

THANK YOU SO MUCH...

IT'S A PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE TO CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOLUNTEER FLORIDA AND AMERICORPS, AND TO CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE THAT BINDS US ALL TOGETHER.

JUST YESTERDAY, AS WE TOOK TIME TO COMMEMORATE THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11TH, I MENTIONED HOW OUR RESPONSE TO SUCH INEXPLICABLE EVIL WAS TO IMMEDIATELY ENGAGE IN SERVICE TOWARD OTHERS.

OUR TRADITION OF VOLUNTEERISM AND SERVICE IS A HALLMARK OF OUR CHARACTER AS A NATION, AND CENTRAL TO HOW WE MEET OUR CHALLENGES.

WE SEE THIS IN OUR COMMUNITIES EVERY SINGLE DAY...

MEN AND WOMEN WHO GIVE OF THEIR TIME AND TALENTS TO HELP OTHERS, TO PLACE SERVICE BEFORE SELF.

IT WAS MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., A MAN WHOSE LIFE WAS DEDICATED TO FIGHTING FOR OTHERS WHO ONCE SAID THAT "EVERYBODY CAN BE GREAT...BECAUSE ANYBODY CAN SERVE."

IT'S THAT GREATNESS THROUGH SERVICE THAT WE ARE HERE TO CELEBRATE TODAY!

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I JOINED VOLUNTEER FLORIDA FOR THE MAYOR'S DAY OF RECOGNITION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE.

WE TOOK THE TIME TO RECOGNIZE THE MORE THAN 16,000 PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND BACKGROUNDS WHO ARE HELPING TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND INCREASE CIVIC PRIDE AND PARTICIPATION THROUGH NATIONAL SERVICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

WHETHER IT'S CITY YEAR MIAMI ENGAGING STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO HELP IMPROVE OUR SCHOOLS...

TO OUR SENIOR CORP VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS "FOSTER GRANNIES..."

THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SOMEONE ELSE KNOWS NO AGE LIMITS.

THESE ARE ALL REGULAR PEOPLE WHO BECOME GREAT THROUGH SERVING OTHERS BY TUTORING AND MENTORING CHILDREN, SUPPORTING VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES, PROVIDING HEALTH SERVICES, PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT, RESPONDING TO DISASTERS, INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND RECRUITING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEERS.

IN SUM, BY MAKING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A MUCH BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

THESE ARE ALL UNSUNG HEROES...

EVERY DAY THEY HEAD OUT, QUIETLY AND WITHOUT FANFARE...

AND THEY TOUCH AND IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

TODAY'S CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF SERVICE BY BOTH VOLUNTEER FLORIDA AND AMERICORPS IS A FANTASTIC WAY TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPACT OF YOUR SERVICE, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO

INSPIRE MORE PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES.

FINALLY, I AM A PROUD MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF CITY YEAR MIAMI...

I'VE SEEN THE WORK THAT MANY OF YOU DO, AND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR ALL THOSE WHO BENEFIT FROM YOUR GENEROSITY ...

I AM VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICE YOU HAVE ALL SHOWN...

AND FOR ALL YOU DO TO HELP MAKE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND OUR COUNTY STRONGER, SAFER, AND HEALTHIER.

ALL OF YOU DESERVE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

NOW IT'S MY PLEASURE TO PRESENT A PROCLAMATION NAMING TODAY VOLUNTEER FLORIDA AND AMERICORPS DAY.