

The 2010 Broad Prize

Announcement of Winner

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Announcement of the Winner of the 2010 Broad Prize

The Museum of Modern Art, New York City

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Michael Bloomberg, Mayor, City of New York
Briana Martin, 2006 Broad Prize Scholarship Recipient
Eli Broad, Founder, The Broad Foundations
Brian Williams, Anchor, NBC Nightly News
Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education
J. Alvin Wilbanks, Superintendent, Gwinnett County Public Schools, Georgia

GREGORY MCGINITY: Well, good morning. I'm Gregory McGinity. I'm the managing director of policy at The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and I want to welcome you all here to The Museum of Modern Art for our Broad Prize award ceremony for 2010.

As many of you know, The Broad Prize is the largest education award in the country, honoring school districts that have demonstrated the strongest student achievement, as well as improvement and the ability to close achievement gaps between income and ethnic groups. This marks the ninth year that The Broad Foundation has awarded The Broad Prize, and we're so pleased that so many good friends and many new friends are here with us today.

We have a number of distinguished guests that I want to first recognize as we get started. First, of course, we're honored to be joined by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, who will be –

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: Who will announce this year's winner later in our program.

We're also pleased that Brian Williams, the anchor of NBC Nightly News, is with us, and he'll deliver the keynote address. Thank you, Brian.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: We have four members of The Broad Prize selection jury with us as well. Former Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: Former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: Former Governor of North Carolina Jim Hunt.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: And President Emeritus of the Service Employees International Union Andy Stern.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: And this past spring, an 18-member review board of top education practitioners selected the five Broad Prize finalists, and we have a number of the members of the review board with us as well today.

And I want to make sure I thank our Broad Prize partners. First, NPR Associates, which manages the data collection and analysis, and RMC Corporation, which leads the site visit team to each of The Broad Prize finalists. And they're joined by representatives from Scholarship America, which manages The Broad Prize scholarship process.

So I want to thank all of our partners for their great help in 2010.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: And we have several members of The Broad Foundation's board of governors with us as well. And I would be remiss if I didn't thank the two people most responsible for the creation of The Broad Prize, Eli and Edythe Broad.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: And now, our special guests of honor. We have officials from the five Broad Prize finalist districts with us—Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina; Gwinnett County, Georgia; Montgomery County, Maryland; and Socorro and Ysleta, Texas. So if those representing the five districts could stand and be recognized?

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: And this year, we're also webcasting our announcement. So we'd like to extend a welcome to our remote audience joining us from around the country.

Each year, we alternate The Broad Prize between New York City and Washington, D.C., and we're so glad to be back here in New York this year. And when we think of New York, the person that first comes to mind for many of us is America's mayor, Michael Bloomberg.

When Michael Bloomberg was elected mayor of New York City in 2001, he made clear that education reform would be the centerpiece of his administration. And three years ago, the New York City Department of Education won The Broad Prize after being a finalist for two years.

Its dramatic reforms and improvement began under the leadership of Chancellor Joel Klein, who we had a chance to hear from earlier today at one of our panels, and Mayor Bloomberg, who was reelected to his third term last year. Over the past nine years, the graduation rates in the New York City public schools have increased by more than 20 percent, and English and reading and math scores have gone up to record levels.

I think it's safe to say that Mayor Bloomberg's leadership is unrivaled among big city mayors. He is bold and definitely unafraid to do the right thing. He continues to be a great national voice for public schools and public education and is a great advocate for America's public school students.

It's now my pleasure to introduce the mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg.

[Applause.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Well, thank you.

For those of you from out of town, my first request is that you spend a lot of money while you're here.

[Laughter.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: The way we pay for public education is through sales tax and property tax and income tax and every other kind of tax you can think of. It ain't cheap, folks, and we do need the money.

And it is my pleasure to welcome all of those from out of town to New York City for today's big event. Now I know everybody in this room is asking the same question. Can A.J. Burnett and the Yankees win tonight?

[Laughter.]

[Applause.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Brian Williams and I were there last night, nine innings, two runs until the last inning, cold. It was a long game, particularly if you're a Yankee fan. But anyways, I apologize to those of you from Texas, but I hope you lose.

[Laughter.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Anyways, playoff baseball may be the most talked about competition in the country, but the competition that's taking place right here may be the most important for America's future and for the world. Around the world, the U.S. is losing the competition that happens every day in our schools. The American education system was once the best in the world, but today, our students rank 20th in the world in high school graduation rates, 21st in science, 24th in problem-solving, 25th in math, and the list goes on and on.

This is the future of our country that we are throwing away. I don't think there is any other way to describe it. With the possible exception of what I call national suicide with our immigration policy, this is the stupidest thing that a country can do, to end public education, and that's fundamentally what we're trying to do.

And thank goodness, the president has picked Arne Duncan because we certainly need some leadership from Washington, and we're counting on you.

[Applause.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: And you can see it in the economy. By losing ground in our schools, we lose ground in our economy. There are an awful lot of people who are unemployed who just don't have the skills for the jobs that are being created. And once somebody leaves our educational system, getting them back into the fold to bring them up to speed is almost an impossibility.

In fact, the economic challenges facing the middle class, especially stagnating wages and the growing income gap, are, I think, directly related to the educational challenges facing our schools. Today, unemployment in America is just too high, and part of the reason, unfortunately, is that many companies just can't find high-skilled workers for the high-skilled jobs. And those jobs are increasingly at risk of going overseas.

And once industries go overseas, you might not get them back for decades or ever. We really cannot continue one more day doing what we've been doing. Throughout this country, people don't understand the importance of public education. They don't understand the standards that have to be used. These education systems are run for the people that work in the education systems rather than for the students, and we've just got to stop that.

[Applause.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Yes. To compete in the global economy and remain the world's economic superpower, we just have to transform our schools from assembly line factories into centers of innovation. And to fulfill the promise of America as a land of equal opportunity, we really have to face up to a disturbing and unacceptable reality. African-American and Hispanic children achieve at significantly lower rates than white and Asian children. And closing that gap is the civil rights challenge of our times, and it really is a key criterion for winning The Broad Prize.

Now The Broad Prize is the nationally most prestigious private education award, and it supports and encourages exactly what we need more of in our schools, excellence. Excellence by all students of all backgrounds.

Winning The Broad Prize in 2007 was a great honor for our city and a powerful affirmation of the progress that we've been making. Over the past eight years, you should know our graduation rates in New York City have gone up 27 percent, while in the rest of the state that takes exactly the same tests and has the exact same standards for graduation, they've only gone up 3 percent.

So I don't know if the tests get harder or easier year in or year out, but comparing us to the rest of the state, we really are doing something right here, and our schools chancellor Joel Klein really does deserve a round of applause for that.

[Applause.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Our African-American and Hispanic students have narrowed this achievement gap, this ethnic achievement gap, as we call it, on state tests by 37 percent in reading and 18 percent in math. Once again, all students taking exactly the same test. So the gains really are real. And when you want to compare us to the country, we have made significant progress based on the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP scores.

But I don't think anybody thinks that we don't have a long way still to go. There is no doubt we're on the right track. And across the nation, momentum for reform, I think, continues to build. President Obama and Arne Duncan deserve a lot of credit for that. In fact, I think the Race to the Top program that rewards states that adopt proven reforms may be the most powerful policy reform that the country has seen in decades.

And New York was thrilled to be among the states selected for the Race to the Top funds, and I know that having The Broad Prize on our resume certainly did not hurt our application. So, Edye, thank you. I don't know what your husband had to do with this, but we want to thank you.

[Laughter.]

MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG: Anyways, before I go, I just want to congratulate all of the finalists. It's a great honor just to have made it this far. I do not want to be in the room to look at the faces of those who lose. It always breaks my heart.

But I particularly wanted to thank the couple that really makes this possible, Edye and Eli. They've both been friends of mine for 20 years, 30 years? Something like that.

And they are the role models for the rest of us in terms of philanthropy and being great Americans. And they don't just do what gets you a newspaper headline, but they do what is right—long-term investments in what up until now have been intractable problems. And they don't walk away from our future. They deserve a prize from the rest of us. And when they go to bed at night, they have a smile on their face, I guarantee it.

The Broad Prize not only highlights and rewards the most successful school districts, but it also helps raise the bar for districts around the whole nation. And whether it's The Broad Prize or Race to the

Top, competition can help drive excellence, and certainly, the finalists here today, I think, are all great examples of that.

So congratulations to all of you. Best of luck. If you don't win this year, the only advice I can give you is try harder and come back.

New York did not win it the first time or the second time. But thanks to Joel Klein and the 120,000 people that work in our education system here, public education in New York City, we kept going. And we've not taken that as the high point. We've taken that as the step-off point to try to do more, and you're our role models.

Thank you very much, and enjoy.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: Thank you, Mayor Bloomberg. It's always a pleasure to have you with us, and we appreciate again being back here in New York City this year.

The Broad Prize finalist districts are recognized for their success in improving student achievement while, at the same time, closing achievement gaps between income and ethnic groups. And the prize winnings, \$1 million to the winner and \$1 million to the four finalists that's shared, go directly to students for college scholarships.

And just as The Broad Prize recognizes school districts that have improved their academic achievement, these scholarships reward those students that have raised their grades over the course of their high school career. And we're fortunate today to be joined by one of our striving students.

Briana Martin is one of our more than 900 students that have been awarded a Broad Prize scholarship since 2002. Briana graduated from Pelham Preparatory Academy in the Bronx in 2007. And since then, she's been at the University of Vermont studying social work and English.

She's here today to tell us a little bit about how she's been doing in college and what the future holds. Please give a warm welcome to Briana Martin.

[Applause.]

BRIANA MARTIN: Hello. Thank you, Mr. McGinity.

First, I would like to thank The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation and everyone here for allowing me to speak to you today. The Broad Prize has made a great impact on my educational journey. This scholarship helped make college a reality for me and was instrumental in helping me relieve the financial burden of attending the University of Vermont.

There have been many times in my life where it seemed as if hardships had no end. Growing up in a number of different homes and being raised by a number of different families is not easy. Yet I managed to use my struggles to fuel my passion to succeed.

Despite the obstacles of my family and my financial circumstances, I have remained optimistic. When my family told me college didn't seem possible because of the expense, I worked even harder in high school. I formed a relationship with my guidance counselor so she could help me explore my options.

I made significant improvements in my academics, going from a 2.5 GPA to a 3.3, and I challenged myself to take on leadership roles. My guidance counselor encouraged me to seek out scholarships and apply to a number of colleges and universities. I was accepted to eight schools, and then I found out I won a Broad Prize scholarship, and I was ecstatic.

When I got to college in Vermont, I faced some of my greatest fears. Not only was I the first person in my family to go to college, but I also enrolled in a school far from home in an environment very different from the one in which I grew up in the Bronx. However, amongst fear and uncertainty, I reminded myself of the journey it took to get where I am, and I kept my eye on the prize.

I got involved with residential life, student organizations on campus, and I worked hard to do well in my academics. I'm now a senior majoring in social work with a minor in English. Time has gone by so quickly. I feel like it was just yesterday when I was a timid freshman.

Throughout the last three years, I've been a resident adviser, a peer mentor for incoming first-year students, a member of the Black Student Union, a tutor, as well as a student leader on campus. I've found numerous opportunities at UVM, and I'm currently the president of the Women's Honor Society, an associate with the Institute for Recruitment of Teachers, and a McNair Scholar, which is a

fellowship for undergraduates to conduct research and prepare for graduate school. After I graduate, I plan to pursue a master's in education.

The Broad Prize is the seed of hope that fueled my college experience. I want to thank The Broad Foundation once again for this opportunity and its support. Thank you.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: I'm very fortunate to have the chance to work at The Broad Foundation. And being able to support students like Briana is one of the great things that we get to do. Thanks very much for your remarks, Briana.

More than a decade ago, when Eli Broad left the world of commerce, he and his wife, Edye, had a big decision to make. How could they make the greatest impact with their philanthropy? They both attended Detroit public schools, and Eli went on to Michigan State University. He credits a strong public education for the foundation of his success in building two Fortune 500 companies from the ground up.

Eli and Edye Broad recognized that America's public schools were no longer number one in the world. The stakes were extraordinarily high if our country didn't step up and restore education to its greatness. It's been 11 years since the Broads determined that public education would be the primary focus of their philanthropy, and they've invested more than \$400 million to date.

Eli Broad is known for taking an active role in his foundation, exercising the same critical eye over foundations' philanthropic investments that he perfected in business. There is no question that he's a passionate education reformer, and he recognizes how important public education is to our democracy and our economy.

So please join with me in welcoming Eli Broad.

[Applause.]

ELI BROAD: Thank you, Gregory.

Edge and I are delighted to see so many of you here for the announcement of the 2010 Broad Prize. We've been convinced for some time there is no greater issue facing our country than improving public education.

As we all know, unemployment is high. We're coming out of the worst recession since the Great Depression. We've got skyrocketing pension and healthcare expenses. Our Social Security system will soon be on the brink of bankruptcy, and our national security continues to be a growing concern.

But if we dramatically improve public education, we will have the citizenry and workforce that can address and even fix these major problems. Until our nation pulls together to fix our public schools, I'm truly afraid that our economy, the American dream, and our very democracy will continue to be at risk.

But I must tell you, in the 11 years we have been working to improve public education, I've never been more encouraged than I am today. I believe we're at a tipping point in the education reform movement. For the first time in memory, education reform is part of the mainstream conversations.

This year, we had two groundbreaking documentaries, most notably "The Lottery" and "Waiting for Superman," both of which our foundation was pleased to support. If you haven't seen these movies, and I hope you all have, I encourage you to see them. They are terrific, and they put a human face on the crisis in America's public schools.

And just three weeks ago, NBC put front and center with its thought-provoking week-long series, "Education Nation" programming. They looked at the critical issues—how we compare to other countries, how underutilized technology is in today's classrooms, how to elevate the teaching profession. All the issues we need to address in everyday conversations.

Now, we do have a dynamic number of leaders in school districts across the country—leaders like the superintendents of the five Broad Prize finalist districts and reform-minded superintendents like Michelle Rhee in D.C.; Joel Klein, who is with us here in New York; Robert Bobb in Detroit; and John Covington in Kansas City. These superintendents are making tough decisions in the face of adult interests who want to maintain a status quo because they know it's the right thing to do for children.

President Obama and Secretary Duncan have made education reform a priority in this country, and they back that commitment with unprecedented federal dollars. As the President said a few weeks ago, money without reform will not fix the problem. We've seen Race to the Top jumpstart reforms in

more than 30 states. We've seen charter caps lifted, better accountability systems implemented, and finally, a rigorous set of common standards adopted in 37 states.

More importantly, we've seen several examples of unprecedented collaboration between districts and teachers unions that have resulted in stronger evaluation systems for administrators, principals, and teachers, and performance pay programs so that great teachers would be paid what they're worth.

The time has come for Americans to wake up and realize that the crisis in public education isn't a problem that affects simply someone else's children. Unless every child receives an education that prepares them for success in college and in life, it is my problem and it is your problem. We can no longer tolerate mediocrity. We have to get this right. We simply have to.

But we're seeing glimmers of hope that are broadening to beacons. As we award the ninth Broad Prize, today is a day of celebration. There is not one of the five finalist district superintendents who will tell you that their work is done, that all the students are finishing high school prepared for college or they have the skills to get a good-paying job. They all know that every district in this country has a long way to go.

But they're making progress. That's what counts. They will not accept the status quo. They've not listened to naysayers who say poor and minority children can't learn. They know better and are an example for other districts throughout America.

These five districts have improved the academic performance of their students. They've narrowed achievement gaps amongst income and ethnic groups. They've raised the standards for their students and made a concentrated effort to ensure poor and minority students achieve at high levels, that they take the SAT and ACT and that they enroll and excel in advanced placement courses.

So, today, we salute you and your communities for the priority you've placed on educating all of your students.

As I mentioned, three weeks ago, NBC News presented "Education Nation," a week of intensive news coverage about education reform in this country that kicked off the network's continuing commitment to this issue. No one at NBC has been a bigger champion of education reform than this year's Broad Prize keynote speaker.

Since 2004, Brian Williams has anchored NBC Nightly News, delivering the news of the day with candor, credibility, integrity and a passion for sharing untold stories with his viewers. Brian is the most honored network evening news anchor. He received four Edward R. Murrow awards, 12 Emmys, the DuPont Columbia University award and the George Foster Peabody award.

Brian's award-winning coverage of Hurricane Katrina and the rebuilding efforts, particularly of the New Orleans school system, has earned him national accolades. In 2007, Time magazine named him one of the 100 people who help shape our world. GO magazine called him the most interesting man in television today. He's often referred to as the Walter Cronkite of the 21st century.

And on the brighter side, Brian's guest appearances on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, The Late Show with David Letterman, Saturday Night Live and 30 Rock have revealed a wicked sense of humor and comedic timing. We're delighted he is here today to talk about the impact that education will have on our country's future.

Please join me in welcoming Brian Williams.

[Applause.]

BRIAN WILLIAMS: I just leaned over to the mayor, and I said, "It seems like I'm a pretty big deal around here." And he said, "For perspective, you should realize you're simply the best they could get today."

[Laughter.]

BRIAN WILLIAMS: So we bid a fond farewell to the mayor of the City of New York, Michael Bloomberg.

[Applause.]

BRIAN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Eli. Thank you, Edye. Thank you for all the distinguished officials we have today, obviously, including you, Mr. Secretary.

My mother-in-law, and let it never be said I don't know how to begin a speech—

[Laughter.]

BRIAN WILLIAMS: My mother-in-law—and I mention her today in a very, very favorable light not just because her daughter, my wife of 24 years, is here today. But my mother-in-law, when she talks about a single day in the Cold War chooses to talk about the 4th of October in 1957. And that is because over what is now Kazakhstan, a rocket was launched, and it gave birth to, in retrospect, nothing more than a shiny basketball with four trailing whiskers on it. But we came to know it as Sputnik.

And a lot of folklore, a lot of myth has sprung up around this first-ever satellite, including the fact that it beeped, and it had a flashing light on it, neither of which is the case. It beeped only if you could hear it over ham radio, and people seemed to fuzz up the fact that they could see it. They could see it only during those instances when the light was right.

So some people could hear the beep that came out of it. It only went around 1,400 times. It was only 500 miles up. The stage of the rocket that was supposed to really boost it failed, and it ended up in a low orbit. It took two minutes to go from horizon to horizon.

It scared the mighty United States of America. It energized the mighty United States of America. And really, it sent us to the moon. That little, highly polished basketball with whiskers, it started our space program.

And more than that, it energized Jack Kennedy, and it uncorked our famous American ingenuity that had been a little bit dormant since we dealt with the titanic struggle of World War II and conquered evil in the world. Listen to what it also gave us—GPS, scratch-proof plastic, baby formula, freeze-dried foods, fire-proof fabric, the microchip, cell phones, robotics, personal computers.

As Eli was kind to mention, fast forward to a few weeks back, we had this gathering at NBC News we called "Education Nation" out on the plaza, better known as America's skating rink. And as our guest, Congressman George Miller from California, rather famously at an afternoon forum, said, "You want your Sputnik moment? Do you want your moon shot moment? Because you have it. It's right now. It's here."

He was talking about education, and he was right. There is so much going on in this explosion. Whether it's philanthropic, not-for-profit, for-profit, it all goes into the same hopper, and it's all going to the same children.

By accident and not by design, as Eli mentioned, that "Waiting for Superman" in effect made its debut while the conference was underway. And it was said in the film more than once, it's all about the children. Education needs to be all about the children.

Should be patently obvious, yes. But flip that around on its back. It also needs to be all about the adults because the children are powerless without good adults. So the opposite has to be true.

I am here to say today very briefly that I was failed by the adults who were around me during those crucial years. I was the victim of a kind of benign neglect by a high school guidance department really phoning in their jobs, and I became a kind of faceless victim of their lack of action. I graduated from a Catholic high school no more than 22 miles from here as the crow flies. I was promptly shunted into the local community college, where I promptly failed.

I stand before you in this great gathering probably, where book learning is associated, the least qualified person in this room to address this gathering because I am a college dropout. I was failed. I failed myself. My parents probably failed me, though we'll settle that later.

[Laughter.]

BRIAN WILLIAMS: Serving our children cannot be done without energizing the adults who are responsible for them. This means something as basic, of course, as you all know, as reading to your children. But it also means empowering employers to almost force their workers to go back for an education. People like me.

It will take adults saying shame on bad teachers. It will take adults, as they already are, saying shame on big, bloated bureaucracies and bureaucrats not doing their work. It will take adults saying shame on the achievement gap, shame on things like summer slide.

And remember that American ingenuity I mentioned that was uncorked with the little shiny basketball with whiskers? Well, let's uncork it again in the field of education. Let's make whatever the equivalent is of the iPad of education.

We vote in 14 days. When you do, wherever you do, vote like your children's education depended on it, because it does. Hold politicians accountable. When they call something No Child Left Behind, make

sure they don't mean some children. When they call something Race to the Top, due respect, make sure they don't mean anywhere near the middle. Hold them to the word "top."

Because overhead right now, it's not Sputnik, but it's something very close. It's opportunity. Like Sputnik, not everybody can see it and certainly not everybody can hear it. The good news is a lot of important people can, indeed, hear it.

To people like Eli Broad, it's making a deafening sound. It's loud enough to qualify as a calling. He long ago decided to go after it and try to fix it, and our country is better for it.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: Wise words from a man who didn't make it through college. I appreciate that very much, Brian.

So I know you're all eager to find out who the winner is of the 2010 Broad Prize. And so, our next speaker is going to deliver the news. We're honored to be joined again by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

I would say it's safe to say that President Obama could not have named a better advocate for public education and public schools than Secretary Duncan. He has traveled the country, meeting with students and teachers, parents and administrators, and encouraging states and school districts to implement critically needed education reforms.

He's championed issues as varied as expanded learning time, giving parents and students the choice to attend public charter schools, common academic standards, and professional compensation and evaluation for educators. He knows firsthand what it takes to lead a large urban school district. For more than seven years, he served as CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, working closely with Mayor Richard Daley.

He is a passionate reformer, a tireless voice for putting students first. So please welcome U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

[Applause.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Good morning. Gregory, thank you so much for that kind introduction.

A few months ago, I spoke at the National Press Club about the quiet revolution underway all across America, where states and districts are pursuing bold, unprecedented reforms. Higher standards, 48 states worked on, 37 have adopted so far. New labor agreements that allow for different compensation and unusual staffing models. New data systems that track student growth and will someday track teachers back to their colleges of education.

New uses of technology to supplement teaching and bring new curriculum and learning opportunities to the most remote places in America. Underperforming schools being turned around and transformed with a new sense of urgency. Expanded learning time for students at risk. And a teaching profession facing tremendous change and opportunity as half of our nation's teachers may retire over the next five, six, seven years.

I have visited about 42 states, many, many districts, and talked to hundreds of administrators, teachers, parents, and students. I am always struck, everywhere I go, by how much passion and commitment there is around the issue of education reform. Superintendents and union leaders are showing courage to do the right thing both by children and by adults. Principals willing to be creative and explore new ways of learning. Teachers who go above and beyond to break through barriers of learning. Parents who will make any sacrifice they need to to help their child get a great education.

And local leaders who rightfully understand that the school is both the community anchor and a community asset, and it binds together the community behind a common vision. America is more focused on education reform than ever before, and Race to the Top has helped to drive change in almost every single state.

The Investing in Innovation program, the i3 fund, drew 1,700 applicants from all around the country. The common core standards have put states at the center of education reform. And President Obama's commitment has brought amazing resources to education—the most we've ever seen.

Congress is also poised for change. The unions are poised for change. The business community is actively engaged. They absolutely see education as an issue of economic security. I truly think this is America's moment, the moment to meet the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education*, to answer the

challenge of "America At Risk," to build upon the hard work of every administration since Lyndon Johnson's that has passed and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Now it's our turn. And together, we have to seize this moment. We need to finally and fully bring about real equity in education. We need to hold ourselves and each other accountable for what happens in our nation's classrooms. We need to challenge each other and to eliminate every barrier to reform and to meet the individual needs of every child.

We need to invest in our teachers to get the very best people into our classrooms and schools where they are needed the most. And we need to get more young people ready for college so they can succeed in higher education.

The time for making excuses is over. When we look at what's happening in districts like these five today, we know that anything is possible, and we can hold them up as a model for success for the entire nation. That's why we've been so grateful for the extraordinary work of The Broad Foundation, celebrating excellence and challenging us all to go further and faster.

And we have to answer Eli and Edythe's challenge because none of us, no one here is satisfied with the status quo. We all know that for every child in America, a quality education is not just possible, but necessary. It is the foundation of a strong and healthy society, both a moral obligation and an economic necessity.

And so, today, we honor five extraordinary school districts, each of which is deserving of The Broad Prize. Unfortunately, only one of them can win. But they all deserve our deepest praise and our respect. And now, let's announce the winners.

This is the moment we've all been waiting for. So rather than just announce the winner, this year I'm told we're going to try and have a little fun here.

[Laughter.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Instead, I'll be working backwards and asking the superintendents of the four districts that will receive the \$250,000 in scholarship money as Broad Prize finalists to come forward one by one in random order—I want to emphasize this is in random order—to be formally recognized for your district's incredible efforts to raise student achievement.

So our first district, and I know you've waited six months, and we'll now have the first district that's a finalist and has won the \$250,000 in college scholarships. The first district is Ysleta School District. Ysleta.

[Applause.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Our second finalist is the Montgomery County Public Schools. Montgomery County.

[Applause.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Our third finalist is Socorro Independent School District.

[Applause.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Our final finalist is the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

[Applause.]

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: And you've probably figured out our Broad Prize winner for 2010 is the Gwinnett County Public Schools. Congratulations.

[Applause.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: You know, I've had the pleasure of coming to New York two or three times a year. But I'm here to tell you, this is a great trip to New York.

[Laughter.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: Yesterday, I was here to visit the rating agencies. We're getting ready to sell some bonds, and we needed to do that. Had two great meetings. But today, there is no greater day in New York than when you can really be honored by The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation for the good things that're going on in public education.

And as I just think about the other four districts—Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Ysleta, Socorro, and my good friend here, Jerry Weast with Montgomery County—what great districts they are. There are a lot of great things going on.

But today, I really need to thank some people that have made this possible. And you know, Mr. Williams, I remember back in it was either 1980 or 1981, NBC was instrumental in producing a documentary called "If Japan Can, Why Can't We?" And Mr. Broad, that really started a revolution in industry that has moved to education.

And I think we really need to ask, as we think about Race to the Top or waiting for somebody or whoever, I believe that somebody should be us in public education—that we move forward and really make sure that we're delivering the quality and effective education that our students in this nation need. We can do that. We just need to begin in earnest today.

I also want to thank my board. They are here. I really can't think of five people who do more for public education than the Gwinnett Board of Education, if you all would stand up? I'm not sure if I'm supposed to do this or not, but I'll take liberty. Stand up.

[Applause.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: And then the people from the central staff that really carry on the day-to-day operations of the school district, if you all could take a bow. Thank you.

[Applause.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: But let me present to you the real heroes. The two people that make the most difference in the lives of children and their success are teachers and principals, represented by teacher Dr. Tim Mullen. Tim? And our principal, Jonathan Patterson.

[Applause.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: And I want every teacher and every principal in Gwinnett County Public Schools to understand it's not us in the district office. We're supposed to support what you do, but you're the ones that carry out the challenge of what we're supposed to do to educate children. We learned a long

time ago that our business is teaching and learning. The emphasis is on learning, and that has caused a sea change in what we do.

Secretary Duncan, I really appreciate your leadership. Appreciate you being here today. And you know, there is just about only one other thing that could really make this the greatest trip I've ever had to New York, if somebody could just get me a ticket to that Yankee ballgame tonight.

[Laughter.]

[Applause.]

J. ALVIN WILBANKS: I also need to thank the great county that we're from, Gwinnett County. The citizens demand quality and effective education, but they support it all the way from our Chamber of Commerce, the business community, the county government. And that's really what we're about is educating children.

I am just just pleased— and more than that, I am just thrilled to be able to represent the district, Gwinnett County Public Schools, and to be recognized by The Broad Foundation for what is being done in public education throughout this nation to educate our children.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: I want to again congratulate Gwinnett, as well as our other four districts. Can I have one more round of applause for all five of our finalists?

[Applause.]

GREGORY MCGINITY: So we come to the close of another great year of The Broad Prize. On your way out, please be sure to pick up a 2010 Broad Prize brochure that helps detail the specific policies and practices that these great school districts have used to be beacons of light in our education system.

We hope you'll join us next year in Washington, D.C., when we announce the 2011 Broad Prize winner on September 20th. And we look forward to seeing you at the reception just out through the lobby in the back.

Thank you very much for coming, and enjoy the rest of your day.

[Applause.]

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