

**James A. Joseph Lecture**  
**ABFE Annual Conference & JAG Unity Summit**  
**Saturday, June 7, 2014**

Good evening. It is a great pleasure to be here with you tonight, at ABFE's annual conference and the Joint Affinity Group's Unity Summit. I am honored to have been chosen to speak as the 23<sup>rd</sup> James A. Joseph Lecturer, and I thank you for selecting me for this very distinguished award.

Thank you Gladys for your introduction. Thank you Ambassador Joseph for your leadership and vision. I especially want to thank Susan Batten, the ABFE Board members and staff for your vision and commitment to ABFE and for your tireless efforts to bring definition and meaning to the need for responsive and transformative investments in Black Communities.

I also thank each of you who are here tonight for your ongoing support of ABFE and your commitment to making this world a better place for the generations that will follow us.

And finally, I would like to thank the Board, the Executive Leadership, and the staff at Casey Family Programs for their insights; their efforts; and their dedication to building communities of hope for all of America's children.

Tonight, we are here to talk about UMOJA: (Unity) Striving for Unity in the Family, Community, Nation and Race! But as we look to the future of a more unified community and a more unified nation we must not forget that we are able to stand at this moment in time and consider the power of UMOJA as we move forward because in 1971 Ambassador James Joseph and a group of courageous leaders decided to take a stand.

They decided that enough was enough. They decided that they could no longer sit by and watch what was happening with Black leaders in philanthropy and they could no longer sit by and watch what was happening to Black children, their families, and their communities.

We can stand at this moment in time because 43 years ago a group of leaders decided that they would not listen to the voices that said wait. They would not listen to the voices that said don't push too hard and don't risk all that you have been given in your current roles and your current state of existence.

We can stand here tonight and focus on UMOJA because in the 80's and the 90's other leaders decided that the actions of those who came before them would not be in vain.

We can stand here at this moment tonight because leaders before us were willing to stand up and declare that something must change. What we see cannot be allowed to be the future that we leave for our children. And neither can this be allowed to be the future that we leave for the leaders of color in philanthropy who will follow us.

We can stand here at this moment tonight because leaders before us were willing to build a pathway towards hope for us to follow; a pathway towards hope for our children and our communities to follow.

Hope for higher academic achievement for all of our children;

Hope for our children and communities to live free of violence;

Hope for a world where all of our children's lives matter.

Hope for a time when the zip code of a child's birth will no longer be one of the most determinant factors of how far they can go in life; or one of the most determinant factors of whether they will reach the age of 21.

Indeed we are here tonight because some courageous leaders before us were willing to take a stand to advocate, influence, and push the doors open for us in the field of philanthropy.

But the question before us tonight is what are we - the leaders of today- going to do that will influence, advocate, and push the doors open for UMOJA (Unity) and the life changing pathways of hope for our children, for their families, and for their communities.

The question before us is how do we work together to change the pathway for our most vulnerable citizens? How do "we," foundation leaders, government leaders, community leaders; parents and youth; business leaders; and nonprofit leaders find **the will** to be different? Not the capacity because we have the capacity to change things—the question is do we have **the will**.

And I would suggest to you tonight that we have already begun to walk down that pathway – the only real pathway to hope for our children --- and that is the pathway towards changing our relationship with government. And by government I mean federal, state, city, and Tribal governments.

The efforts of the Executive Alliance and My Brother's Keeper; the efforts of the Kellogg Foundation in the South; the efforts of the Skillman Foundation and others in Detroit; as well as many other examples are demonstrating what can happen when we change the conversation. These efforts are demonstrating what can happen when stand up and declare that as Foundations, we bring more to the table than our money.

We are strategic demonstrators....

We are strategic partners....

We are members of our communities....and

We are advocates for change.

We are the sons and daughters of the struggle for justice.

**We are more than our money!** And we have to be if we are going to change the pathways for our children and communities.

The annual giving of all foundations cannot compare or compete with the government's annual spending. Our annual giving can only complement, leverage, and enhance the spending of government.

According to the Foundation Center, from 2009 to 2012 the total annual giving from all foundations in the United States ranged from approximately \$46 Billion in 2009 to approximately \$52 Billion in 2012. They also estimate that in 2013 our total giving across all Foundations and across all of our focus areas and giving priorities was approximately \$55 Billion.

Comparatively the Federal, State, and local revenues for public schools (K-12) alone in 2009 were approximately \$591 Billion. (\$276 Billion state; \$259 Billion local revenue; and \$56 Billion Federal funds)

We have to demonstrate that **we are more than our money!!!**

We are the sons and daughters of the struggle for justice for all of our children.

From the earliest times foundations and government have been involved in a delicate dance. This dance has switched leads throughout the course of history, with government sometimes seeking out foundations to support specific focus areas, while foundations have looked to government as the vehicle through which our innovations and demonstrations would be funded to scale.

However, almost Thirty-Three years ago, President Ronald Reagan played a key role in changing the course of this dance. In his first year in office as he began to cut government spending, he looked to foundations to fill the gaps.

As a part of this effort, President Reagan in October 1981 signed Executive Order #12329 which created the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives. The Task Force was charged with advising the President, the Secretary of Commerce, and other Executive Agency Heads with respect to:

- a) Methods of developing, supporting, and promoting private sector leadership and responsibility for meeting public needs,
- b) The Task Force was also charged with offering recommendations for appropriate action by the President to foster greater public-private partnerships and to decrease dependence on government.

In accordance with the Executive Order that created it, the Task Force ended on December 31, 1982. Yet the dance and the conversation between philanthropy and the Executive Branch had been altered forever and a new perspective had been entered into the global thought process.

Over the past 33 years many of us have grappled with questions about this dance and have sought to determine whether we are leading or following in this dance today.

There have been times where it seemed that we were who we had always been. Philanthropy innovating and demonstrating and then getting the government to use its vast resources to scale and replicate our results. Then there have been other times when it seemed that there were some significant challenges with that perspective.

However, regardless of who has been in the White House, philanthropy has continued to demonstrate what is possible in communities around the country. We have focused on poverty elimination. We have focused on dismantling the school to prison pipeline.

We have focused on health care and school disciplinary policies. We have declared that there is absolutely no reason that a preschool or kindergarten age child should be expelled from school in America!! But it is happening every day.

We have brought national attention to the needs of Black Men and Boys. We have elevated the need to end the senseless violence that is taking the lives of too many of our children every day in America.

We have even demonstrated that we can reduce the number children in foster care. We have shown that we can improve the way we respond to the needs of the mentally ill and we can find better ways to provide affordable housing for our brothers and sisters who do not have a home.

But yet we have not created alignment with government to get a pathway of Hope for all of our children. There are even some who might say government is broken and doesn't work. But I would ask you to take a look at the outcomes in certain zip codes and communities and you will see how well government can get things done—but look at others and questions begin to arise.

In one city with 2 neighboring zip codes, one zip code has only 1.5% of its citizens who are 25 years or older that have a level of educational attainment that is less than a GED and the other zip code has 46.6% of its citizens who are 25 years or older whose level of educational attainment is less than a GED. We must ask ourselves the question, is this difference a capacity issue or an issue of will?

Every 24 hours in America, we witness the lack of will which ultimately results in the lack of real change. This does not impact all children but disproportionately affects children in certain zip codes.

Consider for a moment the destiny of many of our youth and young adults living in communities across America. A destiny that doesn't have to be. A destiny that shouldn't be an outcome for anyone so young in a nation as resourceful as the United States.

I invite you to consider what happens on average every 24 hours in communities (zip codes) across the United States:

- Approximately 2,000 children are confirmed as victims of child abuse and neglect.
- Nearly 700 children are removed from their families and placed in foster care.
- 187 children are arrested for a violent crime
- 847 babies are born to teen parents
- 16,244 public school students are suspended and a number of them are children in kindergarten.
- 2,857 high school students drop out of school.
- Approximately four children die as a result of child abuse and neglect; most of them before they reach their fifth birthday.
- More than seven million children wake up in households where they and their families survive on less than \$8 a day for each family member. This is referred to as extreme poverty, as though if they had \$10 per person per day, it wouldn't be so bad.
- Approximately 13 young people between the ages of 10 and 24 die as a result of homicide.
- Approximately 12 young people under the age of 25 take their own life, making the statement that death to them was a better option than to live one more day of life as they knew it.

Every 24 hours we lose 29 young people under the age of 25 to child abuse, homicide and suicide. That means that 435 young people die senselessly and unnecessarily every 15 days – the equivalent to the U.S. House of Representatives. Where is the will to change this?

Clearly, we have before us some examples of how we are already working together. These are opportunities to shape what this relationship between philanthropy and government could look like. But we also need to challenge ourselves to ask, are we doing enough? Are we achieving

what we intended through these partnerships? Are we achieving what we intended through our collective massive outlay of resources (\$591 Billion on public school education in one year)?

Because if we're not, then we need to keep asking ourselves these same questions until, together, we succeed in changing the path for our most vulnerable citizens. We need to keep asking until all children are lifted from poverty. We need to keep asking until all children graduate high school and college. We need to keep asking until all children have a home to live in, and a safe and stable family to nurture them. We need to keep asking until all children have safe communities to play in. Until then, we cannot stop asking ourselves, how do we work together to make this country a better place – for all of us. Those who believe in justice cannot rest until it comes for all of us.

Yes we are here tonight to talk about UMOJA (Unity).

We are here tonight to celebrate with ABFE and the Joint Affinity Group, the progress that has been made, and the unity that is in this room.

But we are also here tonight because we are standing in the gap. We are standing on the edge of history.

We are here to begin to answer the question, what will be said about our actions and our decisions from leadership 43 years from now?

Tonight we applaud the courage of Ambassador Joseph and those who stood up with him 43 years ago.

What story will history tell about us 43 years from now? What will history say about today's leaders in philanthropy? What will history say about today's sons and daughters of the struggle for justice for all?

Every child deserves to be raised in a community of Hope.

UMOJA and May God bless you all.