



A regular day for Cheryl Goffney Franklin is anything but uneventful.

One minute, the long-time OB-GYN physician and surgeon may be seeing patients at Grady Memorial Hospital. Later she can be found sharing knowledge with students at the Morehouse School of Medicine. Add a lot of time serving as Morehouse's first lady and the day becomes very full for the other Dr. Franklin.

The evening means personal time as she slips back into her role as the mother of two and the devoted wife of hard-working, Morehouse President Robert M. Franklin Jr. '75.

"Just coordinating all those pieces can sometimes be difficult," she said, with a laugh. "You have to keep yourself from feeling overwhelmed. But I love it!"

The past two years have been a whirlwind since her husband became the College's 10th president. But being First Lady is a role that Franklin – or Dr. Cheryl as some affectionately call her – wants to put her unique stamp on.

"I take this role as first lady very seriously," she said while relaxing after work one afternoon in the president's family residence,

# THE DOCTOR

*By Add Seymour Jr.*

Davidson House. "I want to learn from it, but I also want to contribute to it. I do want—more than just build my own legacy—to develop the president's legacy. So whatever I can do to assist in that goal, I will."

A native of Houston, Texas, Franklin grew up the youngest of four children to parents who are both graduates of Texas Southern University. Education was heavily stressed in the household, and all four children went off to various colleges and univer-



*Pictured with Dr. Franklin are this year's Ladies' Luncheon honorees Jan Meadows, with photo of her husband Dr. Warner Meadows, and Joy San Brown, with photo of her husband Dr. Calvin A. Brown.*

Southern University. Education was heavily stressed in the household, and all four children went off to various colleges and universities. In fact, there is another doctor in the family and two attorneys.

Franklin attended Stanford University, Harvard Medical School and Columbia University, where she earned a master's in public health. She is now enjoying her 20th year of practicing medicine, focusing mainly these days on gynecology. She sees patients two days a week at Grady and also works in the Morehouse School of Medicine, though she wants to do more research, teaching and work in public health.

That love for medicine has become a major thrust for her: enhancing the College's already firm reputation for developing leaders

tions of students. But the rebuilding of that [after Blocker's 2004 death] is a difficult process. So one of the legacies that I'm working on now is to help to develop scholarship money for the students headed to health professions."

Franklin established the Dr. Cheryl G. Franklin Health Professions Scholarship Fund in 2008 to help support students interested in health-related professional careers. Six students were the scholarship's inaugural recipients.

She has hosted the successful Ladies Luncheon the past two years during the College's Founder's Day observance. Fifty individuals, along with nine businesses, were recognized during the 2009 luncheon for contributing to the fund, which has raised



*Cheryl Franklin is joined by President Robert M. Franklin Jr. '75 at the luncheon, which took place during the Founder's Day observance.*

campus can leave on a daily basis is an important issue for Franklin. Her goal is to strengthen their role in contributing to the Morehouse experience.

"One of the things I'm doing this year... is helping create a way that women who were married to physicians who are now deceased create legacies for their husbands. Two of those women [Joy San Brown and Jan Meadows] helped coordinate the luncheon we had this year. They also will participate in the scholarship effort by doing named, restricted scholarships in their husbands' names. That's actually a piece

# MAKES A 'HOUSE CALL

*Cheryl Goffney Franklin Examines Her Role as the College's Leading Lady*

in the health professions.

"There have been several students and alumni who have lamented to me that Morehouse has a strong, rich legacy of preparing men for careers in medicine, and other health careers, industry, public health, etc," she said. "The person who spearheaded that effort for so long, the late Thomas J. Blocker '74, was a very charismatic person who made a lot of that happen for genera-

nearly \$30,000 so far.

"But there's more to it than just doing scholarship," she said. "There's also programmatic efforts that must be made. I feel very strongly that Morehouse alumni need to be very intimately involved with helping rejuvenate and mentor and do the things that need to be done to rebuild that legacy in health professions."

The potential legacy that women on

that I want—that widows whose husbands dearly loved Morehouse will really have a way of leaving that kind of legacy. I want people to have a means to put a historical significance behind the people who've been here before."

At the other end of the spectrum are the wide-eyed young men who are at the beginning of their Morehouse careers. It's the moment during the Parents' Parting Ceremony when the gates of the College are ceremoniously

shut, separating parents—some of them weeping—from sons who are taking their first steps into adulthood. Franklin said watching mothers in particular leave their sons in the College's care has made her more aware of the matronly role she has to assume.

"I have mother after mother coming up to me and saying, 'I'm so glad you're here. I feel so much better now,'" she said. "For these women, and many single mothers, leaving the apple of their eye—that young man—is the be all and end all. And they are leaving them here in our care. I actually see it in their eyes, so I feel a responsibility. I want to do more things with stu-

dents here at Davidson House; I want to make sure the students are included in everything we do."

A few minutes of relaxation are now nearly over and a busy, new day beckons. There will be patients to see, a course to teach, Davidson House events to plan and two teenagers to raise. She also continues to formulate a bevy of ideas to enhance the Morehouse experience.

"I don't have a clear, big vision of what I want my own legacy to be—except that if that legacy is to enhance my husband's legacy and Morehouse College, then that will be my own legacy," she said. ■



*Cheryl Franklin works closely with Shirley Manor, executive services manager, in running Davidson House, the presidential residence.*

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