

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WILLIAM & NANCY THOMPSON FAMILY FOUNDATION AND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY PROVIDE \$14.8 MILLION TO CREATE ‘THE CENTER FOR AUTISM AND NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA’

- *Will be part of UC Irvine, a leading global research university*
- *Mission is to be a nationally recognized treatment and research center that leads an innovative, integrated approach to researching and treating a wide spectrum of autism related disorders; nationwide 1 in 88 children are affected including upward of 9,000 children, adolescents and young adults in Orange County alone*
- *Center will alter the landscape for autism treatment and research through an innovative multidisciplinary approach encompassing clinical trials and care, research, education, awareness, and community support*
- *Dynamic service partnerships with CHOC Children’s, a premier pediatric healthcare system, and Chapman University will support The Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Southern California*

Irvine, Calif., December 13, 2012 — In a first-of-its-kind public/private partnership, the William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation (Thompson Family Foundation) and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County have provided \$14.8 million to create The Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Southern California (The Center for Autism), which will bring a unique multidisciplinary focus on clinical care, education, research and community support. The Center for Autism will become part of UC Irvine, a leading global research university.

The Center for Autism will be home to a team of experts in the field of autism and neurodevelopmental disorders, led by UC Irvine and CHOC Children’s pediatric neurologist Dr. Joseph Donnelly, director of For OC Kids Neurodevelopmental Center. Since its opening in 2001, For OC Kids has been a leader

in assessment, diagnosis, care coordination, family support and education for children with autism and other developmental disorders. The Center for Autism will build on the For OC Kids platform over time, ultimately offering a complete range of diagnostic and treatment services to children, adolescents and young adults from birth to age 22 years.

“We intend to create a nationally recognized treatment and research center that provides help and hope for children and families living with autism spectrum and neurodevelopmental disorders. Nothing like this currently exists in Southern California and we are absolutely committed to transforming the diagnosis and treatment of autism,” said Mr. Thompson, chairman of the William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation.

The William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation has been a leader in funding autism treatment and research over the past decade and previously created The Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders at the University of Missouri, which will collaborate directly with the new Center for Autism.

The Thompson’s investment will support a separate but related drug research program challenged to finding a cure for autism-related disorders. Under the leadership of nationally recognized metabolic genetic specialist Dr. J. Jay Gargus, UC Irvine professor of physiology & biophysics and professor of pediatrics, the team of researchers will launch an innovative drug discovery platform that unites UC Irvine scientists from diverse areas of study in a common purpose: to develop an effective ASD drug therapy. This multidisciplinary initiative will explore the causes and cures of ASD through a broad spectrum of studies ranging from gene function to cell biology to brain function and behavior.

To enhance and strengthen this unique and comprehensive public/private partnership, CHOC Children’s has made a five-year commitment to fund several key positions that will be based at The Center for Autism, including a pediatric neurologist and a psychologist, in addition to providing rehabilitation services that will be located at The Center for Autism. Chapman University will spearhead two initiatives focused on ensuring quality educational services and resources for children and families impacted by autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

UC Irvine School of Medicine will receive \$14 million in initial funding from a public-private partnership formed by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County and The William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation. The funding arrangement includes a \$7 million grant for

evaluation, diagnosis and treatment services, approved earlier this year by the Commission, and \$7 million from The Thompson Family Foundation that supports both clinical services and research.

“The growing rate of autism and neurodevelopmental disorders is staggering and has a profound impact on families and communities,” said Sandra Barry, chair of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County and former superintendent of Anaheim City Schools. “The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Southern California will be at the vanguard in diagnosis and treatment in an effort to help people and families that are affected by these disorders.”

“More than a decade ago, the Children and Families Commission helped UC Irvine and CHOC launch For OC Kids to offer young children with autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions a path to early intervention and treatment,” said UC Irvine Chancellor Michael Drake. “Today, thanks to ongoing Commission support and a tremendous catalytic investment from the Thompson family, The Center for Autism is engaging in an extraordinary collaboration that will soon expand and enhance local services. At the same time, we are building bridges to novel university research that will give families here and around the world new hope for a cure.”

Dynamic Service Partnerships with Chapman and CHOC Children’s will Support The Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Southern California

The Thompson Family Foundation also will contribute \$800,000 to Chapman University’s College of Educational Studies to fund two initiatives in collaboration with The Center for Autism. The *Family-Schools Intervention Team* (FIT) will serve as an advocate for children, and an ombudsman between the family and the school system. The ultimate mission will be to develop a service plan that will provide the highest quality of learning for the individual with a special need. The second initiative will offer education and outreach to help parents and educators access the most up-to-date information and ideas for children with autism.

CHOC Children’s and UC Irvine, with support from the Commission, have been partners in improving pediatric care and addressing the developmental needs of children for more than 10 years. Together they have touched the lives of more than 17,200 children and families by providing comprehensive medical evaluation and services for children diagnosed with autism and other developmental disorders.

About The William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation

Founded in 2005, The William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation, was created to improve the health, welfare and education of children. The Foundation is dedicated to active, accountable philanthropy with service delivery organizations which have demonstrated outstanding and exemplary results. The Thompson Foundation founded the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders at the University of Missouri in 2005, and provides financial support for the Thompson Center and other organizations working in the field of autism. Mr. Thompson served from 1993-2009 as Chief Executive Officer of PIMCO, the Newport Beach California based investment management firm. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Citigroup and Pacific Life.

About the Children and Families Commission of Orange County

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County oversees the allocation of funds from Proposition 10, which added a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California. Almost \$47 million was allocated last year to fund 170 programs that served more than 165,800 young children. Funds help pay for early education, pediatric primary and specialty health care, children's dental, homeless prevention, and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age 5 and their families. The Commission's goal is to ensure all children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. For more information, please visit www.occhildrenandfamilies.com.

About the University of California, Irvine

Founded in 1965, UC Irvine is a top-ranked university dedicated to research, scholarship and community service. Led by Chancellor Michael Drake since 2005, UC Irvine is among the most dynamic campuses in the University of California system, with nearly 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students, 1,100 faculty and 9,000 staff. Orange County's second-largest employer, UC Irvine contributes an annual economic impact of \$4.3 billion. For more UC Irvine news, visit news.uci.edu.

About Chapman University

Tracing its history to 1861 and consistently ranked among the top universities in the West, Chapman University provides a uniquely personalized and interdisciplinary educational experience to highly qualified students. Programs encourage leadership in research, innovation and collaboration, and focus on developing global citizen-leaders who are distinctively prepared to improve their community and their world. The College of Educational Studies (CES) is committed to developing educators and leaders who challenge convention and serve as change agents in both schools and society. The CES faculty supported by four national accreditations strives to make a more just world through their teaching, scholarship and collaboration with global and local communities.

About CHOC Children's

Named one of the best children's hospitals by U.S. News & World Report (2012-2013) and a 2011 Leapfrog Top Hospital, CHOC Children's is exclusively committed to the health and well-being of children through clinical expertise, advocacy, outreach and research that brings advanced treatment to pediatric patients. Affiliated with UC Irvine, CHOC's regional healthcare network includes two state-of-the-art hospitals, one in Orange and the other in Mission Viejo, several primary and specialty care clinics, a pediatric residency program, and four centers of excellence - The CHOC Children's Heart, Neuroscience, Orthopedic and Hyundai Cancer Institutes.