



STORIES of HOPE

NIGERIA

Bringing Hope to Nigerians Living with HIV/AIDS



First Lady Laura Bush speaks with families living with and affected by HIV/AIDS during her visit to St. Mary's Catholic Hospital, Gwagwalada.

"We started out by funding the mother-to-child transmission – or the stopping of the mother-to-child transmission of HIV. And then our support has grown, as St. Mary's has grown," noted First Lady Laura Bush at St. Mary's Hospital on January 18, 2006.



On January 18, 2006, First Lady Laura Bush and her daughter, Barbara Bush, visited the St. Mary's Hospital in Gwagwalada, Nigeria. The hospital receives support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR). During her visit, Mrs. Bush announced that the United States plans to provide approximately \$163 million to support Nigeria's fight against HIV/AIDS during fiscal year 2006. Mrs. Bush reaffirmed U.S. commitment to help Nigerians treat AIDS and prevent the spread of HIV, saying, "We are all hopeful that one day an entire generation will be born free of HIV."

As part of the support from the Emergency Plan, the First Lady presented the Matron of St. Mary's Hospital with cartons of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs that would allow the hospital to provide life-saving treatment free of charge for the first time to 500 HIV-positive patients. To support the provision of ARV drugs, Mrs. Bush inaugurated a new laboratory at St. Mary's, noting, "Comprehensive drug treatment with antiretrovirals requires laboratory tests to make sure people are really receiving the treatment they need, and the United States is proud to have been able to help St. Mary's by buying some of the laboratory equipment that will be in this new lab."

Mrs. Bush and Barbara met with clinic workers and people living with HIV/AIDS, learning first-hand information about the needs and challenges posed by the epidemic. Sitting under a shade tree at St. Mary's, clinic workers and families shared stories about the impact HIV/AIDS was having on their daily lives. "It's really important for people who are HIV-positive to reach out to let people know that they can be tested; they can find out that they can still live a positive and happy life," Mrs. Bush said.

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

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