

A Call to Serve

Quotes on
Public Service



Compiled by:
Marc Holzer &
Brandon Roberts

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Introduction

We are all public servants at some point in our lives: employees of government and not-for-profits, elected officials, members of boards and community organizations, volunteers, philanthropists, etc. The purpose of this book is to emphasize the concepts of civic engagement and the common good, to foster an understanding of the spirit of service already evident among many citizens, and to suggest a broad array of pathways to public service.

Public service attracts a special kind of individual and is often based on a sense

of duty or an intense inner commitment to a cause that extends beyond the pressures of the moment. Public servants achieve internal satisfaction by making a contribution to a society as opposed to a commitment to achieving only personal goals. Those who enter public service do so out of a desire to serve the public interest and link themselves to the larger community.

Public Service embodies the ethical principles of the common good, service to others and social equity. Public Service is important because the essential components of our society are largely carried out

in the public sphere: public education, public health, justice and security, environmental protection, museums and the arts, etc. We hope the quotes contained in this volume inspire, encourage and draw more of our fellow citizens to public service.



A Call to Serve



And so, my fellow Americans,
ask not what your country
can do for you; ask what you can
do for your country.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

35th President of the United States of
America



Never doubt that a small group
of thoughtful committed citizens
can change the world;
indeed, it's the only thing that
ever has.

MARGARET MEAD

American Cultural anthropologist

I can assure you, public service is
a stimulating, proud and lively
enterprise. It is not just a way
of life, it is a way to live fully. Its
greatest attraction is the sheer
challenge of it –struggling to find
solutions to the great issues of the
day. It can fulfill your highest
aspirations. The call to service is
one of the highest callings you
will hear and your country can
make.

LEE H. HAMILTON

Chairman of 9/11 Commission

Service to others is the payment
you make for your space
here on earth.

MOHAMMAD ALI
World Champion Boxer



We are all called to serve
as long as we call ourselves free.

TOM RIDGE
Former governor of Pennsylvania



We are here to add what we
can to, not to get what we can
from, life.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER
Physician and Professor

I shall pass through this
world but once. Any good
therefore that I can do or any
kindness that I can show to any
human being, let me do it now.
Let me not defer or neglect it,
for I shall not pass this way

again.
MAHATMA GHANDI
Global Humanitarian



The vocation of every man
and woman is to serve other
people.

LEO TOLSTOY
(1828-1910) *What Is To Be Done*

This is man's highest end,
to others' service, all his
powers to bend.

SOPHOCLES
Greek Playwright



There is no greater calling
than to serve your fellow men.

There is no greater
contribution than to help the
weak. There is no greater
satisfaction than
to have done it well.

WALTER REUTHER
American Labor Union Leader

Citizen service is the very
American idea that we meet our
challenges not as isolated
individuals but as members of a
true community, with all of us
working together. Our mission is
nothing less than to spark
a renewed sense of obligation, a
new sense of duty, a new season
of service.

BILL CLINTON
42nd President of the United States of
America

I was taught that the world had a lot of problems; that I could struggle and change them; that intellectual and material gifts brought the privilege and responsibility of sharing with others less fortunate; and that service is the rent each of us pays for living, the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time or after you have reached your personal goals.

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN
Founder and President of
the Children's defense Fund

What made you choose this career is what made me go into politics – a chance to serve, to make a difference. It is not just a job. It is a vocation.

TONY BLAIR
Former Prime Minister of United Kingdom



Do nothing – Or, take history into our own hands and like few generations are given the chance, bend it, bend it, in the service of a better day.

JOE BIDEN
47th Vice President of the United States of
America at Syracuse University

Only a life lived for others
is a life worthwhile.

ALBERT EINSTEIN
German Theoretical Physicist



There is no higher religion
than human service. To work
for the common good is the
greatest creed.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER
French-German Philosopher & Humanitarian



The people who were trying to make
this world worse are
not taking the day off. Why
should I?

BOB MARLEY
Jamaican Musician, & Songwriter

Don't just work hard at your
job; work hard at everything.
Work hard at being a friend.

Work hard at being a partner, at
being a son or a daughter, at
being a grandchild, at being a
steward in your community, at
caring about people who have
never had a day like the one
you're having today.

JAKE TAPPER
Journalist & Anchor

The service we render to others is really the rent we pay for our room on this earth. It is obvious that man is himself a traveler; that the purpose of the world is not 'to have and to hold' but 'to give and to serve.'

SIR WILDRED T. GRENFELL
Medical Missionary
to Newfoundland and Labrador



Every life speaks to the power of what can be done.

OPRAH WINFREY
Talk Show Host

I came here to deliver a call to service. Maybe I should do less talking and more listening. This law school, this community is deeply committed to serving others, to expanding access to legal services, and to use the law to help the underdog and carve out a more equitable, in our march towards equality and an equality society.

MARTIN J. WALSH
Mayor of Boston

I think there's no higher calling in terms of a career than public service, which is a chance to make a difference in people's lives and improve the world.

JACK LEW
76th U.S. Secretary of the Treasury



“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

JAMES BALDWIN
American Author & Playwright

Humanity needs practical men, who get the most out of their work, and, without forgetting the general good, safeguard their own interests. Humanity also needs dreamers, for whom the disinterested development of an enterprise is so captivating that it becomes impossible for them to devote their care to their own material profit.

MARIE CURIE
French-Polish Physicist



Make defending truth and a free society a core value of your life every single day.

HILLARY R. CLINTON
Former Secretary of State

The greatest bit of luck [was] having the good fortune to realize before I was too old to something really useful with my money - that trying to give back to society and trying to make the world a slightly better place was a better use of money than buying more homes, and boats, and planes, and artwork.

DAVID RUBENSTEIN
American Financier &
Philanthropist



Make defending truth and a free society a core value of your life every single day.

HILLARY R. CLINTON
Former Secretary of State

My pitch is for something different - it's to get more directly involved in the democracy of policy... Advocacy - getting involved in issues you care about and fighting for them - can reshape our country, and I guarantee it will reshape you.

ELIZABETH WARREN
U.S. Senator

Compassion



Summon your compassion, your curiosity, your empathy towards others and your commitment to service. Give more than you receive and I promise you, it will come back to you in ways you can't possibly imagine.

HOWARD SCHULTZ

American Businessman & Executive Chairman of
Starbucks



Whatever you do in your life, and whatever we do at Apple, we must infuse it with the humanity that each of us is born with. That responsibility is immense, but so is the opportunity.

TIM COOK
CEO of Apple

The moral test of a society
is how that society treats those who
are in the dawn of life. the
children; those who are in the
twilight of life. the elderly;
and those who are in the shadow of
life; the sick, the needy
and the handicapped.

HUBERT HUMPHREY

38th Vice President of the United States of
America



What do we live for if not to make
life less difficult for each
other?

GEORGE ELIOT

English Novelist

Let us not be satisfied with
just giving money. Money is not
enough. Money can be got, but
others need your heart to love
them. So, spread love
everywhere you go.

MOTHER TERESA

Global Humanitarian



The miracle is this – the
more we share, the more we
have.

LEONARD NIMOY

Actor, "Star trek" Series

Those who bring sunshine
to the lives of others cannot
keep it from themselves.

SIR JAMES M. BARRIE
Scottish Author and Dramatist



Volunteers are the only
human beings on the face
of the earth who reflect this
nation's compassion, unselfish
caring, patience, and just plain
love for one another.

ERMA BOMBECK
Novelist, Columnist

How far you go in life
depends on your being tender
with the young, compassionate
with the aged, sympathetic with
the striving and tolerant of the
weak and strong.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER
American Scientist, Educator and
Inventor



It is important to engage those
we serve, but often we do
an adequate job of ministering
to the poor, but not with the
poor.

ANONYMOUS

I have been the recipient of love and service; therefore I can love and serve. There is great satisfaction in service to others, in seeing people and their conditions change.

CLARENCE E. HODGES

Former US Commissioner for the Administration of Children, Youth, and Families



Living is the art of loving. Loving is the art of caring. Caring is the art of sharing. Sharing is the art of living. If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

American Educator, Orator,
and Author

Perhaps we can bring the day when children will learn from their earliest days that being fully man and fully woman means to give one's life to the liberation of the brother who suffers.

CESAR CHAVEZ

Labor & Civil Rights Activist, Co-Founder of the National Farm Workers Association



To stir the masses, to appeal to their higher, better selves, to set them thinking for themselves, and to hold ever before them the ideal of mutual kindness and good will, based upon mutual interests, is to render real service to the cause of humanity.

EUGENE V. DEBS

American Union Leader

Motivation to Serve



What motivated me to
dedicate myself to public service
for nearly two-thirds of my life
was the chance to produce results
for those people who entrusted
me to be their voice and their
champion.

OLYMPIA SNOWE
U.S. Senator



Public service is a noble calling,
and we need men and women of
character to believe that they can
make a difference in their
communities, in their states, and
in their country.

GEORGE H. W. BUSH
41st President of the United States of
America

Act as if what you do
makes a difference. It does.

WILLIAM JAMES

American Psychologist and Philosopher



Everyone can be great
because anyone can serve. You don't
have to have a college degree to serve.

You don't even have to make your
subject and your verb agree to serve. . .

You only need a heart full of grace. A
soul generated by love. . .

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

African American Civil Rights Leader;
Pastor, Ebenezer Baptist Church

The only thing necessary
for the triumph of evil is for
good men to do nothing.

EDMUND BURKE

British Statesman and Orator



I don't know what your
destiny will be, but one thing I
know: the only ones among you
who will be really happy are
those who have sought and
found how to serve.

ALBERT SCHWELTZER

Author and Journalist
The Ethics of Reverence for Life

The world will little note, nor
long remember what
we say here, but it can never forget
what they did here. It is for us the
living, rather, to be dedicated here
to the unfinished work which they
who fought here have thus far so
nobly advanced. It is rather for us
to be here dedicated to the great
task remaining before us – that
from these honored dead we take
increased devotion to that cause
for which they gave the last full
measure of devotion – that we

here highly resolve that
these dead shall not have died in
vain – that this nation, under
God, shall have a new birth of
freedom – and that government
of the people, by the people, for
the people, shall not
perish from the earth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
16th President of the United States of
America



The highest of distinctions
is service to others.

KING GEORGE VI

Insist that we support the
sciences and the arts, especially the
arts. They have nothing to do with
the defense of the country;
they just make the country
worth defending.

KEN BURNS
Documentary Filmmaker



It is better to light one small
candle than to curse the darkness.

CONFUCIUS
Chinese Thinker and Social Philosopher

I was having a better time at
my job than were those of
my peers who had opted for
private practice. Life as a
public servant was more
interesting. The work was
more challenging. The
encouragement and guidance
from good mentors was more
genuine. And the opportunities
to take initiative and to see real
results were more frequent.

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR
Supreme Court Justice

Yes, our greatness as a nation has depended on individual initiative, on a belief in the free market. But it has also depended on our sense of mutual regard for each other, of mutual responsibility. The idea that everybody has a stake in the country, that we're all in it together and everybody's got a shot at opportunity. Americans know this. We know that government can't solve all our problems – and we don't want it to. But we also know that

there are some things we can't do on our own. We know that there are some things we do better together.

BARACK OBAMA

44th President of the United States of America



The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

American Essayist, Philosopher, and Poet

I am of the opinion that my life
belongs to the community, and
as long as I live it is my privilege
to do for it whatever I can.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Irish Playwright



The time is always right
to do right.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
African American Civil Rights Leader;
Pastor, Ebenezer Baptist Church



Let the public service be a proud
and lively career.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

35th President of the United States of
America

I always wondered why
somebody didn't do something
about that. Then I realized I was
somebody.

LILY TOMLIN

American Actress, Comedian, Writer



[Having met Apple co-founder
Steve Jobs,] I had never
met a leader with such passion
or encountered a company with
such a clear and compelling
purpose: to serve humanity.

TIM COOK

American Business Executive, Industrial
Engineer, and Developer

Careers focused on lifting up
our communities –
whether it's helping transform
troubled schools or creating
after-school programs or training
workers for green jobs. These
careers are not always obvious,
but today they are necessary.

MICHELLE OBAMA
Former First Lady of the United States of
America



The people who were
trying to make this world
worse are not taking the day off.

Why should I?
BOB MARLEY
Jamaican Musician, & Songwriter

Public service comes in
many forms. It starts wherever you are
and whatever you're doing, no matter
how humble your first job or your
second job or your third job is. If you
give yourself to serve others, you will
have an impact. You will move in the
direction of your dreams.

MARTIN J. WALSH
Mayor of Boston



I believe we are here on the planet
Earth to live, grow up and do what
we can to make this world
a better place for all people to enjoy
freedom.

ROSA PARKS
Civil Rights Activist

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end, each of us must work for our own improvement and, at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think can be most useful.

MARIE CURIE
French-Polish Physicist



Man's greatness consists in his ability to do and the proper application of his powers to things needed to be done.

FREDERICK DOUGLAS
Social Reformer, Abolitionist, Writer

Help others and give something back. I guarantee you will discover that while public service improves lives and the world around you, its greatest reward is the enrichment and new meaning it will bring your own life.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Actor & Politician



I can assure you, public service is a stimulating, proud and lively enterprise. It is not just a way of life, it is a way to live fully.

LEE H. HAMILTON
Former U.S. Congressman

When you become detached mentally from yourself and concentrate on helping other people with their difficulties, you will be able to cope with your own more effectively.

Somehow, the act of self-giving is a personal power-releasing factor.

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE
Minister & Author



Man's greatness consists in his ability to do and the proper application of his powers to things needed to be done.

FREDERICK DOUGLAS
Social Reformer, Abolitionist, Writer

Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others.

ROSA PARKS
Civil Rights Activist



The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to *change* it.

KARL MAX
Philosopher, Economist, Journalist,
& Political Theorist



“When I liberate others, I liberate myself.”

FANNIE LOU HAMER
Civil Rights Activist & Philanthropist

Quality of Life



Better the occasional faults of a
Government that lives in a spirit of
charity than the consistent
omissions of a Government frozen
in the ice of its own indifference.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
32nd President of the United States of
America



The progress of the world will call
for the best that all of
us have to give.

MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE
Educator & Civil Rights Activist

Without community service, we
would not have a strong
quality of life. It's important to the
person who serves as well as the
recipient. It's the way in which we
ourselves grow and develop.

DR. DOROTHY I. HEIGHT

President and CEO of the National Council of
Negro Women



The care of human life and
happiness is the first and only
legitimate objective
of good government.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

3rd President of the United States of
America

The magnitude of our social
problems will require that
all citizens and institutions make
a commitment to volunteering
as a way of life and as a
primary opportunity
to create needed change.

GEORGE ROMNEY

Former Michigan Governor



Those who are happiest are
those who do the most for others.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

American Educator & Author

Never before has man had such a great capacity to control his own environment, to end hunger, poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and human misery. We have the power to make the best generation of mankind in the history of the world.

JOHN F. KENNEDY
35th President of the United States of America

I think the events of September 11th remind us that there are issues larger and more transcendent than the issues we thought they were before September 11th, things we took for granted before September 11th –the idea of progress and prosperity, the sense of our security – are now very much at risk. And as they come to be very much at risk, the imperative of service to society becomes all the more important.

LAWRENCE H. SUMMERS
Former President of Harvard University

I study politics and war that my
sons may have liberty to study
mathematics and philosophy.

My sons ought
to study mathematics and
philosophy, geography, natural
history, naval architecture,
navigation, commerce and
agriculture in order to give their
children a right to study painting,
poetry, music, architecture,
statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.

JOHN ADAMS

2nd President of the United States of
America

Consciously or
unconsciously, every one of us
does render some service or
other. If we cultivate the habit of
doing this service deliberately,
our desire for service will
steadily grow stronger, and will
make, not only our own
happiness, but that of the world
at large.

MAHATMA GANDHI
Global Humanitarian

Purpose



Remember that you are on the face of the earth for a relatively short period – a nanosecond – in the several million year span of humankind. Do not waste that precious time. Do not shrink from the responsibility of trying to make a difference. Accept that responsibility. Welcome it. Cherish it. You stand now in the docket of history, and you can make history. Try to do so. Take up this torch and run with it. You will never regret doing so.

DAVID RUBENSTEIN
American Financier, Philanthropist, & CEO
of the Carlyle Group

Giving kids clothes and food is one thing, but it's much more important to teach them that other people besides themselves are important, and that the best thing they can do with their lives is to use them in the service of

other people.
DOLORES HUERTA

Co-founder and First Vice President
Emeritus of the United Farm Workers of
America



“Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?’”

ANONYMOUS

How can we expect our children to know and experience the joy of giving unless we teach them that the greater pleasure in life lies in the art of giving rather than receiving.

JAMES CASH PENNEY
Businessman and entrepreneur;
Founder J.C. Penney stores



Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and help them become what they are capable of being.

GOETHE
German Writer

It is one of the most
beautiful compensations of this
life that no man can sincerely
try to help another without
helping himself.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON
American Essayist, Philosopher, and Poet



If I am not for myself, who
will be for me? If I am not for
others, who am I for?
And if not now, when?

RABBI HILLEL
Jewish Religious Leader

Never forget that the purpose for
which a man lives is the
improvement of the man himself,
so that he may go out of
this world having, in his great
sphere or his small one, done
some little good for his fellow
creatures and labored a little
to diminish the sin and
sorrow that are in the world.

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE
Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

When you cease to make a
contribution, you begin to die.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
Former First Lady of the United States



Doing nothing for others
is the undoing of ourselves.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
Founding Father of the United States
of America

I've met many people across
the public sector who are as
efficient and entrepreneurial
as anyone in the private
sector, but also have a sense
of public duty that is awe-
inspiring.

TONY BLAIR
Former British Prime Minister



No act of kindness, no
matter how small, is ever
wasted.

AESOP
Greek Slave and Writer

It is not the critic who counts, not
the man who points out how the
strong man stumbled,
or where the doer of deeds could
have done better. The credit
belongs to the man who is actually
in the arena, whose face is marred
by dust and sweat and blood, who
strives valiantly,
who errs and comes short again and
again, who knows the great
enthusiasms, the great devotions,
and spends himself in a worthy
cause, who at best knows
achievement and who at

the worst if he fails at least fails
while daring greatly so that his
place shall never be with those
cold and timid souls who
know neither victory nor defeat.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT
26th President of the United States of
America



We make a living by what we
do, but we make a life by what we
give.

WINSTON CHURCHILL
Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Focusing your life solely on
making a buck shows
a poverty of ambition. It asks
too little of yourself. And it
will leave you unfulfilled.

BARACK OBAMA

44th President of the United States of
America



Our prime purpose in this
life is to help others. And
if you can't help them, at
least don't hurt them.

DALAI LAMA

14th Spiritual Leader of Tibetan
Buddhism

When you do nothing, you feel
overwhelmed and powerless.
But when you get involved,
you feel the sense of
hope and accomplishment
that comes from knowing you
are working to make things
better.

PAULINE R. KEZER

Former Connecticut Secretary of State

“Now is the accepted time,
not tomorrow, not some more
convenient season. It is today
that our best work can be done
and not some future day or
future year. It is today that we
fit ourselves for the greater
usefulness of tomorrow.
Today is the seed time, now
are the hours of work, and
tomorrow comes the harvest
and the playtime.”

W.E.B. DUBOIS
Sociologist, Historian, Civil Rights
Activist

Now is the accepted time,
not tomorrow, not some more
convenient season. It is today
that our best work can be
done and not some future day
or future year. It is today that
we fit ourselves for the
greater usefulness of
tomorrow. Today is the seed
time, now are the hours of
work, and tomorrow comes
the harvest and the playtime.

DALAI LAMA
14th Spiritual Leader of Tibetan
Buddhism

Anticipate charity by preventing poverty; assist the reduced fellow man, either by a considerable gift or a sum of money or by teaching him a trade or by putting him in the way of business so that he may earn an honest livelihood and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding out his hand for charity. This is the highest step and summit of charity's golden ladder.

MAIMONIDES
Philosopher

We understand the great arc of human history bends towards people coming together in ever greater numbers — from tribes to cities to nations — to achieve things we couldn't on our own.

MARK ZUCKERBERG
Co-Founder & CEO of Facebook

Ethics



Earn your success based on
service to others, not at the
expense of others.

H. JACKSON BROWN, JR.
American Author



Public service must be more
than doing a job efficiently and
honestly. It must be a complete
dedication to the people and to
the nation.

MARGARET CHASE SMITH
U.S. Senator, U.S. Congresswoman

Try not to become a man of
success but rather try
to become a man of value.

ALBERT EINSTEIN
Theoretical Physicist



A man is truly ethical only
when he obeys the compulsion
to help all life which he is able
to assist, and shrinks from
injuring anything that lives.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER
German-French Theologian, Musician,
Philosopher, and Physician

Nobody made a greater mistake
than he who did nothing because
he could do only a little.

EDMUND BURKER
Anglo-Irish Statesman, Author,
Orator, and Political theorist



I have the consolation of
having added nothing to my
private fortune during my public
service, and of retiring with hands
clean as they are empty.

THOMAS JEFFERSON
3rd President of the United States of
America

Being good is commendable,
but only when it is combined
with doing good is it useful.

ANONYMOUS



The citizen can bring our
political and governmental
institutions back to life, make
them responsive and accountable,
and keep them honest.

No one else can.

JOHN GARDNER

Secretary of Health, Education,
and Welfare under Former President Lyndon
Johnson

My creed is that public service
must be more than doing a
job efficiently and honestly.

It must be a complete dedication to
the people and to the nation
with full recognition that
every human being is entitled
to courtesy and consideration, that
constructive criticism is not only to
be expected but sought,
that smears are not only to be
expected but fought, that
honor is to be earned, not bought.

MARGARET CHASE SMITH

Former Maine Senator

As soon as public service ceases to be the chief business of the citizens, and they would rather serve with their money than with their persons, the State is not far from its fall.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU
Major Philosopher, Writer, and Composer



When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
Former First Lady of the United States of America

And I say to you that it is the work of public employees – it is the work of those who work in the public sector – to hope, to be optimistic, and to build a better, safer, fairer, more just society.

LAURENCE H. SUMMERS
Former President of Harvard University



To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity.

DOUGLAS ADAMS
English Author

Where is the man who owes
nothing to the land in which
he lives? Whatever that land may
be, he owes to it the most
precious thing possessed by man,
the morality of his actions
and the love of virtue.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU
Philosopher, Writer, and Composer



There is no power on earth
that can neutralize the influence
of a high, simple and useful life.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
American Educator & Author

I don't want to live in the kind of
world where we don't look out for each
other. Not just the people that are close
to us, but anybody who needs a helping
hand. I can't change the way anybody
else thinks, or what they choose to do,
but I can do my bit.

CHARLES DE LINT
Writer



"We cannot seek achievement for
ourselves and forget about progress and
prosperity for our community... Our
ambitions must be broad enough to
include the aspirations and needs of
others, for their sakes and for our own."

CESAR CHAVEZ
Labor & Civil Rights Activist, Co-Founder of
the National Farm Workers Association

The greatness of a man is not in
how much wealth he acquires,
but in his integrity and his ability
to affect those around him
positively.

BOB MARLEY

Jamaican Musician, & Songwriter



Leaders become great, not
because of their power, but
because of their ability to
empower others.

JOHN C. MAXWELL

Author, Speaker, Pastor

The government being the
people's business, it necessarily
follows that its operations should
be at all times open to the public
view. Publicity is therefore as
essential to honest administration
as freedom of speech is to
representative government. Equal
rights to all and special privileges
to none is the maxim which
should control in all departments
of government.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

Former Secretary of State & Congressman

Citizenship



Our country – our
democracy – is not a
machine that will run on its
own. It needs you out there
fighting for what you
believe in.

ELIZABETH WARREN
U.S. Senator



You don't have to do
everything, but don't sit on
the sidelines.

HILLARY R. CLINTON
Former Secretary of State

We seldom stop to think how many people's lives are entwined with our own. It is a form of selfishness to imagine that every individual can operate on his own or can pull out of the general stream and not be missed.

IVY BAKER PRIEST
Former United States treasurer



You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

MAHATMA GANDHI
Global Humanitarian

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for someone else.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
A Founding Father of the United States of America



Your national will succeed or fail to the degree that all of us citizens and businesses alike are active participants in building strong, sustainable and enriching communities.

ARNOLD HIATT
Former CEO of the Stride Rite Corp.

We ourselves feel that what we
are doing is just a drop in the
ocean, but the ocean would be less
because of that missing drop. We
can do no great things, only small
things with great love.

MOTHER TERESA
Global Humanitarian



How wonderful it is that
nobody need wait a single
moment before starting
to improve the world.

ANNE FRANK
Author, *The Diary of a Young Girl*

Everything that lives, lives not
alone, not for itself.

WILLIAM BLAKE
English Poet, Painter, and Printmaker



One reason not to wait to address
the world's biggest problems is
that they need your attention
before you accept the
status quo, before you are plagued
by the knowledge of what is
impossible.

WENDY KOPP
Teach for America Founder

If I can stop one heart from
breaking, I shall not live in vain.
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain, Or help one
fainting robin Unto his nest
again, I shall not live in vain.

EMILY DICKINSON
Poet



“I have never had a vote, and I
have raised hell all over this
country. You don't need a vote to
raise hell! You need convictions
and a voice!”

MARY HARRIS "MOTHER" JONES American
Educator & Labor Representative

It is possible to eradicate
hunger. How can we live and
sleep comfortably knowing that
millions of our sisters and
brothers go to bed hungry?

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU



If you can't feed a
hundred people, then feed
just one.

MOTHER TERESA
Global Humanitarian

Be the special envoy of your
ideals. Be citizen ambassadors,
using your personal and
professional lives to forge global
partnerships built on a common
commitment to solve our planet's
common problems.

HILLARY R. CLINTON
Former Secretary of State



So you have to engage, you have to
be involved even in this dirty
business of politics. You have to,
for your own safety's sake. And I
have no doubt you
will, because you must.

JOSEPH BIDEN
47th Vice President of the United States of
America

This great American
experiment has no guaranteed
outcomes. Every generation tests
it, and every generation is tested.
Your responsibility — your test
— is to preserve the experiment,
and renew it for the next
generation. This is no small task,
but I believe it starts with a small
step that each of you can take in
your communities: demanding
that your local schools do more to
teach what it means to be a
citizen and a patriot.

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG
American Businessman, Author, Politician,
& Philanthropist

I'm here to ask you to get more involved in our democracy. Some of you are already headed into public service. I'm looking out at future teachers and firefighters, nurses and social workers. Some of you will work directly in government, some will work in non-profits. And, of course, many of you will work for small businesses. Many of you will start your own businesses. Many of you will join big corporations. But my pitch is for something different—it's to get more directly involved in the democracy of policy.

ELIZABETH WARREN
U.S. Senator

For our democracy and our system to work, people must believe in our institutions are more than means to personal gain. We need people at every level of government and in the private sector whose skills and ambition are grounded in the notions of a higher good, who have ethical baselines that they will not cross for partisan purposes or personal gain, who understands what it means to serve.

MARTIN J. WALSH
Mayor of Boston

I believe if a private citizen is able to affect public opinion in a constructive way he doesn't have to be an elected public servant to perform a public service.

WARREN BEATTY
American Actor & Filmmaker



Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country. Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is

education. Not only our future economic soundness but the very soundness of our democratic institutions depends on the determination of our government to give employment to idle men. We are trying to construct a more inclusive society. We are going to make a country in which no one is left out. The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much it is whether we provide enough for those who have little. In our personal ambitions we are individualists. But in our seeking for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up or else all go down as one people.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
32nd President of the United States of
America

I since my release, I have become more convinced than ever that the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women of our country; their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom. A critical, independent and investigative press is the lifeblood of any democracy. The press must be free from state interference. It must have the economic strength to stand up to the blandishments of government officials. It must have sufficient independence from vested interests to be bold and inquiring without fear or favour. It must enjoy the protection of the

constitution, so that it can protect our rights as citizens. Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people. On my last day I want to know that those who remain behind will say: 'The man who lies here has done his duty for his country and his people.' What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived.

It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.

NELSON MANDELA
South African Politician, Revolutionary,
Activist

We will never bring disgrace on this our City by an act of dishonesty or cowardice. We will fight for the ideals and Sacred Things of the City both alone and with many. We will revere and obey the City's laws, and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught. We will strive unceasingly 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.

ATHENIAN OATH
5th Century BCE

"In the final analysis it doesn't really matter what the political system is... We don't need perfect political systems; we need perfect participation."

CESAR CHAVEZ

Labor & Civil Rights Activist, Co-Founder of the
National Farm Workers Association



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BERNARD SANDERS
U.S. Senator

By following only liberal or conservative news outlets, or by getting trapped in social media's echo chamber, we become less able to discern fact from spin, truth from lies. And we become less willing to listen to anyone who challenges our beliefs. The best protection we have against this kind of political segregation is to ensure that we all share a common understanding of our civic values.

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG
American Businessman, Author,
Politician, & Philanthropist

The forces of freedom, openness and global community [are arrayed] against the forces of authoritarianism, isolationism and nationalism. Forces for the flow of knowledge, trade, and immigration against those who would slow them down. This is not a battle of nations, it's a battle of ideas... It's going to happen at the local level, when enough of us... start caring about everyone... Start building local communities right now.

MARK ZUCKERBERG
American CEO of Facebook

Volunteerism



In my own life, in my own small way, I've tried to give back to this country that has given me so much. That's why I left a job at a law firm for a career in public service, working to empower young people to volunteer in their communities. Because I believe that each of us - no matter what our age or background or walk of life - each of us has something to contribute to the life of this nation.

MICHELLE OBAMA

Former First Lady of the United States

Throughout my life, I've seen the difference that volunteering efforts can make in people's lives.

I know the personal value of service as a local volunteer.

JIMMY CARTER

39th President of the United States of America



I urge young people to consider public service, whether they do it now by volunteering in their community or prepare for public service as an adult.

JOHN WALTERS

Director of the Whitehouse
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Volunteering can be an exciting, growing, enjoyable experience. It is truly gratifying to serve a cause, practice one's ideals, work with people, solve problems, see benefits, and know one had a hand in them.

HARRIET NAYLOR

National Director of the
Office of Volunteer Development

A volunteer is a person who is a light to others, giving witness in a mixed-up age, doing well and willingly the tasks at hand—namely, being aware of another's needs and doing something about it.

A volunteer is a person who remembers to do the thing to make other people happy, who takes the loneliness out of the alone by talking to them, who is concerned when others are unconcerned, who has the courage to be a prophet and to say the things that have to be said for the good of all.

A volunteer is a person whose charity is fidelity, who is faithful in an unfaithful world, grateful in an ungrateful world, giving when all about are grasping, listening when others need to tell about their fears and problems.

THE BEACON
Newsletter of Birthrite, South Africa



Opportunity + Preparedness =
Success. Volunteer to help others
be prepared for the opportunities
afforded them.

ANONYMOUS

A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; who can feel what most do not feel. Often, such gifted persons do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens – citizens in the fullest sense: partners in civilization.

GEORGE H. W. Bush
41st President of the United States of
America

There is something enormously fulfilling about being engaged in something bigger than you yourself. It imparts a satisfying sense of purpose which, in my experience, is not attained in any other way.

GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT
United States national Security advisor

Though government has an important role to play in meeting the many challenges that remain before us, we are coming to understand that no organization, including government, will fully succeed without the active participation of each of us. Volunteers are vital to enabling this country to live up to the true promise of its heritage.

BILL CLINTON

42nd President of the United States of America

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Searches for Public Service quotations included research connected to commencement speeches and phrases such as: Public Service, Volunteering, Giving Back, Community, Citizenship, Ethics, Purpose, etc.

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