

The Obama Era: *Their Importance to the Black Community*

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As one of the most beloved former First Families, the Obamas are an example of an exceptional family, but most importantly, an example of hard work to the black community.

As an eighth grader, I didn't quite understand the significance of former President Barack Obama in 2008. To me, he was just another president, but with a darker skin complexion. I didn't understand why my history teacher at Perkins Middle School pressured us to take interest in the election, especially when we didn't know what the hell they were talking about. I didn't understand why my mother interrupted my sleep during election night, jumping up and down as if we'd won the lottery. With a blanket wrapped around my body, I wiped the sleep from my eyes, followed her downstairs and sat on the couch, pretending to know what I was watching. I mean, I knew I was watching the country's first black president, but I didn't comprehend the depth of this representation until I grew older. Now that I'm older and more aware of the hardships black people face, I can fully interpret just how monumental the Obamas are.

By winning a seat that was always reserved for white men, Barack Obama unknowingly set a standard for his black supporters, but specifically his young ones. He heightened the motivation of young black people within the political world as well as regular black people who just wanted to do better for themselves. He simply set a standard for being black.

However, politics aside, the Obamas serve as an exceptional role-model family within the black community in general. From the South Side of Chicago, Illinois to The White House, the Obamas put their Ivy League degrees to use, all while remembering who they are and who they represent.

For me, seeing the Obamas as the pure essence of black family members is what made them so relatable. Although being black is multifaceted, the Obamas didn't switch up and try to change themselves because of their position. Of course,

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professionalism was increased because of the nature of their titles, but no soul was lost. Barack Obama still maintained his untouchable Chicago swagger, winning the medal for the most suave president ever, and I'm sure he still talked as slick as he did when he finally won Michelle over. Also, no matter how stressed he was from various politicians' antics, he kept his hairline crispy and in tip-top shape by flying out to his personal barber every two weeks—a laughable and relatable action, if I say so myself. Michelle Obama also holds the record for the most stylish former First Lady. Her smooth, chocolate skin glistened in her designer dresses, complementing her to-die-for curvy hips and toned arms. Just a mere sight of her poised posture and elegant look added a grin to our faces, as we watched her glide admirably across the TV screen. Raising their two beautiful daughters as black as they could and never forgetting where they came from, living in The White House sure didn't put a damper on Michelle's black mom ways.





We could tell that Michelle “didn’t play,” which of course is the most identifiable concept that connects us all. There’s something about those sharp looks and pursed lips that take us back to childhood. Nevertheless, Malia and Sasha Obama are well behaved children, living a balanced life, focusing on school and fun, exemplifying the best of both worlds. One of my favorite characteristics of Michelle Obama, however, is her balance. She knows how to be a strong, black woman beside, behind and in front of her husband. She knows when to take the reins but also trusts her man when she should, which is one of the ultimate strengths of a woman. Michelle Obama is the epitome of a beauty and beast, while staying fabulous nonetheless.

As a 23-year-old black woman in a relationship with a black man, I can relate to the Obamas more so now than I did in eighth grade. They taught us what teamwork, focus, strength, black love and black excellence look like. I now understand why my middle school teacher tried to stress the importance of the 2008 election to the “hood kids” in the “bad demographic” school. I now understand why my mother jumped up and down as if we’d won the lottery, because in a sense, we did. Barack Obama, the black guy with the weird name, led by example and proved his worth to himself, America and, most importantly, to people who look like him.

