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## **FILM STAR JOINS LOCAL PHILANTHROPISTS IN BRINGING NEW "PALS" TO KIDS AT LONG BEACH'S MILLER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

*Dakota Fanning Joins Starlight Starbright to Honor Debbie & Glen Bickerstaff  
for Donation of Five PC Pal Computers to the Hospital's Pediatric Unit*

LOS ANGELES, March 3, 2006 — Patients at Miller Children's Hospital are going to have a lot more friends after March 9. That's the day Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation and local philanthropists Debbie and Glen Bickerstaff, joined by actress Dakota Fanning, are presenting the hospital with five new PC Pals. One of Starlight Starbright's signature programs, PC Pals are special computers that enable kids in the hospital to access proprietary programming, use e-mail and instant messaging as well as log onto Starbright World®, an online community for seriously ill teens.

"Starlight Starbright is dedicated to making a world of difference for seriously ill children by pioneering the use of media and entertainment to provide inspiring and empowering programs," said Paula van Ness, CEO, Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. "As one of our newest hospital offerings, PC Pals help combat some of the 'hospital blues,' by giving them a way to keep in touch with friends and family, keep up with schoolwork, and meet new friends dealing with similar challenges during what is often a lonely and scary time."

Despite the fact that research demonstrates Internet-enabled computers help raise children's spirits, distract them from their pain and provide them with a sense of community, more than 50 percent of the hospitals Starlight Starbright works with have none available for patient use. Now, thanks to the Bickerstaff's generous donation to this Starlight Starbright program, Miller Children's Hospital can no longer be counted in that number.

"The Bickerstaffs understand and respond to the special needs of our patients and their families," said Mel Marks, MD, chief administrative officer, Miller Children's Hospital. "They epitomize the best in generosity and volunteerism."

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The Bickerstaffs, long-time supporters of Starlight Starbright, are among the first to sponsor PC Pals. For this generous sponsorship, and their many gifts to the Foundation over the years, the Bickerstaffs will also be honored at Starlight Starbright's annual Stellar Night gala on March 31<sup>st</sup> at The Beverly Hilton.

"We've been working with Starlight Starbright for many years, and we've seen first hand the positive impact of Starlight Starbright's programs on seriously ill kids and their families," said Debbie Bickerstaff. "We're excited to support new advancements, particularly in pediatric healthcare - and the PC Pal, which is a groundbreaking program, will help kids and teens overcome many of the social and emotional challenges they face in the hospital every day."

In addition to their new virtual friends, children in-residence at Miller Children's Hospital on the day of the dedication will get to meet another potential pal: actress and Starlight Starbright supporter Dakota Fanning. Fanning, who is being honored along with the Bickerstaffs at Starlight Starbright's upcoming gala, will participate in a quick Q&A with the kids before the official dedication ceremony begins.

The PC Pal dedication begins at 11:30 a.m. in the 3rd floor Starlight Site playroom, with remarks from Mel Marks, chief administrative officer, Miller Children's Hospital, Paula Van Ness, CEO of Starlight Starbright, and Glen and Debbie Bickerstaff. Patients are invited to attend and be among the first to use the new PC Pals.

### **About Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation**

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation is a non-profit organization that transforms the lives of seriously ill children and their families through imaginative programs that educate, uplift their spirits, foster a sense of community, and help alleviate the pain and fear of prolonged illness. Starlight Starbright offers an impressive array of in-hospital, outpatient, school and home-based programs and services that touch the lives of more than 180,000 children and families each month. To learn more about the organization, visit their web site at [www.starlight.org](http://www.starlight.org).

### **About Miller Children's Hospital**

Located on the campus of Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, Miller Children's Hospital is a full-service hospital providing a complete range of primary and specialty care for newborns through young adults, as well as expectant mothers. The hospital's many specialized services include the Jonathan Jaques Children's Cancer Center, the Stramski Children's Developmental Center, and pediatric abuse and violence intervention, cardiac, cystic fibrosis/pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal, HIV, rehabilitation, renal, rheumatology and spina bifida centers.