

# DR. JILL BIDEN

## First Lady

*Jill Biden, Ed.D., is the First Lady of the United States, a community college educator, a military mother, a grandmother, and bestselling author. Dr. Biden also served as Second Lady of the United States from 2009–2017.*



*First Lady Dr. Jill Biden | Photo Credit: Erin Scott*

As First Lady, Dr. Biden has focused on reaching out to all Americans, helping to bring our country together.

She has continued championing the causes that have defined her public life: supporting military families, advocating for increased educational opportunities for all, working to end cancer as we know it, and, her most recent body of work, advancing women's health research. She has also served as a leading messenger for the Administration's most urgent priorities, including: safely

reopening schools after the pandemic's shutdown, urging communities to get vaccinated against COVID-19, supporting the President's economic agenda, and helping restore U.S. global relations.

Dr. Biden sees the role of First Lady as an act of service, and knows how important it is to reach beyond the halls of the White House, connecting with people where they are. As of the end of 2024, she has traveled to more than 40 states, 200 towns and cities, and 19 countries. For the American people and the Administration, she is both messenger and listener, bringing the lived experiences and compelling stories of Americans back to the White House. During her tenure as First Lady, she has advanced the missions of three key White House initiatives: Joining Forces; the Biden Cancer Moonshot; and the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research.

## **JOINING FORCES**

In the spring of 2021, Dr. Biden announced the next phase and priorities of Joining Forces, her White House initiative to support military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors. As First Lady, she visited over 30 military installations; worked with Joining Forces partners to support over 80 engagements with the military-connected community; and launched an interagency working group with the National Security Council, which secured over 80 commitments and proposals across the federal government to support military families. Through her Joining Forces work, she has advocated for: increased economic opportunities for military spouses; additional educational programming and support for military children; more focus on health and wellness in the military community; and improved resources for caregivers and survivors, including military and veteran children in caregiving homes.



*First Lady Jill Biden launches a new United Through Reading Story Station at Mihail Kogălniceanu Airbase in Romania that allows service members to record themselves reading their child's favorite book and share with their families back home.*

## **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL**

As a classroom teacher for 40 years, advocating for increased educational opportunities for all students, of all ages, is close to her heart. From championing universal pre-school, teacher recruitment and retention, opportunities for career-connected learning, and more affordable options for education after high school, including free community college, Dr. Biden has continued her work promoting quality education for everyone.



*First Lady Jill Biden visits Bates Technical College on Friday, October 7, 2022, in Tacoma, Washington. (Official White House Photo by Erin Scott)*

## **THE BIDEN CANCER MOONSHOT**

Cancer affects every community and it's a common dark thread for so many, including the Biden family. In recognition of World Cancer Day 2022, the President and First Lady reignited the Biden Cancer Moonshot, laying out bold goals and a vision to end cancer as we know it. As First Lady, Dr. Biden has continued to work on behalf of American families confronting cancer, focusing on supporting patients and their loved ones during their cancer journeys; urging Americans to prioritize their cancer screenings; and reducing health inequities in diagnosis, treatment, research, and outcomes.



*First Lady Jill Biden visits the U.C. San Francisco Bakar Precision Cancer Medicine Building, Friday, October 7, 2022, in San Francisco. (Official White House Photo by Erin Scott)*

## **ADVANCING WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH**

The President and First Lady launched the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research in November of 2023 with a clear goal: to fundamentally change how our country approaches and funds research on women's health. Research on women's health, especially for women in mid-life and beyond, has always been underfunded and understudied – but because of the President and First Lady's leadership in this area, this disparity is changing. In his 2024 State of the Union, President Biden called on Congress to make a transformative investment of \$12 billion in new funding for women's health research. He also signed an Executive Order to advance Women's Health Research and Innovation, directing the most comprehensive set of executive actions ever taken to expand and improve research on women's health. Since its launch

in November 2023, the Initiative has galvanized nearly \$1 billion in funding to close gaps in research.



*First Lady Jill Biden attends a Women's Health Research roundtable, Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at Coda at Tech Square in Atlanta. (Official White House Photo by Erin Scott)*

## **REIMAGINING THE WHITE HOUSE TOUR EXPERIENCE FOR VISITORS**

When President Biden took office, Dr. Biden trained her educator's eye on reimagining the White House public tour. She believes that the public tour, which accommodates approximately 10,000 visitors per week, is a significant opportunity to educate students of all ages about the living history of the White House and our country – but until 2024, the public tour hadn't seen significant improvements in decades. Because of Dr. Biden's vision and leadership, and thanks

to the National Park Service and The History Channel, the enhanced White House public tour now includes, more educational and engaging elements along the tour route; incorporates more story-telling in the tour using technology and digital components; provides visitors with more historic context to their tour; evokes the senses with compelling and tactile content; and presents more opportunities for learning about our nation's history, civics, and the lives of Presidents and first families, past and present. The reimagined, expanded White House public tour route now brings visitors further into rooms which were previously roped-off, and now includes the Diplomatic Reception Room, where President Franklin D. Roosevelt held his famous fireside chats. This lasting contribution by Dr. Biden will live on at the White House, educating visitors for years to come.

*“More than 10,000 visitors come through these doors each week on the public tour and it’s such an opportunity for students of all ages to learn about our country’s history, civics, and the lives of Presidents and their families,” said First Lady Jill Biden. “When Joe became President, I took a look at the public tour, which I’m told hasn’t seen any significant improvements in decades, and thought there has to be a way to reimagine this tour experience, add more educational content and story-telling, while also preserving and protecting its history. So, we did.”*

## **IN THE CLASSROOM**

While serving as First Lady, Dr. Biden continued teaching English and writing at Northern Virginia Community College, where she has been a professor since 2009. She is the first presidential spouse to maintain an independent career outside of the White House.

## **EARLY LIFE AND CAREER**

Jill Tracy Jacobs Biden was born on June 3, 1951, in Hammonton, New Jersey, to Bonny Jean Godfrey Jacobs and Donald Carl Jacobs. The oldest of five daughters, she grew up in Willow

Grove, Pennsylvania, just outside of Philadelphia. She graduated from Upper Moreland High School in 1969, then graduated from the University of Delaware with a bachelor's degree in English in 1975.

In 1976, Jill Biden began teaching English at St. Mark's High School in Wilmington. She then became a reading specialist at Claymont High School. At that time, she was also pursuing a Master of Education with a specialty in reading from West Chester University. She completed her first master's degree in 1981.

In 1975, she met then-Senator Joe Biden. They married at the United Nations Chapel in New York City in 1977 and she became the mother of his two sons, Beau and Hunter. Their daughter, Ashley, was born in 1981.

Jill Biden taught English at Rockford Center psychiatric hospital while also pursuing a Master of Arts in English from Villanova University. In 1993, she accepted a teaching job at Delaware Technical Community College. During that same year, Dr. Biden's advocacy for more cancer education and prevention began. After four of her friends were diagnosed with breast cancer, she launched the Biden Breast Health Initiative to educate Delaware high school girls about the importance of early detection and prevention efforts.

In 2007, she received a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in educational leadership from the University of Delaware. When her husband, then-Senator Joe Biden became Vice President and the Bidens moved to Washington, DC, Dr. Biden began teaching at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), where she continues to do so today.



## **DURING AND AFTER THE OBAMA-BIDEN ADMINISTRATION**

As Second Lady for eight years, Dr. Biden focused on advocating for community colleges, military families, and the education of women and girls around the world.

As the Obama-Biden Administration focused on recovering from the 2008 economic recession, Dr. Biden worked to underscore the critical role of community colleges in the nation's economy. She hosted the first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges with President Obama and led the Community College to Career Bus Tour to highlight industry partnerships between community colleges and employers. She also became the honorary chair of the College Promise National Advisory Board, leading the effort to make community colleges free for hard-working students.

The daughter of a Navy Signalman and the mother of Major Beau Biden, a soldier in the Delaware Army National Guard, Dr. Biden has been a longtime advocate for military families. In 2011, she launched the first phase of Joining Forces with First Lady Michelle Obama, a White House initiative to support service members, veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. She also released a children's book in 2012, [Don't Forget, God Bless Our Troops](#), the story of their family's experience with deployment through the eyes of Dr. Biden's granddaughter, Natalie, in the year her father, Beau, was deployed to Iraq.

She continued to advance community colleges and support military families through her work at the Biden Foundation after the Obama-Biden Administration ended.



*First Lady Jill Biden poses for a photo at the Military Children's Corner with military children and their families, Monday, September 25, 2023, at the White House. (Official White House Photo by Erin Scott)*

During her tenure as Second Lady, Dr. Biden traveled to nearly forty countries, visiting military bases, hospitals, and refugee camps, and advocating for education and economic empowerment for women and girls. After the Obama-Biden Administration and now as First Lady, Dr. Biden continues these efforts during her international travel.

After Dr. Biden and then-Vice President Joe Biden lost their son Beau to brain cancer in 2015, they helped push for a national commitment to ending cancer as we know it through the White House Cancer Moonshot. Following the Obama-Biden Administration, then-former Vice President Biden and Dr. Biden continued their cancer work through the Biden Cancer Initiative.

Dr. Biden's New York Times bestselling memoir, Where the Light Enters: Building a Family, Discovering Myself was published in 2019. Her second children's book, JOEY: The Story of Joe Biden, was published in 2020, and, her third, WILLOW the White House Cat, was published in 2024.