White coats and applause: Inaugural class of Pediatric Residents officially begins at Nemours Children's Hospital

First class of 12 is part of building a pipeline of talent to address physician shortages nationwide

Orlando, Fla. (June 17, 2019) – Today, Nemours Children's Hospital welcomed its first ever class of pediatric residents, who were greeted by a crowd of cheering coworkers in the lobby of the children's hospital in Lake Nona. Nemours Associates welcomed the physicians-in-training, and lined up to high-five and clap in the group on their first day reporting to the hospital. The residents received their official Nemours white coats in front of community and hospital leaders who also welcomed the 12 residents and helped mark the hospital's historical day.

Coming from as far north as New York and New Jersey, and Chicago and Ohio, as well as around Florida, these first 12 physicians-in-training were chosen among 1,200 applicants to participate in Nemours' new program, designed to help address the pediatric specialty shortages in Florida and nationwide.

"At Nemours, we have a rapidly growing population of children with medical complexity and those with high acuity needs," said Dr. Amber Hoffman, who serves as program director for Nemours Children's Hospital Pediatric Residency Program. "This, paired with an expert faculty assembled from across the country is a combination that provides a perfect training ground to teach pediatric residents and subspecialties evidence-based, cutting edge medicine."

Across the country, children's hospitals are experiencing significant shortages in pediatric specialties. That issue is compounded in Florida, where the state anticipates a shortage of 7,000 medical specialists by 2025. The population of children in Florida are expected to increase by 7% by 2022. Difficulty accessing care means that medical situations can become acutely worse, say the experts.

That is why, after receiving accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) in June 2017, Nemours Children's Health System leadership has invested in the new Pediatric Residency Program in Orlando. Plans are under way to develop pediatric subspecialty fellowship programs, such as cardiology, gastroenterology, emergency medicine, rheumatology and infectious diseases, among others.

"When we opened our doors, we were a children's hospital with a small census and relatively low acuity. With the continued recruitment of nationally recognized faculty and the development of expert subspecialty programs, we have transitioned into a pediatric academic medical center focused on patient safety and quality care," said Dr. Heather Fagan, designated institutional official for Graduate Medical Education at Nemours Children's Hospital. "The development of robust GME programs will further enhance our academic model, and support the growth of high quality expert care and innovative scholarship."

The hope is that this new generation of specialists and medical leaders will stay in Florida, mirroring a national trend. Two-thirds of pediatric residency graduates practice medicine where they complete their training. By adding residency spots, Central Florida families will have more access to pediatric specialty care closer to home, and will not be forced to travel out of the region in search of care for their child.

"The arrival of our very first class of residents is yet another sign that Nemours is growing as a leading academic institution, as well as a destination for academic medical care," said Dr. Hoffman.

As a part of their training, the Nemours Pediatric Residents will be trained in state-of-the-art technology, innovative simulation, and patient care models focused on quality and safety. They will begin their clinical rotations in early July.

# # #

About Nemours Children's Health System

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system that owns and operates the two free-standing children's hospitals: the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in five states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org, and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect. Nemours ReadingBrightstart.org is a program dedicated to preventing reading failure in young children, grounded in Nemours' understanding that child health and learning are inextricably linked, and that reading level is a strong predictor of adult health.

Established as The Nemours Foundation through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.

Additional assets available online: Photos (6) Video (2)

https://nemours.mediaroom.com/2019-June-17-Resident-First-Day-NCH