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**First Lady Michelle Obama Highlights Advances in Children's Health;
Celebrates 25 Years of Private Investment in Children's Hospitals**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Friday, June 12, 2015) – Medical advances that improve children's lives are possible by the "passion, dedication, and generosity" of private philanthropy, said First Lady Michelle Obama at the Woodmark Children's Forum on Thursday, June 11. Speaking to children's hospital executives, faculty, and donors, she cited the role of philanthropy in improving survival rates and transforming pediatric care.

"I have a real passion for the work that you all do," noted Mrs. Obama. "I've seen the impact you have in the faces of kids who are beating cancers like leukemia and who are living longer than ever before with illnesses like cystic fibrosis. We all know that these advances are made possible by the research that you all fund."

She added, "I've seen the resources that you provide for the families—equipping hospital rooms so that parents can stay by their children's side, transforming these sterile hospital wards into warm, child-friendly havens...and so much more."

The Woodmark Children's Forum brought together more than 450 hospital executives, faculty, staff, and donors from the U.S. and Canada. Attendees gathered over two days to commemorate 25 years of collaboration among children's hospitals that has advanced care, treatment, and cures in pediatric medicine.

The forum was produced by the Woodmark Group, which was established in 1995 so that hospital development staff members could work collaboratively to secure increased private support for children's hospitals and lead the development of philanthropy to improve the health of children everywhere. Since then, the 26 Woodmark hospitals have raised billions of dollars for pediatric care, research, teaching and advocacy.

Mrs. Obama closed by stressing the vital need for ongoing philanthropy. "I want you all to know how grateful we are for your passion, your dedication, your generosity. Both as President and as First Lady, and as parents, we know the difference you all are making for so many kids and families. Thank you for everything that you have done and everything you will continue to do to support children's hospitals in the years ahead." [Read the First Lady's remarks.](#)

About the Woodmark Group

The Woodmark Group is a not-for-profit organization whose members are 26 prominent children's hospitals in the United States and Canada. In the past 20 years, leading benefactors in the Woodmark Group's Children's Circle of Care program have contributed nearly \$6 billion to these hospitals for care and research. Last year, these donors gave nearly \$600 million, and from all sources, these hospitals received a total of \$1.5 billion in charitable contributions.