

children's PRESSLINE

Youth ready to do part to help President Obama, inauguration-goers say

By **Jordan Barsky, 16, Tatyana Bellamy Walker, 12; Natasha Kirchuk, 17; and Zuzu Myers, 15**

Children's PressLine journalists were among the 1.8 million people who flocked to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., to witness President Barack Obama being sworn in as the country's 44th president. They spoke to their peers who were there with families and youth groups to be a part of history. Here's what was on the mind of some of these young people:

**JESSIE KOHLMAN, 15
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

It was obviously monumental because Obama was the first Black president in American history. It signifies how far the country has come in that respect. We're coming out of a dark age from our last presidency and Obama signifies a time of change, and he's inspired such a broad of range people, from old people to young people, every race and ethnic group. What he represents is really strong.

It was interesting to see the different types of tourists that it attracted. I have never seen anything like it before.

D.C. definitely deserves statehood or at least more representation in government, which was something that was overlooked with the last president.

One of the changes we have

already seen pertaining to youth is that he has inspired kids to become more proactive with their own government on a smaller scale and to have the opinion to speak out more.

I definitely cared a lot more about this election than I did in the past ones. I was actually involved in this one, and I campaigned for Obama, which I had never done before.

**CLAUDIA HASON, 12
WESTON, CONN.**

This is history. This is big. It is cool that I can be a part of history being made. Hopefully now the world will clear up and the economy will be better. I promise to do my part to help the world be a better place.

**SCOTT BOULINAUX, 14
VIENNA, VA.**

I hope that the Obama administration brings better education policies and creates more jobs. They should give teachers better salaries and make sure more kids graduate. I canvassed for his campaign!

**DIAMOND BARLOW, 10
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

When I'm old enough to vote, I will pay more attention because I've been a part of this special

day. President Obama inspires me because that means I can do anything. It might be a good idea for him to visit schools and meet the kids. He would see that I do my part to help by throwing



Photo caption: Broadcast journalist Judy Woodruff interviews CPL editor Natasha Kirchuk at an inauguration reception hosted by Children's PressLine at the Ralls Collection in Washington, D.C.

(Angelique Bellamy/CPL Media photo)

trash away when I'm done eating.

**ISAIAH JAMES, 12
BOSTON, MASS.**

If you work hard you can accomplish your dream—that is what I'm learning from being here. There is a lot of killing in my neighborhood. I was in the corner store and someone started shooting. I was ashamed for my color because it was Black people shooting each other for no

on the bus. It took five hours. It was so cold, and we walked a long way. There were millions of people. Then we saw Barack Obama become president. We did not get to see the parade, but we walked an even longer way back to the bus. Then we waited for other people, and then we went home. It was a good trip. I can't wait for the next four years and to see who gets to be the president. I hope it is Barack Obama again.

reason.

**CARLOS JOSEPH, 10
LOCKWOOD HEIGHTS, MD.**

I've been feeling a togetherness this whole week. This is bringing Americans together to have friendships.

**ZAMIR GOODRICH, 8
AMITYVILLE, N.Y.**

Obama inspires me to do whatever I put my mind to. Now I know that African-Americans can succeed in being president.

**RAJAH GOODRICH, 14
MASSAPEQUA, N.Y.**

Obama made me believe that I can do anything that I want to do. I've seen people get talked down to because they look a certain way, but with Obama as our leader I don't know if people will do that anymore.

**ASHLEY FYE, 16
MASSAPEQUA, N.Y.**

President Barack Obama gives me confidence to hold my head high.

**MICAH ARSON-SEROTTA, 13
CHEVY CHASE, MD.**

If this generation can do this, when I'm old enough to vote, imagine what we can accomplish then.

**JAENNE ARSON-SEROTTA, 13
CHEVY CHASE, MD.**

President Obama needs to listen to people about the issues that are affecting them. They

know the most about these issues because they are living with them. He's taught me that there are things we thought we couldn't do, but we did, and we can fight to change the things that aren't right.

**CLAIRE DOUGLAS, 15
TACOMA PARK, MD.**

I hope we fix the financial crisis so that I can go to college and it's not that big of a worry. President Obama inspires me that I can make a difference with my vote. I want him to revise the No Child Left Behind Education Act, and he should know that standardized tests don't do anything for our schools.

**MAYA CONYERS, 11
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

I hope some younger kids will realize how brave he is and make him their role models.

**ETHAN METH, 14
WEST CALDWELL, N.J.**

My grandpa was at MLK's speech and he saw a part of history and I came here so I could do that too. There is a lot of racism in my school, and we all need to do our part to stop it.

**GABRIEL BAUM, 12
MONROE TWP., N.J.**

I think the new president should put more money into education so that people who go to bad schools can switch to better ones.

I am proud of our president

By **OLAYEMI ODESANYA, 10**

Special to the AmNews

In November 1781, John Hanson became the first president of Congress after he signed the Articles of Confederation. Some people say he was the first Black president. Most people do not know about him.

Last week, Barack Obama became known as the first Black president of the United States of America.

I am proud that we have a Black president. I hope that President Barack Obama will help the poor people, Black people and people who are sick. Everybody needs Barack Obama's help. He can help America become a better place to live, work and grow. Barack Obama needs to be the best president who ever existed.

I went to Washington, D.C., to

see him in the inauguration, and he was O.K. I hope Barack Obama will be president again—for eight years. Ms. Michelle, Malia and Sasha, I hope you believe in your husband and father. I hope you guys are happy. Malia: I am the same age as you. I am a Cancer like you. I know someone who has the same birthday as you. Sasha: My sister is the same age as you. I hope you are a good and happy First Family. Michelle Obama: I hope you are happy with your family. My mother is two years younger than you.

Thank you for listening, First Family.

I had been to Washington, D.C., before for the Million Family March, but last week I went by bus on late Monday night. First, I went to Brooklyn, to a café called Sista's Place. Then I went

We woke up in D.C.

By **NOSAYABA ODESANYA, 7**

Special to the AmNews

My mom, sister and I went to Washington, D.C., last

week to see Barack Obama become the president. First, we went to Brooklyn to go to Sista's Place to



catch the bus. Two of our friends were there. They

were brother and sister, and we were playing on the bus. Everyone was talking about Barack Obama. It was after midnight, and so we got sleepy. My two friends went to sleep, then my sister, my mother and other people.

When we woke up, we were in Washington. It was so cold. We had gloves and scarves and hand warmers. There were a lot of people with us. We walked and walked to see Barack Obama. He is the new president, and people were happy.

We have a new Black president, and I was there. I was glad I went to D.C., but it was freezing. We saw Malia and Sasha and Michelle Obama.

It was great.