

NBC's *Today*

05/06/26

7:02:17 a.m. [TEASE]

23 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: One-on-One]

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: All of that, plus one-on-one. Former President Obama talking to Jenna about the upcoming opening of his Presidential Center a decade in the making.

BARACK OBAMA: The goal for me has been to create something that's a living monument, not to me, but to this idea of American citizenship.

GUTHRIE: What he hopes it will inspire for generations to come.

(...)

7:20:41 a.m. [TEASE]

9 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: 8:12AM; One-on-One With President Obama]

CRAIG MELVIN: Coming up, Jenna's conversation with former President Obama ahead of the opening of his Presidential Center in Chicago.

GUTHRIE: An inside look at his goals for the center and why the project is so personal to him.

(...)

8:00:42 a.m. [TEASE]

18 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Presidential Preview]

GUTHRIE: And presidential preview. Jenna sits down with former President Obama for a look at his new Presidential Center.

OBAMA: A space where communities come together to meet, to learn, to work with each other around projects that they care about.

GUTHRIE: Inside his historic new chapter decade in the making.

(...)

8:08:03 a.m. [TEASE]

11 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: 8:12AM; One-on-One With President Obama]

GUTHRIE: But first, Jenna's here with a one on one with the former President Obama ahead of the opening of his much anticipated Presidential Center, a project a decade in the making. Their must-see conversation right after this.

(...)

8:11:05 a.m.

6 minutes and 40 seconds

MELVIN: And we are back coming up on 8:11 now. Back with a special look inside former President Obama's Presidential Center ahead of next month's grand opening.

GUTHRIE: Yeah, he's been working on this project for a decade and Jenna, who's always sitting down with presidents and queens and such you heard all about it.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Barack Obama on New Presidential Center]

JENNA BUSH HAGER: Yes, I did. I was honored to recently interview all the former president ahead of our country's 250th anniversary. While there, I also got a chance to hear more about a historic new chapter for President Obama. We also got an exclusive sneak peek of them touring with staff and members of the community while having some fun along the way.

BARACK OBAMA [dates N/A]: At this defining moment, change has come to America. [CUT] The single most powerful word in our democracy is the word "we." [CUT] Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

BUSH HAGER: A presidential library is meant to serve as a window to the past, but for former President Barack Obama, that was never the whole plan. [TO OBAMA] I know that it's, of course, a place for history, but more than that, I've read that you want it to be a place for community.

OBAMA: Well, that's how we've conceived it. This campus is going to be 19 acres and there will be a museum there that records the presidency and has some of Michelle's dresses, which will be no doubt the most popular exhibit there. But that's really just one part of it.

BUSH HAGER: Rather than simply paying tribute to his historic two terms, President Obama envisions the center will also shape our collective future.

OBAMA: The goal for me has been to create something that's a living monument not to me, but to this idea of American citizenship. And if we can encourage that, then I'll feel pretty good. And I think people will really enjoy being there. [CUT] We've got a campus that's designed to model

the space where communities come together to meet, to learn, to work with each other around projects that they care about.

BUSH HAGER: President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama chose to build the center on Chicago's South Side, where they both began their lives in public service. That dedication to giving back as strong as ever on the brand new campus.

OBAMA: We've got a Chicago Public Library on site that's an actual library, not just some academic library. We've got community spaces for people to meet, recording studios for young people to come and talk about their lives and create art and music that can be inspiring.

BUSH HAGER: The Obama's greatest hope was to create a place to educate the next generation and inspire a sense of belonging.

OBAMA: We've got that playground for kids to play in — [RIDING DOWN A SLIDE] — that was fantastic — a community garden following up on what Michelle did and a basketball court and a gym, because I think sports are central to who we are, and an auditorium where public speakers will come to it, and young people who are bringing about change in their communities can come together and convene and learn and practice civic leadership.

BUSH HAGER: A lover of architecture, President Obama was deeply involved in the design process. And dozens of artists have contributed to every corner of the property.

OBAMA: We also have a whole bunch of amazing public art that is rare to see outside of some of the fancy museums downtown.

BUSH HAGER: But perhaps the most personal feature is what's tucked away for children. A water terrace, named in his mother's honor.

OBAMA: It's a fountain that's designed where kids can run in and out of the fountain and play in it and splash in it. And she loved kids.

BUSH HAGER: Ann Dunham was a scholar with big dreams.

OBAMA: Even as a young mom, she never gave up on herself, working for decades to complete a doctorate and champion global causes.

BUSH HAGER: Her determination and heart not lost on the little boy she helped raise. [TO OBAMA] When you sit there, what do you reflect on?

OBAMA: You know, my mom didn't live to see me as President. But she was reflected in everything I did as President because she was a kind person, somebody who believed in doing things for other folks and not just thinking for yourself. A lot of those values of respecting people regardless of their backgrounds and listening to them and learning from them. I learned from her.

BUSH HAGER: A legacy of steadfast hope and humanity —

OBAMA [IN PRESIDENTIAL CENTER OVAL OFFICE]: They did a good job. Looks like it's supposed to.

BUSH HAGER: — carried on through her son.

OBAMA: Well, I'm looking forward at some point to being able to sit there, maybe not right during the opening because it'll be really packed, but maybe 20 years from now where people won't know and I can kind of sneak over there and just sit there and watch some kids running through some water on a nice summer day and I know that would make her happy.

BUSH HAGER: It's pretty cool —

CARSON DALY: Wow.

BUSH HAGER: — how, you know, so much is personal.

MELVIN: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: I know Mrs. Obama wanted to put in a sledding hill because they grew up in Chicago —

MELVIN: Yeah.

GUTHRIE: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: — and always wished there was a sledding hill —

GUTHRIE: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: — nearby and now there will be. They want it to be, you know, a place where kids come or families come and on June 18th when it opens —

MELVIN: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: — it'll be a rare moment where all the presidents come back together, the former presidents come back together.

DALY: And you'll be there.

MELVIN: That's pretty cool.

BUSH HAGER: I won't be there.

MELVIN: It's going to be cool.

BUSH HAGER: No, I won't be there.

DALY: No more? No follow-up chats?

GUTHRIE: Is that the one where your dad's bringing a case of Altoids?

BUSH HAGER: I did — yeah. He's ordered a case of Altoid, and he will be bringing that —

GUTHRIE: Yes.

BUSH HAGER: — to Mrs. Obama.

MELVIN: I love the moment.

GUTHRIE: After their famous moment, not because she needs a case of Altoid —

MELVIN: Oh, no.

GUTHRIE: — so they have that cue.

DALY: No, good. Good.

BUSH HAGER: He loves, he sits next to her at all at the event funerals —

MELVIN: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: — and this will be a happier occasion.

MELVIN: America has come to really enjoy that dynamic between the two of them.

BUSH HAGER: Yeah, so he said he's purchased a Altoid.

MELVIN: Good. I love the location, by the way, of the — of the Presidential Center, that 19 and a half acres. It's — it's going to revitalize a part of Chicago, the desperately needs revitalization.

BUSH HAGER: Yes, yes.

MELVIN: So —

DALY: How does it work once it's open? I mean, it's just free and people go in there and use the gym and play hoops and kids with a playground?

BUSH HAGER: Well, I'm sure they're going to have partnerships with some, you know, with

nonprofits and things like that —

DALY: Okay.

BUSH HAGER: — because every single one operates differently, you know, their museums are testaments —

MELVIN: Yeah.

BUSH HAGER: — to history, but I think they really wanted this to be a community center as well.

MELVIN: The playground is going to be open to the public —

BUSH HAGER: Yeah.

DALY: Yeah, okay, cool.

MELVIN: — free and open to the public. Folks can just come and hang out.

DALY: Awesome.

BUSH HAGER: Awesome. By the way, you guys can find more on the Obama Presidential Center on our website *Today.com*.

GUTHRIE: All right, Jenna.

MELVIN: Which president tomorrow? Who are we going to hear from tomorrow?

BUSH HAGER: We're done. Yeah. It's over.

MELVIN: I love it.