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FORMER FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA FOCUSES ON LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION AND MORE AT TOIGO FOUNDATION'S 16TH ANNUAL GALA

New York, NY - July 5, 2017 - Former First Lady Michelle Obama discussed leadership and education at the Toigo Foundation's 16th Annual Gala, celebrating the non-profit's nearly 30-year focus on a mission of leadership by all and for all.

The importance of drive and determination in the face of adversity, inclusion, access to education, and women in leadership served as the focus of Mrs. Obama's remarks to a standing-room only audience of 1,000-plus at the Cipriani Wall Street on June 15th. Her timely, inspiring messages resonated with Toigo Gala attendees, including many diverse leaders and organizations directly impacted by the Foundation's work. Toigo's focus is on developing a diverse leadership pipeline from the classroom to the boardroom.

"Michelle Obama perfectly captured the essence of the Toigo mission, including both the need and advantage of having diverse experiences and voices at the leadership table," said Nancy Sims, president and CEO, Toigo Foundation. "It was a memorable and historical night for Toigo—a reminder of progress we have made to bring greater diversity to business leadership, as well as the importance of our continued efforts."

This year's Gala theme – "Onward!" – acknowledged Toigo's longstanding work to advance the nation's next generation of leaders and the need to forge ahead. Toigo Alumnae, Melody Rollins, Partner at Brightwood Capital, led the moderated conversation with Mrs. Obama. CNN political commentator and president of the Dream Corps Anthony Kapel "Van" Jones served as the evening's master of ceremonies, providing added insight into issues core to the Toigo mission. Toigo honored two distinguished Alumni as part of the annual gala event, including *Leading by Example* honoree, Jay Ferguson, managing partner, Vicente Capital Partners and *Blazing Trails* honoree, Kenneth Salas, founder and chief operating officer, Camino Financial.

Each year, Toigo Foundation supporters, including firms and individuals committed to developing and advancing diverse leaders, Toigo Fellows and Alumni gather to honor the nonprofit's accomplishments and mission. Proceeds from the event support the organization's leadership programming, including an education curriculum aimed at next generation finance leaders.

About the Toigo Foundation

The [Toigo Foundation](http://toigofoundation.org)'s mission is to encourage and support exceptional minority students to become the future financial leaders in the global economy. Founded in 1989 and based in Oakland, CA, the non-profit has created a highly regarded platform for leadership development that includes high standards

for academic and professional achievement, demonstration of ethical leadership, and a passion for social responsibility. Today, Toigo nearly 1,200 professionals have been named Toigo Fellows, making it one of the most active networks for diverse finance professionals in the nation. Toigo programs span and support minority leaders through the full arc of their careers, including Toigo Institute programs aimed at board leadership (All A Board), women in leadership (Groundbreakers), and entrepreneurship (Bridge to Business.)

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