

*Remarks for the  
Governor's Initiative on Volunteer  
Excellence (GIVE) Ceremony  
March 27, 2002*

Marsha, thank you. It is great to be here with you today, and I'm proud of the work each of you do for communities around our state.

Governor Winter, on behalf of the people of Mississippi, let me thank you for service to our state. Your commitment to education, to racial reconciliation, and to the growth of Mississippi has set a high standard for others to follow.

And to the others being honored here today – Jimmy Williams, Mayor Samuel Rikard, Philip Wright, Lavelle and Pat Woodrick, Noel Guthrie, the Southern Eye Center and Orange Lake Elementary Breakfast Club – congratulations to you. Please accept my special thanks for the time and energy you give.

I was looking over the brochure for this conference, and the focus is right on target – “Investing in Mississippi’s Future: Together We Can Do It!”

Listen to the key words – *invest; future; together.*

We must invest in our state and our people to make the most of our potential. During a national recession, we've created more than 21,000 new jobs and attracted over \$6 billion in new investments to the state.

We made it in the top ten of *Site Selection* magazine's "Governor's Cup" awards – a testament to the work we're doing to build Mississippi.

I stress this again – we’re doing this in the midst of a national recession, and we’re doing it because we’re investing.

Now, we have to keep those investments strong. This is not the time to cut our funding for programs like the Mississippi Development Authority or workforce training for our people.

More than ever, we should be putting money into areas where we know we can get a strong return. Let’s invest in our people today to build a better tomorrow.

The work we're doing now – *together* – is so important to the work we'll be doing in the years to come.

I want to thank you for the work you do as volunteers and as leaders in volunteer organizations. The time and the effort you give to our people and our communities will be realized in the success of the next generation, and in their commitment to the generation after them.

The work we do now is the message we send to those future generations, and the message is strengthened through your volunteerism.

It's been said that "success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go."

I tell you this – we aren't letting go. There are too many opportunities out there, and too many opportunities for us to create, to ever think about letting go.

Believing “I must do something” solves more problems than saying “something must be done.”

You won't hear us say, “something must be done.” We live in America's state of promise. It is a promise too long unkept. That has changed.

In ancient Greece, the young men of Athens took an oath when they reached the age of seventeen. The last lines of the Athenian Oath reflect our common theme:

“We will strive increasingly to quicken the public’s sense of civic duty. Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.”

Let’s invest in Mississippi’s future today, together – and build a Mississippi “greater and more beautiful” than we could imagine.