Nationally recognized 'traumatologist' becomes chair of surgery for Nemours Children's Specialty Care and Wolfson Children's Hospital

Robert W. Letton, Jr., MD, is the Albert H. Wilkinson, Jr., MD, Endowed Professor in Surgery, funded by the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital

Jacksonville, FL (June 10, 2019) – More than 30 years after helping to create the partnership between Wolfson Children's Hospital and Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville, a WWII veteran and pioneering pediatric surgeon's legacy lives on through the new chair of surgery for both institutions.

Robert W. Letton, Jr., MD, a board-certified pediatric surgeon, assumed the position of chair of the Department of Surgery for Nemours and Wolfson Children's in May. He is also the Albert H. Wilkinson, Jr., MD, Endowed Professor in Surgery.

"Wolfson Children's Hospital is committed to providing expert care for our region's sickest and most critically injured children," said Michael D. Aubin, FACHE, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Dr. Letton not only brings his expertise in the field of pediatric surgery, but a strong drive to grow both Wolfson Children's and Nemours, and train other pediatric surgeons to follow in his footsteps."

Dr. Letton was previously the medical director of the Pediatric Trauma Program and director of the Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Program at Children's Hospital of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, where he was also the Paula Milburn Miller Endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery.

"His experience and national reputation in pediatric surgery and trauma will further enhance our already wonderful programs. His passion for our mission in caring for children, and his interest in promoting research, education and clinical care will assure we will provide the region with the most innovative models in caring for the children and families we serve" said Gary Josephson, MD, Chief Medical Officer of Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville.

The Wilkinson Endowment was funded by the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital as part of a five-year, $4 million pledge to create a Pediatric Surgery Center of Distinction at Wolfson Children's. The endowment was created in memory of Dr. Wilkinson, Jacksonville's first pediatric surgeon and one of the founders of Nemours, to support a renowned pediatric surgeon who will develop and enhance surgical techniques and equipment, and train the next generation of pediatric surgeons.

"The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital is excited to welcome Dr. Letton, a true leader in pediatric surgery," said Katherine Armstrong Forrester, president of the Women's Board. "It is a great joy to honor the late Dr. Albert H. Wilkinson. He was a champion to all children for health care in our community and region."

Dr. Wilkinson began his career in medicine as a medical corpsman in the Navy in WWII. After his service, he completed college and pursued a career in pediatric surgery. Wilkinson oversaw the transition of Nemours in Jacksonville from a small children's hospital to a large multi-specialty outpatient care clinic and laid the groundwork for the partnership between Nemours and Wolfson Children's as it stands today. Dr. Wilkinson passed away in 2013 at 86.

Dr. Letton, who served in Kuwait and Germany with the U.S. Army Reserves medical corps, said of practicing in a military community like Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia, "It's an honor carry on the legacy of a fellow veteran like Dr. Wilkinson. I have always taken great pride in caring for military families, and I'm happy to be in a city and a region that values servicemembers."

Dr. Letton began his position with Wolfson Children's and Nemours in May 2019. He is married with two adult children. Outside of work, he enjoys listening to rock music and playing the guitar. In fact, he's been in several bands in the past, primarily made up of other physicians. Dr. Letton looks forward to getting to know Jacksonville's music scene, including checking out the old stomping grounds of Lynyrd Skynyrd.

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About Wolfson Children's Hospital of Jacksonville

Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, is a part of Baptist Health, Northeast Florida's most comprehensive health system serving every stage of life. Wolfson Children's is the only children's hospital in Northeast Florida and serves as the pediatric referral center for North Florida, South Georgia and beyond. Staffed 24/7 by pediatric nurses and other

healthcare professionals specially trained to work with children, the 216-bed, patient- and family-centered hospital features the latest pediatric medical technology in a welcoming, child-friendly environment. At Wolfson Children's, nationally recognized pediatric specialists representing nearly every medical and surgical specialty work with pediatricians to provide care for children of all ages with congenital heart conditions, cancer, neurological disorders, diabetes and endocrinology disorders, orthopaedic conditions, behavioral health conditions, traumatic injuries, and more. Wolfson Children's pediatric institutional partners include Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville, the University of Florida College of Medicine—Jacksonville and Mayo Clinic Florida. A Magnet™-designated hospital since 2007, Wolfson Children's Hospital has been named among the U.S. News & World Report *50 Best Children's Hospitals year after year, and in 2018, was selected as one of only 13 children's hospitals in the country as a Leapfrog Top Children's Hospital, a recognition of patient quality and safety. For additional information, please visit wolfsonchildrens.com.*

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

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