

President of the Republic of France

Dear Members of the Cercle Jefferson and International Visitor Alumni:

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate you for launching the directory of your organization, which is a testament to French-American friendship.

I am pleased for several reasons.

First, because I, myself, am an alumnus of this program and because I, like you, had the pleasure of visiting the United States and discovering that immense country during that exceptional journey.

Second, because this program is testament to the vitality and importance of citizen diplomacy, which means that, beyond the borders of a country, each citizen may legitimately advance our ideals and values through meetings and exchanges. These are the democratic values that the French and the Americans hold so dear.

Finally, because the Cercle Jefferson, created after the September 11th attacks, is once again testament to the enduring alliance between our two peoples and our two countries. It is this message of friendship between France and the United States of America that I brought before the United States Congress on behalf of the French people.

Please allow me to reiterate my best wishes for the Cercle's success and congratulate you on your efforts to promote French-American friendship.

Long live the friendship between France and the United States of America!

Nicolas Sarkozy
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