

First lady Michelle Obama agrees to chair First Ladies' Library

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CANTON —

The National First Ladies' Library has a new honorary chairwoman to add to its list: first lady Michelle Obama.

Obama became an honorary chair of the library Monday.

She joins her predecessors, all of whom are serving as honorary chairwomen of the institution, which is dedicated to the history of America's first ladies and their contributions to society.

Obama holds no duties in her role, said Patricia Krider, the library's executive director, but her name will appear on the library's letterhead and on its Web site.

The role has become a traditional one for first ladies. In fact, since the founding of the National First Ladies' Library in 1995 by Mary Regula, first ladies Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush, Hillary Clinton and Laura Bush have served as honorary chairs.

“In the short period of time since she became first lady, Michelle Obama's words and deeds, her vision and message have already touched the lives of many young women, and captured the attention of the nation,” Regula said. “As a result, the library has seen an enormous rise in interest on the long history of First Ladies and how they have effectively used the visibility of their position to raise awareness and address problems both domestic and global.”

But will Obama visit the First Ladies' Library?

While there are currently no plans, Krider said, “We are hoping to get her here sometime in the near future.”