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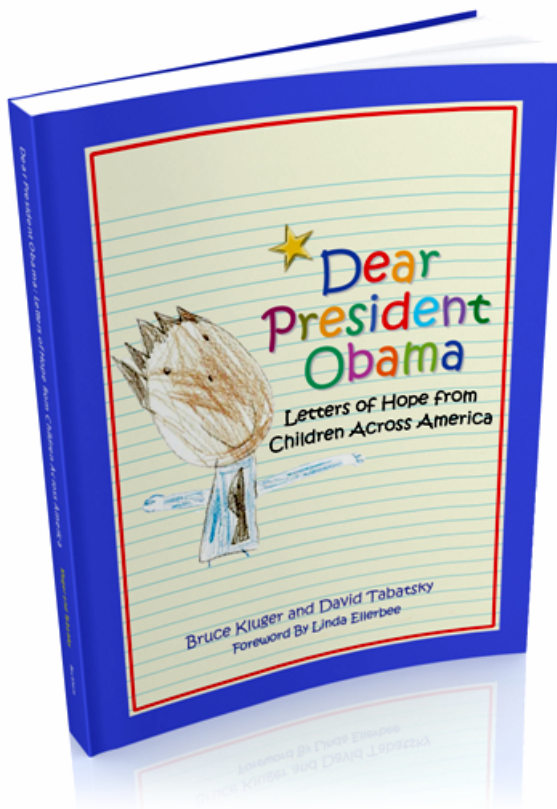
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*From New Mexico to New Hampshire, from blue states
to red states, from small towns to big cities...*

America's Children Speak Out!

*Beckham Publications Group releases "Dear President Obama,"
a landmark collection of letters and drawings from nearly 200 of the
nation's youngest citizens, with a Foreword by Linda Ellerbee*



NEW YORK — As the world continues to marvel at America's historic 44th presidency, Beckham Publications Group is proud to announce the release of *Dear President Obama: Letters of Hope from Children Across America*, an inspiring and visually vibrant collection of nearly 200 letters and drawings to President Barack Obama from children in 29 states, and every region of the country.

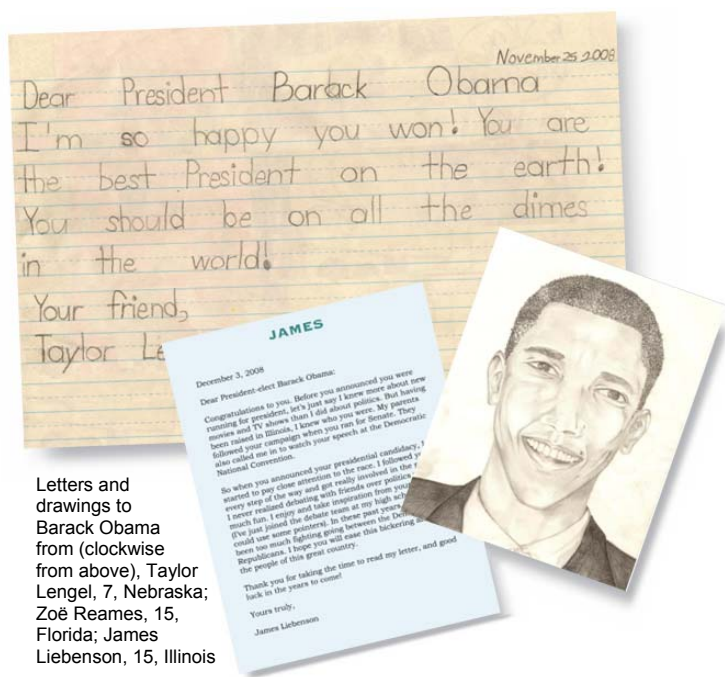
Compiled and edited by author-journalists Bruce Kluger (*USA Today*, National Public Radio) and David Tabatsky (*Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Cancer Book*), this unprecedented collection is the culmination of a four-month effort in which the young contributors, ages 4 through 18, not only wrote heartfelt letters to the President, but also collaborated with editors on the graphic presentation of their correspondences. In her thoughtful Foreword to the book, veteran journalist and host of Nickelodeon's long-running *Nick News*, Linda Ellerbee, praises the collection for both its passion and authenticity.

"Kids get it, they really get it," writes Ellerbee, "and after getting it, they often want to change it. They believe they can change their world...They understand that citizenship doesn't start when you're 18; it starts the day you're born. They are passionate and they want to participate. And that is the kind of honesty you will find in this book."

To the surprise—and delight—of its creators, *Dear President Obama's* evolution reflected the same kind of infectious enthusiasm that fueled the Obama campaign itself. On the day after the

November election, Kluger and Tabatsky had a simple idea: to recapture the exhilarating spirit of the 2008 presidential race from the perspective of our nation's youngest citizens. They emailed a handful of friends, inquiring if their children had something they wanted to say to the President-elect. Those friends forwarded the email to *their* friends – and within six weeks, Kluger and Tabatsky had received nearly one thousand submissions. Suddenly, their little experiment had become a nationwide, grass-roots project.

The 179 children ultimately selected for *Dear President Obama* represent a wide spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds – from the seventh-grader in a Manhattan private school, to a classroom of children in one of the poorest communities in Lincoln, Nebraska. Yet despite their differences, their letters are uniformly inspirational, as the young correspondents enunciate their hopes, fears and dreams about the world they live in, and their boundless excitement about the historic election that took place during their young lives.



Letters and drawings to Barack Obama from (clockwise from above), Taylor Lengel, 7, Nebraska; Zoë Reames, 15, Florida; James Liebenson, 15, Illinois



“I want my children’s children to see polar bears!” writes ten-year-old New Yorker Paola Wernick, about the environment. “Please do not forget Darfur,” pleads Tasha Slavin, 11, from Missouri. “Talk carefully on the radio,” warns San Franciscan Ashley Wu, 7, “and don’t talk too fast because you’re going to mess up if you do.”

And this from 14-year-old Casey Mack of Connecticut: “I was happy to see that someone who looks like me can be President of the United States of America. The kids at school have been saying some mean things about people who look like us. But now I believe we can change their negative points of view.”

As the nation faces the daunting challenges that lie ahead, *Dear President Obama: Letters of Hope From Children Across America* is an uplifting reminder of the unwavering optimism of our national spirit, and a testament to the great promise to be found in our future generations.

About the Authors

Bruce Kluger (www.brucekluger.com) is a writer, columnist and commentator whose work appears nationwide in newspapers and magazines and on the Internet. A member of the Board of Contributors of *USA Today*, Bruce is also a regular contributor to *Parenting* magazine, National Public Radio, *The Los Angeles Times* and The Huffington Post. He has written about current events, family and the popular culture for, among others, *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Boston Globe*, *Newsweek*, Time.com, Salon.com, Alternet.org, NickJr.com and the Sesame Street Workshop. He co-edited the books *The Right Words at the Right Time, Vol. 2: Your Turn!* (Atria Books) and *Thanks & Giving: All Year Long* (Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing), by

Marlo Thomas, and was co-author, with David Slavin, of the satirical memoir, *Young Dick Cheney: Great American* (AlterNet Books). Bruce lives in Manhattan with his wife and two daughters.

David Tabatsky (www.tabatsky.com) is the co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Cancer Book: 101 Stories of Courage, Support & Love* (March 2009). He was Consulting Editor for Marlo Thomas's bestselling book, *The Right Words at the Right Time, Volume 2: Your Turn!* (Atria Books). David wrote and published two editions of *What's Cool Berlin*, a comic travel guide to Germany's capital, and has written about family and culture for, among others, *The Forward*, *Parenting* magazine and *Sesame Street Parent*. He has worked professionally in theatre and circus as an actor, clown and juggler, and has taught and directed for The American School of London, die Etage in Berlin, the Big Apple Circus School and the United Nations International School. He is on the theatre faculty at Adelphi University and is a teaching artist for The Henry Street Settlement. David lives in New York City with his children, Max and Stella.

Linda Ellerbee (www.ldp.com) is an outspoken journalist, award-winning television producer, best-selling author, breast cancer survivor, mom, grandmother and one of the most sought-after speakers in America. Ellerbee began her career at CBS, and then moved to NBC News where she pioneered the late-night news program *NBC News Overnight*, which she wrote and anchored. In 1986, Ellerbee moved to ABC News to anchor and write *Our World*, a weekly primetime historical series. Her work on *Our World* won her an Emmy. In 1987, Ellerbee and Rolfe Tessem, her partner, quit network news to start Lucky Duck Productions, first producing documentaries for PBS. In 1991, Lucky Duck began producing *Nick News* for Nickelodeon, with Ellerbee writing and hosting. Eighteen years later, *Nick News* is watched by more children than watch all other television news shows put together, and has earned honors traditionally associated with adult programming. Known for the respectful and direct way it speaks to children about the important issues of our time, *Nick News* has collected three Peabody Awards, a duPont Columbia Award and six Emmys.

The Beckham Publications Group, Inc. (www.beckhamhouse.com) is the Internet's foremost source of multi-cultural and cutting-edge titles, as well as a leader in joint-venture publishing and self-publishing assistance. Founder Barry Beckham is also an acclaimed writer, whose books include the novels *Will You Be Mine?*, *Runner Mack* and *My Main Mother*, as well as *Double Dunk*, an innovative autobiography of Manhattan schoolyard basketball legend Earl ("The Goat") Manigault. Beckham lives and works in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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DEAR PRESIDENT OBAMA

Letters of Hope from Children Across America

By Bruce Kluger and David Tabatsky

Foreword by Linda Ellerbee

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