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DESIGN TEAM SELECTED FOR LSU HOSPITAL

NEW ORLEANS—One of the world’s leading design firms is partnering with Louisiana architects known for their healthcare expertise to form the architectural team for the new Louisiana State University Hospital in New Orleans, state and university officials announced today at news conference at the LSU Health Science Center in New Orleans.

A joint venture of Blich Knevel Architects of New Orleans and NBBJ of Seattle was selected by the Division of Administration to plan the 484-bed hospital to be built on a 37-acre tract of land in downtown New Orleans. The projected \$1.2 billion facility is part of a joint medical center project under development by LSU and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs that is planning an adjacent 200-bed hospital.

LSU System President Dr. William Jenkins praised the selection as a “major step forward” in building the university-run hospital that will replace the 68-year-old Medical

Center of Louisiana at New Orleans (MCLNO), which includes the Avery C. Alexander Charity Campus and the Interim University Hospital Campus, both of which were heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina two years ago and were declared obsolete prior to the storm.

“We are beginning to pick up the pace,” said Jenkins. “This hospital is critical to health care delivery not only for residents of the New Orleans area but also our veterans population as well as the recovery of the region, the creation of a bioscience research district and the future of our medical education programs.”

“The selected joint venture has the combined experience and skills to provide a team uniquely qualified to design and deliver this project,” said Jerry Jones, director of the Louisiana Office of Facilities Planning and Control. Jones noted the team’s extensive prior work in designing hospitals and particularly academic medical centers. “This team is highly regarded in the field of medical facility design. NBBJ alone has a staff of more than 280 healthcare specialists in site and land use planning, facility planning, economics, lifecycle, operational, and safety issues in addition to construction cost estimating and management,” he said.

Before Katrina struck, the LSU and VA hospitals served as primary training venues for more than 500 LSU and Tulane University medical residents along with more than 2,000 third and fourth-year medical, nursing, pharmaceutical, and allied health students such as physical therapists and medical technology students not only from LSU and Tulane but also Xavier, Delgado, and Dillard universities.

"The selection of architects represents LSU's commitment to build an academic medical center that will meet its dual mission of delivering undergraduate and graduate medical education while providing medical care and trauma services for the greater New Orleans region," said Dr. Michael Butler, acting chief executive officer of the LSU Health Care Service Division that operates seven of the ten public hospitals administered by LSU.

NBBJ is the second largest architectural firm in the U.S. and fourth largest in the world. It has a long history of designing academic medical centers and other health care facilities both in the United States and overseas. The firm has collaborated on seven of the Top Ten *U.S. News and World Report* Honor Roll hospitals.

"For NBBJ, this is a humbling day to be selected to bring to reality a great new state-of-the-art LSU Hospital," said Mackenzie Skene, an NBBJ partner adding, "You have our pledge that the revitalization of an academic teaching center will create a landmark for human-centered experiences, the future of medical education and the recovery of New Orleans."

Land acquisition for the new 1.1 million-square-foot LSU hospital is underway. Planners say design will begin in September and be completed by March 2009. Construction is scheduled to begin in June 2009 with the first patients admitted in December 2012. The LSU Hospital will include 68 psychiatric beds, long-term care beds, ambulatory care space along with an energy plant, dietary, and lab facilities that will serve both the LSU and VA hospitals.

"The physical and technical aspects of a project of this importance and magnitude are both a challenge and a great opportunity," said Ron Blicht, head of New Orleans-based

Blitch Knevel. “We are fully prepared to deliver the effort to develop this great facility based on our similar effort in resurrecting University Hospital as a Level 1 Trauma facility in record time.”

About Blitch Knevel Architects:

Blitch Knevel Architects is celebrating its 50th anniversary after its founding in 1958 by J. Buchanan Blitch Sr. FAIA. The firm is currently headed by Ron Blitch FAIA, FACHA and Ken Knevel AIA. The firm has been honored nationally and internationally for its design expertise in healthcare architecture, senior living design, and educational and religious facilities. Blitch Knevel’s major healthcare experience includes the original Children’s Hospital, East Jefferson General Hospital (over 70 projects from 1971 - 2007 including the original facility), projects at Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital, Touro Infirmary, Memorial Hospital at Gulfport, and at the VA Medical Centers in New Orleans and Biloxi. Blitch Knevel has had a long relationship with NBBJ of Seattle through Ron Blitch’s service with John Pangrazio FAIA, FACHA in AIA’s Academy of Architecture for Health and the American College of Healthcare Architects, of which Blitch and Pangrazio were founding Fellows.

About NBBJ:

NBBJ, headquartered in Seattle, was founded in 1943 by four architects--Naramore, Bain, Brady and Johanson. Today, the firm has more than 700 staff members at nine offices in four countries. NBBJ is highly regarded as an international leader in architecture for healthcare. For over 60 years, the firm has defined the role of architecture in promoting health and healing, influenced the relationship between contemporary medical practice and the patient, and set precedents that change the face of healthcare. NBBJ contends innovations in design and planning are the direct result of the research and activities it undertakes to learn more about clients and their focus on the future. The firm says it tries to encourage and inspire healthcare leaders to look beyond the present and implement realistic plans that solve today’s problems while keeping an eye on what the future will bring.

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