



Former President Bill Clinton holds a copy of Sean Stephenson's book, "How YOUth can Succeed" while the two met recently in Chicago. Stephenson, of La Grange, has encountered Clinton many times through his work as a professional motivator.

## Motivator to motivator: Stephenson, Clinton chat

La Grange resident Sean Stephenson recently had the opportunity to hook up with an old pal. The 22-year-old professional motivator recently renewed acquaintances with former President Bill Clinton during a private meeting in a Chicago hotel.

Stephenson cannot recall the exact number of times he has met with or been acknowledged by Clinton.

"I first met him at Boys' Nation in 1996. Then I saw him while he was campaigning in Michigan City, Ind. He invited my family to the convention the next night. I met him again at Homewood-Flossmoor High School and then saw him several additional times."

He also ran into Clinton on several occasions while working as a White House intern during the summer of 1998. During that time, "I attended his birthday party in the Rose Garden," he recalled.

Stephenson's most recent visit with Clinton was the most exciting.

"Of all the encounters that I've had with him, this was the most fun time I've had," he said. "It was the most personal and the most relaxed, the most friend-to-friend."

When Clinton walked into the room, "It was unbelievable," Stephenson said. "The first thing out of his mouth was, 'Sean, am I glad to see you!' He sat down and we talked about all sorts of things ... He went right into being a regular guy."

Stephenson proudly presented Clinton with two copies of his book, "How YOUth Can Succeed" — one for Clinton and one for daughter Chelsea. He also solicited a statement from the former President on video to help promote his work.

"He said, 'Sean is an amazing person with an important message. All of the young people in the country ought to listen to him,'" Stephenson recalled.

When the two discussed the recent terrorist attacks on America and the need for renewal and recovery, Stephenson said Clinton urged him to "get into the schools."

"He told me that it's really important to talk to the kids," he said. "He told me, 'These kids are bright and they need answers. They need honesty.' It was a very encouraging conversation. It sparked me to get out more and work harder than I had before."