



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

April 15, 2015

Branam Thompson
Wayne Middle School
200 Pioneer Road
Wayne, West Virginia 25570

Dear Branam,

Thank you for your letter. I love to hear from students and appreciate your questions about being the governor of South Carolina. I hope the enclosed information is helpful to your project.

It is a privilege and an honor to serve as governor of this great state. I am the first female governor and first minority governor in South Carolina's history. Growing up, I never thought about running for office. I was never involved in student government or party politics. When I was thirteen years old, I started doing the accounting books for my family's business, a retail clothing store. My background in both my family business and, later, corporate business motivated me to run for the legislature because I wanted the Statehouse to be more business friendly and to spend tax dollars more wisely. When, after six years in the House, I couldn't get what I wanted done as a legislator, I decided to run for governor. My mother always told me, "Don't complain about it; do something about it," so that's what I did.

Trying to become governor was challenging. I ran against a Congressman, a State Attorney General, a Lieutenant Governor, and a State Senator, so I had tough competition. There were many differences between myself and the other candidates but, by finding and using the power of my voice, I showed that my differences didn't matter and that I could bring people together. I encourage you to find the power of your voice and get involved in your community. Your special gifts and talents are needed by those around you.

Thanks again for writing. Keep up the good work, and I wish you the best of luck in the future. God bless.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nikki".

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/ld

Enclosure

A handwritten note in black ink that reads "Thanks Branam!" with an exclamation mark.