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### Obama HQ

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#### Hope Action Change: Nevada Preview

By **SAM GRAHAM-FELSEN** - MAR 30TH, 2007 AT 4:50 PM EDT

Tony Cannella of Henderson, Nevada is a 64-year-old retired veteran of the Vietnam War. He supports Senator Obama because he believes Barack will help bring "our brothers and sisters back home" from Iraq. But he also sees Barack as a once-in-a-generation leader.

Periodically, people like Mohandas Gandhi, John Kennedy, and Martin Luther King come along who touch our souls. They inspire us with their ideas. They offer a clear vision of a better world. They have the values, integrity, insight, and empathy that we long for in a leader. Barack Obama is a man who offers us a new type of politics; one without hostility, with a cooperative spirit that reaches across party lines for the common good. Barack Obama is a man that we need. And his time is now! Sam, that is why I am working to elect Barack Obama the next President of these United States.

Tony decided he wanted to do everything he could to convince Barack to run, and so he served as state director of the **Draft Obama** movement. Since then, he's connected with Joshua Murphy, who heads up **Southern Nevada for Obama**, a group that already has about 150 members, according to Cannella.

Tony's throwing a **Hope Action Change get together** with "about fifteen or twenty" Nevadans tomorrow at his house in Henderson. "It's a small place, but I wanted to get as many people in as I could," he says.

"It's very rare when someone comes along who you vote *for*," says Tony. "Usually you vote for the better of the two. It's not the case here with Barack. I'm voting for *him*."

Billy Howard, another Nevadan who supports Barack and is throwing his own Hope Action Change party, concurs. "For many of us Barack represents not just change, but a very intense, very real kind of change."

Billy and his mother Dorrie, who just turned 87 (but certainly doesn't look it!), have joined a group called **RENObama**, and are **hosting an event tomorrow in Reno** as well. For both Billy and his mother, the Iraq war is one of the main reasons they're throwing support behind Barack.



Dorrie is a World War II veteran. She was serving as a nurse on the USS Comfort, taking care of wounded soldiers, when her ship was bombed off the coast of Okinawa. "She's been strongly antiwar ever since," says Billy.

Dorrie began supporting Barack after seeing him talk about the Iraq war on television a few weeks ago. "Tears came to her eyes," says Billy. "She said, 'You look into the man's eyes and you can just see his intelligence.'"



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She believes him, she trusts him, and she likes him. And she thinks he can end this war."

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### Hope Action Change: From Kenya to Chicago

By **SAM GRAHAM-FELSEN** - MAR 30TH, 2007 AT 1:25 PM EDT

Illinois resident Kathy Tate-Bradish has been to Kenya four times in the past five years, working as a schoolteacher in a rural village.

The first time she went was in the summer of 2004, when Barack was gaining momentum in his run for Senate. Some people had heard of him, and word was beginning to spread that a son of a Kenyan was coming close to capturing an office of great importance in America. The next time Kathy visited, in the fall, after Obama's victory, word had gotten around fast, and Kenyans were ecstatic that one of their own had gone on to the US Senate. Kathy brought a few Obama posters and handed them out to people she worked with at the school.

Through a contact I had on the campaign, I arranged to have him sign a campaign poster "To the Students and Staff of Lavenda Springs Academy". I laminated that poster and brought it with me in October of 2004. It still hangs in a place of honor in the principal's office. When I went back last summer I brought photos of Barack and Michelle. I regularly send newspaper and magazine articles following his career to the school, and the teachers use them as English reading and for political discussion.

Here's Kathy and her daughter Jessy with the president of the Nakuru, Kenya Rotary. "By last summer all of Kenya was buzzing about him, and all of the Rotarians wanted their photo taken holding the photo of Barack," says Kathy.



Kathy also gave an Obama poster to a group of local women. "The women's group there loves Michelle," Kathy says. "I've also brought them photos of her and stories about her balancing of career and parenthood."



Obama was a "huge ice-breaker" for Kathy when she first got to know the people in her village. Kathy had once met Barack Obama at a fundraiser, and "so many people wanted to shake my hand because they heard I had shaken his hand!"

But even in Kenya, Kathy says, Barack's popularity is much deeper than simple celebrity worship. The people of Kenya, she says, are deeply grateful to Barack for the speech he gave in Kenya last summer, where he criticized Kenyan government officials for corruption and media censorship.

The way he addressed corruption last summer with the media and the government there—that was amazing. Corruption is the single biggest thing keeping not only Kenyans, but all Africans, down. I can't get stuff to the school—I can't ship stuff there because it gets stolen at the docks, I can't mail stuff because it gets stolen by post office. There's been a container sitting at the port from Mombasa with Christmas gifts from the Christmas before last. It's been a year and a half. I shipped uniforms to the school, which were stolen, the money we paid getting it through customs was stolen. Corruption is just killing them but nobody has been able to speak out against it because they fear for their own security. Barack spoke out against it, publicly, in Kenya. I honestly think the speech he gave will be one of the major factors that turns the tide against corruption.

And while corruption in the United States may not be as direct and overt, Kathy says she also admires Obama for the work he's doing to clean up politics here. "There's so much soft money going around. I mean, it's not like people can't get running water, but there's corruption here too," she says.

Kathy plans on going back to Kenya in June with her two daughters, and this time, she's got a "whole tub full of Obama '08 stuff" to give out. In the meantime, she's **throwing a Hope Action Change get-together** at her house in Evanston, Illinois, right outside of Chicago.

"The way he's received in Kenya is just... goose-bumpy. We love him here too. He's magic," says Kathy, "I can't explain it."

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## 75,000!

By **SAM GRAHAM-FELSEN** - MAR 30TH, 2007 AT 12:41 AM EDT

We just hit our **goal of 75,000** people giving to this campaign.

That's a huge number. Figures this big can obscure the fact that behind each number is an actual human being with a real story and a personal reason for giving.

Number 75,000 gave a five dollar donation.

I decided to call number 75,000, and as it turns out, there's quite a story behind that five dollars.

Rashed R. is a 28-year-old IT help desk specialist from Long Beach, California:

This is the first time I've given to any type of campaign. I studied political science in school, but it's really rare when someone comes along like this—someone who's intelligent, ethical, and persuasive all rolled up into one.

His background really intrigued me too. I was in the Navy right out of high school and traveled to eight different countries when I was 18. My dad was in the military and I moved a lot as a child too. I remember feeling like an outsider. When I read Barack's book, *Dreams From My Father*, I connected to it, because he moved around a lot as a kid, and he felt like an outsider for a while too.

Rashed supports Barack for other reasons that hit close to home, too. His wife, Sumiko, is thrilled at the prospects of seeing Obama win the presidency, in part, because she is half-West African.

Most of all, Rashed feels that Barack has given him new hope for his daughter, Yasemin: