

Metro Civitan Club
Wednesday, April 19, 2000
11:45 a.m.
Hudgey's Restaurant

Thank you for the invitation to speak with you today.

I have several items that I would like to speak with you about and we don't have much time, so I will get started.

Item 1

As some of you may know, I recently returned from Spain where a delegation of Mississippians finalized plans to bring the Majesty of Spain exhibit to Mississippi on March 1, 2001. This is unprecedented for several reasons. Number one, this is the first time the country of Spain has allowed any of its treasured pieces leave its borders. Number two, Mississippi is

the only state that will have the pleasure of exhibiting this work. This is a fantastic coup for our state. This is a great opportunity for our tourism industry and can enhance the image and economic development efforts.

The exhibit will be open to the public beginning on March 1, 2001 and will be on display during the months of March, April and May of 2001. I hope that you will take this great opportunity to tour this wonderful display.

We will also be visited by the King and Queen of Spain, which is another first for us.

Item 2

I believe that it is never too early to teach leadership skills through volunteer service, that is why I have recently taken on the responsibility of being the spokesperson for the State of Mississippi's President's Student Service Challenge Scholarship Program.

I was asked to serve as the spokesperson for this program and after I reviewed what great opportunities it provides for the students of Mississippi, I could only say yes, with great enthusiasm.

This program provides an opportunity for high schools to make available a \$1,000 scholarship to students who perform outstanding service to the community. It also recognizes all students who serve 100 hours or more. All students, parents, teachers, principals and superintendents must be made aware that this program exists and this year the program can provide \$1,000 educational scholarships to more than 40 junior or senior high school students across the state of Mississippi.

What does it take to qualify for the President's Student Service Challenge scholarships? Applicants

must have completed 100 hours of service in the past twelve months.

And why 100 hours? You may ask.

Research indicates that students benefit much more from sustained service activities than one-time service projects. The 100-hour award level was established to encourage ongoing community service by youth. The types of service, which are considered for the scholarship, are varied and can include service with community or religious organizations, service through school-or community-based service-learning projects and individual efforts to help others and improve the local community.

Letters, giving details about the program, have been mailed to principals, counselors and superintendents across the state. I encourage you to ask them for details. This is an opportunity that Mississippi students should be taking advantage of and a program that I enthusiastically endorse.

Item 3

You have probably read in the newspaper or seen on television something about the Governor's goal to raise Mississippi teachers' pay to the Southeastern average. I support his efforts in that area 100%. Not just because I am his wife, but because I am a former school teacher.

We must pay our teachers competitive salaries in order to recruit good students into the teaching profession and keep them in the teaching profession in the State of Mississippi.

(Insert personal story)

Item 4

I have made it one of my goals to help improve literacy in the State of Mississippi while I am in the role of First Lady for our state.

I chose this issue because it is so dear to my heart and because I feel like I can help to make a difference.

(Insert personal story from teaching reading.)

Within the next few months we will be unveiling a

program that we believe will make a difference in the area of improving literacy and I know that we will need your help in doing so. I hope that you will step forward and help me help Mississippi.

I thank you again for allowing me to share some time with you. It has been a pleasure.