



All the Best Podcast
Episode 38: "Service Before Self"
*Featuring Former Deputy Chief of Staff and Current Interim CEO of the
George and Barbara Bush Foundation, Andy Card*

Andy: November 19th, 1990, We've been to Czechoslovakia in a very moving and historic visit, the first visit of an American president to Czechoslovakia and, obviously, the first since the Czechoslovakian Revolution. I've spoken at Wenceslas Square, one year after the communists went out, Estimate was 750,000 people. It was wall to wall. I regretted we had to be in a plexiglass cocoon, dictated by the security people. But even that did not detract from the moment. I felt a sense of awe, standing with President Havel. Havel is a very modest, close to shy man, unpretentious to the T. He took great pleasure in introducing me to his playwright and his artistic friends. This man was in jail a year ago. This man was beaten and driven to his knees but refused to give up. We can never take our democracy for granted.

George: In the first place, I believe that character is a part of being president.

Barbara: And life really must have joy.

Sam: This is "All the Best," the official podcast of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. I'm your host, Sam LeBlond, one of their many grandchildren. Here, we celebrate the legacy of these two incredible Americans through friends, family, and the foundation. This is "All the Best."

We're Mountaineers, volunteers.

We're the tide that rolls, we're Seminoles.

Yeah, we're one big country nation, that's right.

George: I remember something my dad taught me. He said, "Write your mother, serve your country." And he said, "Tell the truth." And I've tried to do that in public life all though it.

And we're one big country nation, that's right.

Barbara: You are a human being first and those human connections with children, with friends, are the most important investment you will ever make.

George: We stand tonight before a new world of hope and possibilities for our children, a world we could not have contemplated a few years ago.

Sam: On behalf of our family and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation, this is "All the Best."

Yeah, we're one big country nation, that's right.

Sam: Secretary Andrew Card is making a second appearance on "All The Best" after recently being named interim CEO of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. In his first appearance on the show, Andy shed light on the 1980 presidential election, my grandfather's role as vice president and his relationship with Ronald Reagan, and shared his thoughts on the impact my grandparents had as President and First Lady. Andy has held numerous positions at senior levels of government under three presidents throughout the years, including Chief of Staff to my uncle, President George W. Bush, Deputy Chief of Staff to my grandfather, as well as Deputy Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs under President Reagan. In addition to his new CEO position, Andy is also the chairman of the National Endowment for Democracy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world. Andy, thank you so much for joining us again on "All The Best."

Andy: I am thrilled to be with you, Sam.

Sam: Well, Andy, for over 40 years, you've served my grandfather, my uncle, and more important, our country, in so many capacities. You're on the White House staff, Deputy Chief of Staff, Secretary of Transportation, then the longest-serving White House Chief of Staff before becoming interim dean of the George Bush School at Texas A&M and then the president of Franklin Pierce College. Well, that's an amazing career in itself. In the last few weeks, you've agreed to lead the George and Barbara Bush Foundation as our interim CEO, while a national search is underway for a more permanent CEO going forward. So my question is why this job and why now?

Andy: Well, first of all, I'm doing this as a volunteer because I love everything that has to do with George and Barbara Bush. And David Jones was serving as the CEO and he retired. And so the Board made a decision that we were going to do a nationwide search for CEO that would reflect the reality that those of us

who served President Bush with him are now getting a little long in the tooth, and we need someone younger and more vibrant to run the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. So I've stepped in to help the Foundation transition from David Jones to a new successor that we don't know yet. But I am committed to, not only the ongoing work that the George and Barbara Bush Foundation do and they do a lot and I want to talk about that, but I also am committed to making sure that the legacy of George and Barbara Bush is well-understood, appreciated, and replicated. Hopefully, it will become contagious so people will want to live the kind of life that George Bush lived. And I'm not talking about the privilege, I'm talking about the service. He and Barbara Bush were both very giving people. They gave much more than they ever took. They gave in ways that most people don't even think about and I'm a witness to a lot of it. I've been very privileged.

I first met George H.W. Bush, I want to say it was in 1972. It was very, very early on. I was very impressed with him then. He wasn't the best speaker in the room but his words were the most impactful. And I paid attention to his words. And this was at a time after Watergate where people were attacking all of our institutions, especially our political institutions. But he talked about the institutions of government. He talked about the institutions of democracy and the role that partisan politics plays in our democracy, the two-party system. So I was turned on to George H.W. Bush, not because of his dynamic personality, not because he was the most handsome person in the room, I was impressed by what he stood for and how he lived his life. And so I signed on very early to be part of the "George Bush for whatever he wants to be" effort. And fortunately, that took him on to becoming vice president, then the president, and then the father of the president, and more significantly, a conscience for a generation. And I'm proud to say that I want to help make sure that conscience is alive and well and I can say that it is, because, Sam, you reflect what George H.W. Bush wanted you to reflect.

Sam: Well, so do you, Andy, and we're so lucky to have you at the helm, even for a temporary basis, steering us into the future with the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. We're in good hands. Andy, I want to talk about the name, George and Barbara Bush Foundation, because a little over a year ago, with my grandparents' full knowledge and blessing, the Foundation changed its name to become the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. What was the name before and why the change? Has the educational mission at the core of the Foundation changed as well?

Andy: Well, the name of the foundation was the President George H.W. Bush Presidential Foundation. It was the formal presidential foundation that was created after he left the presidency, and to support the museum and the library

where all of his records are stored and where his life is told. But more significantly, what President Bush did when he left the White House, he said that he wanted a foundation but he wanted to have that foundation support a school, rather than an institute, because he wanted to invite young people to follow a path of public service and be trained in that opportunity. So he created a school of public service at Texas A&M University and the Bush Foundation is housed right next to the Bush School, right next to the Presidential Library, right next to the archives. And they also hold all of the documents of Barbara Bush. And Barbara Bush is a force on to herself but President Bush would not have been who he was if it wasn't for Barbara Bush being there. And we decided the Bush world is so much bigger than just what he did in politics or what he did as president and that it includes what Barbara Bush did, that the Foundation really should be the George and Barbara Bush Foundation because their collective legacy is remarkable. Their individual legacies are remarkable. So Barbara Bush's legacy of compassion and becoming a conscience to make sure that we invited people to be fully engaged in our country by having a literate education where they could really read, and understand, and participate. And the President, he proudly said he created the Points of Light foundation. It was really Barbara Bush that was the first person to use the term. We said, "Let's have a foundation that respects both of them, helps everybody understand the legacy that they both gave us, and the collective legacy that they gave us." And that's what it is. So it is the George and Barbara Bush Foundation at Texas A&M University, on the campus, right next to the Bush School, right next to the Bush Presidential Library, and it's right near where their permanent resting place is. And part of my job is to make sure that the George and Barbara Bush Foundation puts together programs that highlight the tremendous contributions they made to the world. But we also invite people to make a difference today. So it's not just reflecting on the past, it's actually putting a conscience into how everyone lives their life today, reflecting the theme of your podcast, "All The Best."

Sam: Thanks, Andy. I want to talk about Texas A&M because, of course, my grandparents dearly loved A&M, the spirit, the traditions, the values, but most of all, the Aggies themselves. How critical is this vital partnership with Texas A&M for the three institutions that comprise the Bush Center in College Station: the School, the Library and Museum, and the Foundation?

Andy: Well, I was involved in the "search where to put his presidential library and museum and whether or not to have a school or an institute." So I remember him saying he wanted a school. He was going to focus on what the future should be, so he was gonna focus on the school, not an institute, yet in young people. It would bear his name and hopefully, they would want to go into public service. And he was very ingratiated to Texas A&M because they had

welcomed him twice as president and I remember him saying, "Every time I went to that campus, I was greeted as a friend, treated with respect, and I felt as if service above self was what they were living and practicing." I can honestly say I felt his thumb was on the scale the whole time we did these objective searches to where to put his library, foundation, and school. And I wasn't surprised when he said, "I want it to be at Texas A&M." And that's because of the service that Texas A&M has demonstrated for this country, going back for 150 years.

And, you know, if you go on campus, there is a great sense of clean campus. And I remember being in an office that overlooked a big part of the campus when I was working in the Provost's Office. And there was a fellow visiting and I said, "Turn around and look at that campus and say what you see." And he said, "I see all of these kids coming out of buildings and walking to go to another building." I said, "That's because classes are getting out and they're moving from one class to another class. But tell me what you see." And then he's looking and he says, "No one's walking on the grass. They're walking on the pathways." And I said, "That is Texas A&M. Everybody respects what they're supposed to be doing and they treat everything with respect and everybody with respect." And that's how George Bush saw the campus and that's why he put his library there.

But it's also a partnership where they were very generous. They gave the land for where the Bush Library is, where the Bush School is, and where the Bush Presidential Center is. They share the cost of maintaining that land and they give us a place to work. They are full partners in what they do and we, hopefully, are a complement with the need to what Texas A&M does. I guarantee that they're a complement, with an "e" and an "i", to what the Bush world does.

Sam: I'm glad you mentioned the two-way street of admiration because I remember firsthand during both of their funerals. And seeing the outpouring of love and support from Texas A&M, to see the droves of people who came out and stood in the heat just to have a glimpse of either my grandmother or grandfather was really inspiring and truly is a mutual love between my grandfather and grandmother and Texas A&M and vice-versa. So it's really a special group.

Andy, your predecessor, David Jones, who retired in early June after four years as CEO, put some plans in motion to make some big enhancements at the Bush Center, including a retired Marine One helicopter, updates to my grandmother's exhibit and others in the Museum, and the Union Pacific Engine 4141. Where do all these big plans stand, currently?

Andy: I'm gonna start with the Bush Engine 4141, which President Bush rode behind that engine many times in his life and the most important time when his life was over. It took him on his final trip. And Union Pacific has donated that engine, 4141, to the Bush Foundation to be displayed outside on the campus. As you're coming into Texas A&M and you're going into the Bush Presidential Center, you'll be able to see Engine 4141. And it was a remarkable trip that the President took very slowly from Houston to his resting site. And literally, millions of people lined the track during that trip. And it became iconic, not just in Texas, not just in the United States, but all around the world. It's amazing how many people saw that train haul President Bush to his final resting place. So it's a great gift for Union Pacific to give it to Texas A&M. We now have to raise money to make sure that it is well-displayed and I'm in the process of doing that. We've had some very generous people. I expect the train to show up in about a year. I think about this time next year, we may have it on-site and well-displayed. And we're working hard to do it so if people would like to contribute to the 4141 gift of that engine, we need it. We want the help and we'll take it.

The helicopter. I just got an email from David Jones last week saying the helicopter is on-track, and that should be showing up late 2021. And that's also something that is remarkable because there were very few helicopters that get retired. They should have been retired many, many, many years ago but they've finally reached their endgame, and they're being retired. And we've applied for one and have been told by the Navy and the Marine Corps that we're gonna be able to get one. So now, we have to number one, raise the money to make sure that it is cleaned up, which really means everything inside is taken out so that those secrets passed on with the helicopter that we would get and then have it transported to Texas A&M, put it inside of a building and that's where we're talking about having a restaurant. But more importantly, a destination for people to come to see "What does a presidential helicopter look like and how cool is it to go on it?" It's unbelievably cool. So everybody thinks of Air Force One, we're gonna get an Air Force One, too, but we think Marine One is even cooler than Air Force One. And it used to take the President almost every week someplace. And we're almost always taken to Andrews Air Force Base to get on that Air Force One. Lots of times it would take him to Camp David, which was his favorite place to go when he was President of the United States. So that helicopter was more of a home, even more than Air Force One was, when the President was in office. And we're looking forward to having Marine One.

And then the big thing would be to get Air Force One, the last of the 747s and that's a work in progress. We don't know if we can get it yet. We know we're in the list to have a chance to get it. We have to raise an awful lot of money to do

it. But I tell you, Texas A&M is really excited about having a train, a helicopter, and a plane, all these reasons to come see Texas A&M's campus in College Station, Texas. And the public that comes will not be disappointed when they see any one of those, never mind all three of them.

Sam: Well, you've talked about planes, trains, helicopters. Something else that you've had to deal with is COVID-19. Andy, how has the Foundation adjusted to the new normal we've all encountered due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Andy: We have become digital partners with each other. The same way I'm talking to you on this podcast, I talk to the staff at Texas A&M. The campus is closed because of COVID-19 and we're following all the rules of Texas A&M. We're being very careful. The staff is staying away. One or two people go into the office. They all wear a mask. They've been doing everything right, paying attention. But it's a scary time in Texas and as you know, Texas has got a lot of hotspots going on right now. Thankfully, College Station isn't one of the hotspots. But they're all around us and we want to make sure that everybody's safe in College Station so I'm telling people, "Wear the mask out of respect for other people. Number two, practice social distancing out of respect for other people and your own protection. Number three, don't congregate with big crowds." So that's what we're trying to do.

We're still pursuing the legacy and making it such that people will pay attention. I, just today, finished a wonderful event sponsored by the George and Barbara Bush Foundation to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. And we had over 1000 people participate in the process. But that's what we're doing. So we're putting lots of events together digitally, that celebrate the legacy of both Bushes, George Bush and Barbara Bush. The Bush Foundation is alive and very well. And we are thriving but we're also making sure that we're the right kind of partner in whatever we do, and we're attentive to the realities that COVID-19 is something that will spread quickly if we don't practice social distancing and wear a mask.

Sam: Andy, what do you think my grandparents would say if they were here coping with everything required by the pandemic: the social distancing, the masks, and the like?

Andy: First of all, I think they would respect the advice that comes from their health care professionals. And Tony Fauci served George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush. I have tremendous respect for him. And both the Bushes that I've worked with did listen to Tony Fauci when he would talk and what he would say to do, and they would try to follow that direction. They also cared deeply about the least of us so they would say, "No. Let's do what's right, not

for ourselves but for other people. It's a call to arms. A government is only as good as the people that it represents. Be one of those good people because the government will be better because of you."

Sam: Well, Andy, I want to end with this. What's the state of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation? And if you could, what's one thing you hope to accomplish during your time as interim CEO?

Andy: First of all, my goal is to make sure that the foundation of the Foundation is solid, and it certainly is from a context of content. We've got the best content in the history of democracy about what it means to be in service. You can see it by going through the Museum and see what George and Barbara Bush's life was like and it was a life of service. You can do it by looking at the documents that are in the archives in the Library that show not only what good was but how they made good happen, by making laws, and by motivating people and getting people engaged. So I want to make sure that foundation is very solid and it will be there for a long time for us to go and have a physical look at what their life was like and what their documents were like. What's of greater concern, I want the foundation of the Bush School to be solid so that it will always attract students for the next 150 years. They will go to the Bush School of Government and Public Service, committed to giving a life of service in government, whether it's local government, or state government, or the federal government, or international government. And remember, George H. did an awful lot at the UN and serving in China, and doing other things. I want the living legacy of George Bush not to be the Andy Cards, or the Condi Rices, or the Bob Gateses of the world, I want it to be the graduates of the Bush School. And as you know, the Bush School turns out the best and the brightest. Of all of the public policy schools in America, the school with the highest percentage of people that go into public service after they graduate are the graduates of the Bush School at Texas A&M. My commitment is to make sure the financial foundation of the Foundation is solid for the next CEO, that the legacy is respected and well-understood for the next 100 years, and that the living legacy will continue by fostering opportunities for students to go to the Bush School, finding their path to public service, getting on that path, making a difference, and being contagious in what they do. Barbara Bush and George Bush were so contagious with their love, number one, with their mutual respect for their passion for service and for a call to do better. If that's not all the best, nothing is worth it.

Sam: Well, Andy, I've said it before, we are so lucky to have you at the helm even for a temporary basis, steering the George and Barbara Bush Foundation into the future. Thanks for coming on "All the Best."

Andy: Thank you, Sam.

Sam: I'm Sam LeBlond, reminding you to listen, share, and subscribe to "All the Best" on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and everywhere great podcasts are found. Thank you for joining me as we celebrate "All the Best."

Yeah, we're one big country nation, that's right.

Barbara: Both George and I believe that while the White House is important, the country's future is in your house, every house, all over America.

George: Preparedness, strength, decency, and honor, courage, sacrifice, the willingness to fight, even die for one's country. America, the land of the free and the brave. And God bless the United States of America, the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

