President Obama Talks College Affordability at the University of Buffalo

On Thursday, the President delivered remarks at the University at Buffalo, the State University of New York. The President discussed the importance of ensuring that every American has the opportunity to achieve a quality education by reducing cost and improving the value of higher education for middle class students and their families.

The President stressed the importance of making college affordable for every American family:

“The system’s current trajectory is not sustainable. And what that means is state legislatures are going to have to step up. They can't just keep cutting support for public colleges and universities. That's just the truth. Colleges are not going to be able to just keep on increasing tuition year after year, and then passing it on to students and families and taxpayers.

“Our economy can't afford the trillion dollars in outstanding student loan debt, much of which may not get repaid because students don't have the capacity to pay it. We can't price the middle class and everybody working to get into the middle class out of a college education. We're going to have to do things differently. We can't go about business as usual.”

President Obama outlined an ambitious new agenda to combat rising college costs and make college affordable for American families.

His plan will measure college performance through a new ratings system so students and families have the information to select schools that provide the best value. And after this ratings system is well established, Congress can tie federal student aid to college performance so that students maximize their federal aid at institutions providing the best value.
DNC Fall Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona

The DNC held its Fall Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona this week. At the meeting, DNC members discussed ways to support President Obama and the Democratic Party’s agenda that focuses on the middle class.

This meeting was also an opportunity for Democrats from across the country to come together and discuss ways to continue building our organization and our brand in all 50 states. The DNC continues to make investments in state parties throughout the country to make sure we are electing strong Democrats at the state, local, and federal level.

The choice of Arizona for our Fall Meeting is a signal of the DNC’s commitment to the state.

In an Arizona Capitol Times Op-ED, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz said that Democrats’ agenda will resonate with Arizona voters in 2014 and beyond.

“But it’s not just the demographics that are making Arizona a more competitive state. Democrats are going to do well in the Grand Canyon State this year and beyond because we simply have an agenda that better resonates with Arizonans concerned about the health of the economy, who want immigration reform driven by common sense, and who believe in the virtues of having a thriving middle class.

“At the same time, Republican extremism continues to alienate the people of this state. With their so called ‘Autopsy’ report, the leaders of the GOP made a show of their intention to change a set of policy positions that are increasingly out of step with mainstream American views.

“As part of that makeover, Republicans vowed to soften their hardline stance on immigration. But earlier this month, when the Republican National Committee had its own meetings, members voted to reject a pathway to citizenship, which was a crucial element of the reform package that passed the U.S. Senate this summer with bipartisan support.”

Read the rest of the Chair’s Op-Ed Here.
First Family Welcomes New Puppy to White House

On Monday, the Obamas welcomed the newest member of their family—a puppy named Sunny.

Sunny is from Michigan and was born in June 2012. Just like the Obama’s other dog Bo, she’s a Portuguese Water Dog. The breed is great for the Obamas because of allergies in their family.

In honor of welcoming Sunny home, the Obamas made a donation to the Washington Humane Society.

President Obama Honors 1972 Super Bowl Champion Miami Dolphins at the White House

On Tuesday, President Obama welcomed the undefeated 1972 Super Bowl Champion Miami Dolphins to the White House for the first White House ceremony honoring their historic season.

After finishing the season undefeated and winning the Super Bowl, the 1972 Miami Dolphins never got the traditional visit to the White House after winning a major championship.

President Obama paid tribute to the 1972 Dolphins and their achievements on and off the field.

“Nobody can argue with this record. Nobody can argue with what all of you have gone on to do after you hung up the shoulder pads for the last time. Players from this team have gone on to become a minister, a mayor, a doctor, a state senator, a high school counselor, many successful businessmen. Nick Buoniconti helped found the world’s most comprehensive spinal cord research center. Some have dabbled in acting. I hear somebody serves up a pretty good T-bone as well,” President Obama said.

“So these are all men of accomplishment and character, and it showed on the field and off the field as well. We want to congratulate all of them, and we want to make sure that they’re remembered for not only the history that sports fans will always remember, but also for all the countless contributions that they’ve made in their community as well.”

The 1972 Miami Dolphins went 14–0 and won Super Bowl VII.
President Obama Discusses Reducing Cost and Improving Value of a College Education in Syracuse

On Thursday, President Obama delivered remarks at Henninger High School in Syracuse, New York.

The President discussed the importance of ensuring that every American has the opportunity to achieve a quality education by reducing cost and improving the value of higher education for middle-class students and their families.

President Obama stressed the importance of increasing the value of a college education and making sure students and families understand what they’re paying for when they pay for a college education.

“If we move forward on these three points -- increasing value, making sure that young people and their parents know what they’re getting when they go to college; encouraging innovation so that more colleges are giving better value; and then helping people responsibly manage their debt -- then we’re going to help more students afford college. We’re going to help more students graduate from college. We’ll help more students get rid of their debt so they can get started on their lives.”

The President’s plan will also take down barriers that stand in the way of competition and innovation, particularly in the use of new technology, and shine a light on the most cutting-edge college practices for providing high value at low costs.

And to help student borrowers struggling with their existing debt, the President is committed to ensuring that all borrowers who need it can have access to the Pay As You Earn plan that caps loan payments at 10 percent of income and is directing the Department of Education to ramp up its efforts to reach out to students struggling with their loans to make sure they know and understand all their repayment options.

President Obama Participates in Town Hall at Binghamton University

On Friday, President Obama will participate in a town hall event at Binghamton University, the State University of New York.

The President laid out a plan to make college more affordable, tackle rising costs, and improve value for students and their families.

To create a better bargain for the middle class, President Obama stressed that we have to fundamentally rethink how higher education is paid for in this country.

“Bottom line is we need to stop taking the same business-as-usual approach when it comes to college education. Not all the reforms that we’re proposing are going to be popular. There are some who are benefitting from the status quo. There will be some resistance.

“There’s going to have to be a broad-based conversation, but part of our goal here is to stir a conversation because the current path that we’re on is unsustainable. And it’s my basic belief and I suspect the belief of most people here, higher education shouldn’t be a luxury. It’s an economic necessity in this knowledge-based economy. And we want to make sure that every family in America can afford it.”

The federal government provides over $150 billion each year in student financial aid, while states collectively invest over $70 billion in public colleges and universities.

Almost all of these resources are allocated among colleges based on the number of students who enroll, not the number who earn degrees or what they learn. President Obama’s plan will connect student aid to outcomes, which will in turn drive a better, more affordable education for all students.