

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

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President Obama: Our Thoughts and Prayers are with Oklahoma

On Wednesday, President Obama delivered remarks on the devastation in Oklahoma earlier in the week. The President offered his prayers for the victims, their families, and all those affected by the destruction.

President Obama emphasized that a coordinated response effort is already underway in Oklahoma and assured the people of Moore and all the impacted areas that they "would have all the resources that they need at their disposal."



The President said:

"For there are homes and schools to rebuild, businesses and hospitals to reopen, there are parents to console, first responders to comfort, and, of course, frightened children who will need our continued love and attention. There are empty spaces where there used to be living rooms, and bedrooms, and classrooms, and, in time, we're going to need to refill those spaces with love and laughter and community."

President Obama continues to direct his team to provide all available resources to support state and local partners leading the response and continues to receive updates on the situation on the ground. More than 400 federal personnel remain on the scene in the Oklahoma City area, including teams that are working directly with families and individuals who were affected by the tornadoes.

Watch President Obama's remarks [here](#).

President Obama Delivers Remarks on US Counterterrorism Efforts

On Thursday, President Obama laid out the framework for U.S. counterterrorism strategy as we wind down the war in Afghanistan in a speech at National Defense University.

The President explained how the threat of terrorism has changed substantially since September 11, 2011, and discussed his comprehensive strategy to meet these threats.

President Obama said:

"Today, Osama bin Laden is dead, and so are most of his top lieutenants. There have been no large-scale attacks on the United States, and our homeland is more secure. Fewer of our troops are in harm's way, and over the next 19 months they will continue to come home. Our alliances are strong, and so is our standing in the world. In sum, we are safer because of our efforts.



"Now, make no mistake, our nation is still threatened by terrorists. From Benghazi to Boston, we have been tragically reminded of that truth. But we have to recognize that the threat has shifted and evolved from the one that came to our shores on 9/11. With a decade of experience now to draw from, this is the moment to ask ourselves hard questions -- about the nature of today's threats and how we should confront them."

The President spoke of the strong and resilient spirit of the American people, saying "That's who the American people are -- determined, and not to be messed with. And now we need a strategy and a politics that reflects this resilient spirit."

The President said:

"Our victory against terrorism won't be measured in a surrender ceremony at a battleship, or a statue being pulled to the ground. Victory will be measured in parents taking their kids to school; immigrants coming to our shores; fans taking in a ballgame; a veteran starting a business; a bustling city street; a citizen shouting her concerns at a President.

"The quiet determination; that strength of character and bond of fellowship; that refutation of fear -- that is both our sword and our shield. And long after the current messengers of hate have faded from the world's memory, alongside the brutal despots, and deranged madmen, and ruthless demagogues who litter history -- the flag of the United States will still wave from small-town cemeteries to national monuments, to distant outposts abroad. And that flag will still stand for freedom."

Read the President's full remarks [here](#).

President Obama and Vice President Biden Meet with DREAMers

On Tuesday, President Obama and Vice President Biden hosted DREAMERS – young immigrants – for a meeting in the Oval Office.

The meeting, which also included the siblings and spouses of undocumented immigrants, provided an important opportunity for the President and Vice President to hear directly from people whose families are affected by our nation's broken immigration system.

President Obama and Vice President Biden were moved by the DREAMers' powerful stories. The young people

spoke about how the deferred action improved their lives while also stressing that they and their families continue to require a permanent solution in order for them to be able to wholly contribute to the country they call home.

The President reaffirmed his commitment to passing commonsense immigration reform this year. He reminded the DREAMers and other attendees that while the current bill is not perfect, it does represent an important step forward towards. Both the President and Vice President thanked the DREAMers for sharing their stories and encouraged them to continue to do as, as they play an important role in the immigration debate.



President Obama Welcomes Myanmar President to the White House



On Monday, President Obama hosted a bilateral meeting with President Thein Sein of Myanmar. The meeting offered an opportunity for the two leaders to continue to build their relationship after President Obama's historic trip last November as the first-ever sitting U.S. president to visit Myanmar.

The President said that in the months since his trip to Myanmar, "there have been significant bilateral tensions between our countries. But what has allowed this shift in relations is the leadership that President Sein has shown in moving Myanmar down a path of both political and economic reform."

President Obama said:

"But as President Sein is the first to admit, this is a long journey and there is still much work to be done. And during our discussions, President Sein shared with me the fact -- the manner in which he intends to continue to move forward on releasing more political prisoners; making sure that the government of Myanmar institutionalizes some of the political reforms that have already taken place; how rule of law is codified so that it continues into the future; and the process whereby these ethnic conflicts that have existed are resolved not simply by a ceasefire but an actual incorporation of all these communities into the political process."

Read President Obama's full remarks [here](#).

[Dr. Jill Biden Congratulates Graduates of Navajo Technical College](#)



Last Friday, Dr. Jill Biden delivered the commencement address at Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint, New Mexico. Dr. Biden addressed the 33rd graduating class of Navajo Technical College, one of two tribal colleges serving the Navajo Nation. The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program recently recognized the college for the second consecutive year as being one of the nation's top 120 community colleges, in part because of its graduation rate of nearly 80 percent.

On Wednesday, Dr. Biden reflected on her visit to the college in a post on the White House blog.

Dr. Biden wrote:

"As a community college teacher, I love seeing what a tremendous difference a community like the one I saw at Navajo Tech can make in the lives of its students.

"The impressive class of graduates included veterans like Jerrilene Kenneth, who served in Iraq and Afghanistan as an Army mechanic, before she became the first college graduate in her family with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. It also included Navajo Tech Student of the Year Sherwin Becenti, who dropped out of college more than ten years ago but returned to school in order to build a better life for his family and set a good example for his children. Dwight Carlston, who grew up with no running water or electricity, was also among the graduates. Dwight maintained a 3.8 grade point average, ran cross country, served as Student Senate President and was recently elected as the Student Congress president of all 38 tribal colleges.

"The Class of 2013 also marked a key milestone for Navajo Tech itself as they celebrated their first student to graduate with a Baccalaureate Degree. Dody Begay received his Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology-Computer Science – a path many other students are now planning to follow.

"It is thanks to students like Jerrilene, Sherwin, Dwight, and Dody, and their dedicated faculty and administrators, that for the second year in a row Navajo Tech was recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the top 120 community colleges in the United States. It was the only TCU and the only college in New Mexico to receive this distinction."

Read Dr. Biden's full blog post [here](#)

President Obama Addresses Graduates of Morehouse College

On Sunday, President Obama delivered the commencement address at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

President Obama recounted Morehouse's storied history, and spoke about the "unique sense of purpose that this place has always infused -- the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world."

The President told the graduates, "Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any generation of African Americans that came before it."

President Obama said:

"My job, as President, is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody -- policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class. Policies that



create more good jobs and reduce poverty, and educate more children, and give more families the security of health care, and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. That's my job. Those are matters of public policy, and it is important for all of us -- black, white and brown -- to advocate for an America where everybody has got a fair shot in life. Not just some. Not just a few."

Watch President Obama's full address [here](#).



New DNC Web Video: Meet Virginia's Extreme Dream Team

On Thursday, the DNC released a new video highlighting the anti-women, anti-gay candidates the GOP chose for the governor's race in Virginia.

After just a few days of travelling around the state, it's become abundantly clear the Republican ticket of Ken Cuccinelli and E.W. Jackson are way outside the mainstream of Virginia's values. On social issues like women's health and gay rights, E.W. Jackson has taken positions that would be harmful to his fellow citizens and used rhetoric that is offensive, demonizing, and dangerous. In response to Jackson's comments Ken Cuccinelli has called Jackson a "powerful voice" and said "I'm glad he's on this ticket." Cuccinelli and Jackson were cut from the same extreme right-wing cloth. They are Virginia's Extreme Dream Team.

http://www.democrats.org/news/blog/more_anti_women_anti_gay_gop_candidates