



Dear Adams Memorial Commission,

I have always believed that we only get one choice, and that is what you want to give your life for. Early on in my life, I, along with Dr. King and many others, decided that the fight for civil rights was worth us risking our lives. I was influenced in part by John Adams, my favorite U.S. President, along with our country's other Founding Fathers, who also risked their lives in a fight for freedom. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." These words were written by Thomas Jefferson, who was recruited to write them by John Adams. Adams had previously written the Massachusetts Constitution, which remains the oldest constitution currently in effect in the world and is the model of our own U.S. Constitution. I'm a free man because of these founders and many others.

The resolute commitment of the Adam's family to these higher ideals is one of specific importance to my own life. The success of John Quincy Adams in defending the liberty of the Amistad Captives before the Supreme Court is directly responsible for the formation of the American Missionary Association. The Association, originally a body organized only to finance a defense of the Amistad Captives, became a permanent and leading body of the abolitionist cause as a result of Adam's involvement. They later went on to found many of the earliest HBCUs, including Dillard University, the same one I later attended.

The Adams Memorial will serve as an important reminder of our nation's founding principles embodied by the Adams legacy.

Peace and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Young".

Andrew Young

COMMUNICATING POSSIBILITIES
DEVELOPING LEADERS