

From: Kitty Braaten <kbraaten@ggc.org>
To: Veldran, Katherine KatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov
Date: 1/22/2016 10:03:04 AM
Subject: Gov. Haley visit to GGC

Ms. Veldran,

We cordially extend an invitation for Governor Nikki Haley to visit the Greenwood Genetic Center (GGC), tour our facilities and see firsthand the dramatic and life changing impact the Center has had on children and families across South Carolina over the past 41 years. While we would look forward to hosting the Governor at any point that her schedule allows, our preference would be before June 2016.

GGC, AS SOUTH CAROLINA'S GENETIC CENTER, PROVIDES SERVICES HERE AT HOME, BUT WITH A GLOBAL IMPACT - The field of medical genetics and genomics has exploded over the past four decades with GGC at the forefront of this progress. While committed to serving patients through offices statewide, the Center's work extends beyond our state and national borders in the field of genetics. Many of the Center's faculty have international reputations in areas such as birth defects prevention, intellectual disability and autism research. GGC has lead the charge in SC to reduce the number of babies born with severe birth defects of the brain and spine and our program (in collaboration with SC DDSN and SC DHEC) has been held up as a model for other states to emulate. Because of this program, 70 babies are born healthy in SC, who 25 years ago, would have succumbed to or been significantly impacted by these preventable birth defects. This program has been bolstered by Gov. Haley's annual declaration of January as Birth Defect Prevention Month.

GGC PARTNERS WITH MULTIPLE STATE AGENCIES TO IMPACT THOUSANDS OF SOUTH CAROLINIANS EACH YEAR - Through our longstanding collaborations with SC DDSN and SC DHEC, our joint efforts are directly impacting thousands of SC residents on a daily basis. The Center, with support from public and private partners is focused on providing and developing treatments for a variety of genetic disorders. Through contracts with both of the aforementioned agencies, we are providing care to newborns with metabolic disorders, ensuring that they receive life-saving and life-changing treatments, providing answers and hope for patients who may have been in diagnostic limbo for years, and embarking on clinical trials to ameliorate the effects of these diseases – both on the families themselves and also on the state's healthcare expenditures. Our programs save the state of SC an estimated \$80 million in avoided healthcare costs through prevention and treatment efforts.

DRIVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALONG WITH MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS - GGC, which has been described by our local media as the crowning jewel of Greenwood, has provided numerous high paying jobs, and continues to expand with the recent collaborations with Clemson University. Through state support as well as philanthropists such as the Self Family Foundation, Clemson University is joining GGC in the field of human genetics with a new state-of-the-art facility in Greenwood as well as new jobs for our community and our state. These jobs, including two endowed chairs, one at GGC and one at Clemson, will bring more research into areas like autism which impacts 1 in 68 children across our nation. GGC's current autism program, which we would love to share with Gov. Haley, is poised to make dramatic advances with the development of a diagnostic blood test and potential targets for personalized therapies. The Center also has a plan for a Greenwood Research Park, in collaboration with the Greenwood Partnership Alliance to attract other biotechnology and life science industries to the Greenwood area.

With the dramatic impact of the Greenwood Genetic Center on both the health and economy of our state and with implications for huge breakthroughs that Gov. Haley would be proud to say came from South Carolina, we eagerly anticipate sharing our work with her and counting her among the supporters of our mission.

Sincerely,

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