



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 15 2009

Mr. Daniel Manzoni
123 Jasper Place
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

Dear Daniel:

When I wrote to USDA employees in July to encourage you to take part in United We Serve, President Barack Obama's summer of service initiative, I knew that you would respond enthusiastically. You did not disappoint. You and your colleagues shared truly wonderful stories that affirmed the pride I feel about being the Secretary of this great Department. Accordingly, I am writing to thank you personally for your extraordinary dedication to serving your community and your country through volunteerism.

Thanks to the stories you submitted and the survey you completed at my request, I was able to give the President an impressive report on the volunteer efforts that we as a Department made this summer. The President, the First Lady, and I all deeply appreciate the commitment that you and Americans all over the country have made to serving those in need.

I also wanted especially to recognize you, Daniel, because you are one of the top 100 USDA employees who are especially passionate about community service. In recognition of your commitment and enthusiasm, I am proud to present you with the President's Volunteer Service Award. While I know that volunteering to help people in our communities is deeply rewarding in and of itself, I also wanted to communicate how much your service means to me.

During these difficult times, and especially during this holiday season, we all need to ask ourselves if there is anything more we can give to help improve the lives of our neighbors next door and beyond. The President and First Lady have often said that each of us has a role to play in contributing to a better future for our country. I want to thank you again for going above and beyond the call of your official duties and making truly remarkable contributions to that future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Vilsack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Vilsack" clearly legible.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary