

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 18, 2004

I send greetings to those gathered for the Second Annual Heroes of History Lecture and Idea of America Essay Contest Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to the 2004 essay winners as you are recognized for your essays exploring the evolution of our freedom and democracy.

Our Founders believed that the study of history and citizenship should be at the core of every American's education. By remembering the past, we honor their vision and affirm our commitment to advancing the ideals that make our country strong. My Administration is working to encourage students to learn more about American history, increase their civic involvement, and deepen their love for our great country.

This year's essay winners are helping to preserve President Lincoln's legacy of leadership, and I hope that you will continue to work hard to achieve your dreams. I also applaud your parents and teachers for their guidance and support.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes on this special occasion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George W. Bush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline.