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Sent: Fri, 13 Sep 2013 06:54:24 -0400
From: "Jarrett, Valerie" <valerie_jarrett@who.eop.gov>
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: PROFILE: BET: Why I Serve: Nicole Isaac

Please take a look. An uplifting way to start your day.

From: Lewis, Kevin S.
Sent: Thursday, September 12, 2013 08:19 PM
To: Lewis, Kevin S.
Subject: PROFILE: BET: Why I Serve: Nicole Isaac

Why I Serve: Nicole Isaac

By Joyce Jones | BET.com

President Obama's special assistant for Legislative Affairs discusses the importance of being an agent of change.

Nicole Isaac, special assistant to the president for Legislative Affairs and former deputy director of legislative affairs for Vice President Joe Biden, literally grew up in two worlds. Weekdays were spent at New York's prestigious Fieldston School, where she studied alongside some of the city's most affluent children. It was a huge contrast to the gritty Bronx housing project that her family called home.

Living in one world and going to school in another, Isaac told **BET.com**, brought her to the realization that everyone should have access to opportunity and resources, regardless of their ZIP code. It also was a stark reminder that in too many African-American communities the opposite was true.

Still, as a civic-minded teenager, who volunteered at a local community center, she encouraged younger children to be optimistic about their futures.

"When I was 16, I met a [12-year-old boy] and tried to convince him that with education and hard work he could end up in a different place, maybe get a scholarship and have more opportunities," she said.

His response shocked her.

"He said, 'I just want to be alive when I'm 18, 21 and 25'," she recalled.

Isaac tried to convince him that he was wrong and even offered to work with him seek the access she spoke of. But six months later, the boy was dead – stabbed six stories below her kitchen window.

"I will always remember that as a pivotal moment when I knew that more had to be done and I had to be part of making that change," she said.

Isaac said that a high school summer internship with the New York City Commission on Human Rights gave her an opportunity to see how government can impact the lives of average Americans.

After earning an undergraduate degree at Brown University, a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania and master's degrees at Columbia University and Oxford, and a series of internships, Isaac went to work on Capitol Hill as legislative counsel for the nonpartisan House Office of Legislative Counsel and later as Senate floor counsel for Assistant Majority Leader Dick Durbin.

Read the full story [HERE](#) or go to BET.com

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@Klewis44