“The Legacies of America’s First Ladies conference series is an inside view into the lives of our first ladies. The series showcases how these women used their official role to the benefit of American citizens. Congratulations to Anita McBride, my former chief of staff, who conceived of this program and brought together historians, White House photographers, presidential advisers, and social secretaries to tell the stories through personal accounts of life in the White House. The presidency is about all of the people who join with that president in service to our remarkable nation, from their first lady to their staff. I appreciate American University and the White House Historical Association for their support of this fascinating series.”
—Laura Bush, former first lady of the United States

“I cannot imagine a better way to promote understanding and interest in the experiences of our first ladies.”
—Doris Kearns Goodwin, presidential historian

About Anita McBride

Anita B. McBride is executive in residence at the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University’s School of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C. She directs programming on the legacies of America’s first ladies and their influence on politics, policy, and global diplomacy. Prior to this appointment, she served as assistant to former president George W. Bush and chief of staff to former first lady Laura Bush. In the latter role, McBride advised the first lady on a diverse platform of domestic and international initiatives, and she directed the first lady’s foreign travel to nearly 70 countries in four years, including historic trips to Afghanistan, the Middle East, and the border of Thailand and Burma.

McBride’s public service spans two decades and three U.S. presidential administrations, with positions at the White House, the U.S. Information Agency, and the U.S. Department of State. She currently is a senior advisor to the George W. Bush Institute and an advisor to several global nonprofit organizations. McBride co-founded the RAND African First Ladies Initiative and Fellowship to strengthen the offices of first ladies across the continent of Africa.

McBride also serves on the board of several organizations, including the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, the U.S.–Afghan Women’s Council, and the White House Historical Association.

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