha, Christian, T.J., Serena, Joseph, Jocelynn, Nina, Logan and Elizabeth. We are age 8 or 9 and from J. Stanley Sullivan Elementary School in North Adams, Massachusetts. You have made good campaign promises to get people out of war and to help get more jobs so people can take care of themselves and not be poor.

You have a lot of work ahead of you because our country is in a sad state of affairs. Could you stop the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, because more and more soldiers are dying every day and every night? We want to know when you will bring home the troops. We hope we don't have another war, so would you work toward world peace and end all wars.

Please have a plan to stimulate the economy. Please develop a plan to help all families with paying

for college. Please change the world like having no war and have jobs for people too. Could you lower the price of gas? We as a country need to think of alternative fuel sources. We should do more to stop pollution for future generations. We should all work to strengthen our planet.

What will change in our schools now that you are president? Can you visit our school so we can talk to you about our hopes and dreams for America? Hopefully you can get everything back to normal so people can then have good lives.

Don't quit or give up on your promises. Good luck with all your endeavors. We wish you the best and stay safe. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Ms. Saldo-Burke's 3rd Grade Class

**St. Thomas Aquinas High School – Overland Park, KS  
15 Dream Stars (17 years old)**

We, the class of Mrs. Bauman's second hour Honors English IV dream...

Anisha dreams that everyone will be able to accomplish their dreams.

Vern dreams of starting his own business.

Grant dreams of a day where people are not discriminated by what they believe in.

Patrick James dreams of a day where it will be easier to more openly express your religious views.

Megan dreams that everyone has the opportunity to learn.

Jake dreams that one day there will be a world with no strife.

Maddi dreams that everybody will have equal opportunities.

James dreams of a world where individuals do not feel afraid to express themselves.

Julie dreams that everyone will learn to accept everyone else.

Mike dreams that all children will be given the opportunity to dream.

Marissa dreams that no one will be judged by age, color, or gender.

Minh-Anh dreams of a world where every voice will be heard.

Caroline dreams that everyone has a chance to reach their goals.

Kelly dreams that everyone will be generally happy with themselves.

Mrs. Bauman dreams of a world full of peaceful, loving harmony.

We dream that someday everyone will reach for the stars and SOAR!

**Rutland High School – Macon, GA  
22 Dream Stars (15-17 years old)**

Congratulations on your presidency! We look forward to the next four years, and believe that you will do your best as our President.

**Greenbriar School – Indianapolis, IN  
32 Dream Stars (5-12 years old)**

We are a diverse school. We love and respect each other in our class, and that is our hope for our country.

**Sag Harbor Elementary School – Sag Harbor, NY  
18 Dream Stars (7 years old)**

Dear President Obama,

We are very excited that you are our new President! We have many ideas to share with you. Some of our ideas:

Max and Elizabeth – "Outlaw guns to everyone except police."  
Tommy – "Stop the wars by making everyone meet and talk."  
Lily, Natalie, Leyla, Emma and Andrew – "Get lots of nails and hammers and have people volunteer to build homes for the homeless. Maybe big companies can donate materials." "Everyone should have shelter!"  
Cooper, Adam, Phoebe and Katie – "Save endangered animals and make poaching and hunting illegal." "Save our polar bears and whales."  
Harlan – "Stop global warming, use more electric cars and stop pollution."  
Sarah – "Give everyone a good education, give schools more money especially in Africa, and give everyone in the world a chance to have a good life."  
Caroline, Mark – "Prices need to go lower!" "Lower gas prices."  
Carl – "Make it a law to recycle"  
Ava – "We need peace any way you can get it."

Mrs. Collum's Second Grade

**Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School – St. Louis, MO  
18 Dream Stars (7-8 years old)**

Mr. Obama, here are some of the wishes Mr. Horwitz's class wants to share with you...  
That there will be peace.  
That there will be no pollution.  
That more people can get a job so that they can get more money, so that they can take care of their family.  
That you will be a good president.  
That you will help everyone in the world.  
That St. Louis will be a good city to live in.

**Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School, 3rd Grade Mrs. Bender – St. Louis, MO  
17 Dream Stars (7-9 years old)**

Dear Mr. Obama,

We are in a crisis. So on January 20th could you change that by helping our economy and lowering gas and food prices because you said that you would help the middle class families. So could you please help us?

I wish we could find a cure for cancer.

I wish we could cure diabetes.

I wish there was less crime.

And can you help homeless people?

I wish people wouldn't cut trees down and pollute the air and litter.

I wish people would care more about animals and that there were more animal shelters.

I wish people could get a better education.

I wish people would respect every person even if their religion is different.

I wish there would be no more war so the world would be peaceful.

I would like to be president someday, too.

Thank you and best wishes, The Third Grade MICDS Students

**Northaven Elementary School – Memphis, TN**  
**203 Dream Stars (7-11 years old)**

Northaven is a Title 1 school in Memphis, TN. The excitement of the students here has been high with the win of Barack Obama. So too are the expectations for change.

Like other children, students at Northaven may dream of making it to the NBA, becoming a teacher or doctor. Some of those dreams seem very far away for them. But their hope has been rekindled with your election, Mr. Obama. Our students dream that you will help "blacks and whites of America come together and be friends," that you will "help people be safe and reduce crime," "help homeless and poor people," and that you will "help schools so kids can learn."