



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 2004

I send greetings to all those observing National Employ Older Workers Week, September 19-25, 2004.

The times in which we work and live are changing dramatically. Today, workers change jobs many times during their lives, and this changed world can be a time of opportunity. Millions of older Americans are choosing to stay active and remain in the workforce. Their insight, knowledge, and experiences contribute to the success of our Nation's economy and inspire a rising generation of workers.

My Administration is committed to supporting these individuals and ensuring that everyone who wants a job can find one. We also are taking action to make sure our workers of all ages are trained in the skills needed to compete in a changing economy. I have proposed the Jobs for the 21st Century initiative, a more than \$500 million commitment to new, innovative education and job training programs, including \$250 million for training partnerships between community colleges and local employers. These community-based job training grants build on the success of my High Growth Job Training Initiative, which has provided \$92 million since 2002 for public-private partnerships that train workers for jobs that are in demand. By offering opportunities for our citizens to gain new skills, we can help our workers fill the jobs of the 21st century and realize the promise of America.

I commend the Department of Labor, State and local governments, faith-based and community organizations, and all who encourage and celebrate the participation of older Americans in the workforce. Your efforts emphasize our commitment to our older citizens and reflect the true spirit of our Nation.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Laura Bush", written in a cursive style.