



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

DAVID A. PATERSON
GOVERNOR

February 27, 2009

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to send greetings to everyone gathered for *A Nation of Neighbors Helping Neighbors: A Summit on Volunteerism as a Response to the Economic Crisis*, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the Fairfield University Center for Faith and Public Life.

As New York State and the Nation face historic challenges brought by the current economic crisis, the need for volunteer service is more urgent than ever. The national and global fiscal downturn has reached every sector, and Americans across the country are struggling in countless ways with the difficulties of today's economic climate.

However, there is cause for hope, as more and more citizens and groups nationwide are responding to the uncommon gravity of our times with a commonness of purpose – to help our neighbors in need. Today's summit shows us how we can harness the energy of this renewed commitment to service to fuel our great Nation's turnaround.

With their tremendous leadership, today's sponsors remind us of the power of volunteerism to unify and to bring light and hope to so many. Even in these difficult economic times, all of us – regardless of our age or background – have something to contribute to our neighbors and to our communities. The current crisis provides an opportunity for each of us to shape our Nation's future, and together we can open even bigger pockets of light for those struggling in the darkness of the current storm.

On behalf of all New Yorkers, I offer my best wishes for a productive summit and applaud all gathered for their commitment to ensuring a better future for all Americans.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

David A. Paterson