

Congratulations, Jacob



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Hi there,

Do you remember this photo?



I sure do.

In 2009, Carlton Philadelphia, a National Security Council staffer, brought his wife and two sons to the Oval Office for a departure photo. Carlton's older son, Isaac, asked me a few questions about policy, but a more surprising question came from his younger brother, five-year-old Jacob.

"Is your hair like mine?" he asked.

It wasn't the kind of question a president gets every day.

So, I bent down and told him, "Go ahead, touch it."

He replied, "Yeah, I think that's pretty much what I've got. "

White House photographer Pete Souza captured that moment and for years the photo hung in the halls of the West Wing. It was a reminder of one of the reasons I first ran for president: that if I were to win, young people—Black kids, Hispanic kids, kids who may not have always felt like they belonged—might see more possibilities for their own future.

It's hard to believe 13 years have passed. Today, Jacob will graduate high school and continue on to the University of Memphis to study political science. And I couldn't be more proud of him.

We recently reconnected to reflect on that moment and his journey since then: [Check out our reunion here.](#)

Congratulations, Jacob, and best of luck to the Class of 2022.

—Barack

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