



July 14, 2017

Dear Respected Citizen Michelle Obama,

It is with great honor and enthusiasm that we respond to the call of the Obama Foundation inviting young citizens to become involved in your vision.

Shenandoah University is a non-profit institution of 4,000 students located in the Shenandoah Valley. We are not a wealthy Ivy League research university; instead we focus on teaching students to be active global citizens. Established in 1875, we aspire to educate students from diverse economic, racial, cultural, political and social backgrounds. We generate our wealth by creating a deep and extraordinary bond with our students under the umbrella of the concept of extended family.

In biographical writings, it is noted that “family,” is the most essential element in your life; you do not take a “no” for an answer and you followed your educational goals with determination and love to create a space for others. We see these principles communicated through the Obama Foundation inspiring future generations to become leaders for humanity in a global world.

**“Obama out,” were the last words of the President before he tossed the mic on the floor to be picked up by a young girl. Having watched your video, our students retrieved the mic to follow your message in offering the Foundation their voluntary hands. Through their own video, which can be viewed at [www.su.edu/obama](http://www.su.edu/obama), their longing to become part of your vision becomes known. Before following their goals, they are ready to listen to you, model citizen Michelle Obama, to speak and share the values and ideas of an extended family to an audience of students, faculty, sponsors, and others, so that your vision can manifest within the human family around the world.**

We would be honored to have you as our inaugural speaker for the opening ceremony of our new James R. Wilkins, Jr. Athletics & Events Center in spring 2018. If spring 2018 doesn't fit your schedule, then we can work with your calendar for anytime in 2018. Your leadership as a mother, First Lady, educated professional and role model carries an extraordinary energy that inspires people to become engaged, active citizens in our global world. Your message can likewise spark and empower our students to fulfill the vision of the Obama Foundation.

Sincerely,

Tracy Fitzsimmons, Ph.D.  
President

Office of the President