



## **2008 IS LAST ROUND FOR DUKE CHILDREN'S CLASSIC**

Dear Friends:

This May will mark the 35<sup>th</sup> year of the Duke Children's Classic, the annual golf tournament initiated by the Duke Department of Pediatrics to raise funds to improve and expand services for infants and children at Duke Medical Center. I was fortunate to be chairman of the department when this event was conceived in 1973 and brought to the Durham community on a rainy fall day in 1974. With the tireless leadership of singer Perry Como and the enthusiastic support of hundreds of volunteers in Durham, we were wonderfully successful over the succeeding years in building one of the premier celebrity golf events in the country. Over the past 12 years comedian Jeff Foxworthy and his family have energetically chaired the event, joining with our loyal local volunteers to provide a memorable event for the community while always fulfilling its founding mission: to provide support to Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center to better serve young patients and their families who look to us for hope and healing and to perform groundbreaking research to advance children's health.

Since then other events have been launched to further support Duke Children's, most notably the annual Radiothon on MIX 101.5 and the Teddy Bear Ball. These signature events have generated major financial support that translates directly into better service to our patients and important advances in children's health. With every Duke Children's event our guiding principle has always been – and always will be – to do what is best for our patients. In that spirit, we initiated an extensive review to determine if the Children's Classic is fulfilling its original mission. While 35 years is a remarkably long run for an event of this nature, the review supports that the Duke Children's Classic is no longer viable in its current format. This is a natural step in the evolution of a growing program and is in no way a reflection of the outstanding efforts of our community of volunteers. Indeed, our volunteers are among the greatest assets of Duke Children's.

With the full support of Jeff Foxworthy and his family, this year's event (to be held May 30- June 1) will be a celebration of more than three decades of Classic success. As in the past, we will continue to count on the support of loyal community volunteers. We will keep you fully informed of our plans in this time of transition and look forward to your continuing involvement in helping Duke Children's provide the best possible service to its patients and remain a leader in pediatric research.

We face the future with excitement and optimism.

Sincerely,

Samuel L. Katz MD  
Professor and Chair emeritus  
Duke Department of Pediatrics