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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LSU LEADERS PRAISE VA HOSPITAL SITE DECISION

BATON ROUGE--Louisiana State University officials today praised the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for announcing it wants to build its new hospital adjacent to a planned LSU teaching hospital in downtown New Orleans.

“This action by the VA helps reduce the uncertainty of continued medical support for the veterans and others we serve in the New Orleans area,” said Dr. Michael Butler, acting chief executive officer of the LSU Health Care Service Division.

The VA’s preferred site is on 34 acres of land bounded by Tulane Avenue, Canal, South Galvez, and South Rocheblave streets and is about five blocks from the VA’s hospital that was knocked out of action by Hurricane Katrina. The property adjoins 37 acres of land on the east side of South Galvez Street being purchased for the LSU hospital. An environmental assessment team is also evaluating the LSU site.

“The announcement is truly very gratifying,” said LSU System President Dr. William Jenkins. “Our hope and expectation has always been to build a powerful synergistic relationship with the VA in downtown New Orleans. The collaboration, once the complex is constructed, will lead to superb health care delivery not only for Louisiana citizens but also veterans throughout the region, first class education and training of health care professionals, and a vibrant medical research environment.”

LSU Health Sciences Center Chancellor Dr. Larry Hollier also praised the VA move. “We are very pleased to see that the VA has decided to locate the hospital downtown in collaboration with the LSU hospital project,” he said. “This collaboration will save more than \$400 million to taxpayers over the next 25 years. Additionally, these hospitals will serve as the main anchors for the development of the downtown biomedical district, which will be critical for the future of the New Orleans area.”

When completed, the nearly \$2 billion total LSU/VA Medical Center will include a state-of-the-art Level One Trauma Center and encompass more than 1 million square feet of treatment and research space. LSU has hired a team of architects to design its portion of the complex, which is expected to be operational by late 2012.

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