Gov. Juan F. Luis Hospital & Medical Center

March 8, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: James (Jay) Rollins
Public Information Officer
(340) 778-6311, Ext. 5320
jrollins@jflusvi.org
https://jflusvi.org/
www.facebook.com/JFLUSVI

JFL Held Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in Anticipation of March 25 Patient Transfer

ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS-- The Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center (JFL) held its Ribbon Cutting ceremony on March 7, 2023 to celebrate the opening of the new interim facility referred to as JFL North. This occasion marked one of the final steps in anticipation of transferring patients from the current JFL facility to the new state-of-the-art facility on March 25th.

More than 150 invited guests, JFL staff, and territorial leadership gathered on the lawn to the north of the facility. The Mistress of Ceremonies, JFL's own Merlisa George, greeted the speakers that included Governor Albert Bryan, Jr., Lt. Governor Treganza Roach, Senate President Novelle E. Francis, Jr., Director Adrienne Williams-Octalien, Executive Director Darryl Smalls, Board Chairman Chris Finch, JFL CEO Doug Koch, and an invocation and benediction from Apostle Mona Barnes. Also in attendance was special guest Carlotta Luis, the daughter of the late Governor Juan F. Luis for whom the institution is named.

CEO Koch emphasized that the opening of JFL North was the first of many steps to the ultimate goal of a new JFL hospital. He also indicated that for this initial opening, patient safety would be the top priority. "We still have many challenges ahead of us, and I am certain that more surprises will surface in the coming weeks," he said. "Our number one priority is patient safety and we must ensure that as we transition to JFL North. But our

commitment to everyone here and to everyone in this community is that the long awaited opening JFL North will soon be upon us."

Acknowledgements were made to everyone involved in the process over the years. Director Williams-Octalien highlighted the partnership with FEMA and the numerous times they had to be approached to get us to the cost in excess of $120,000,000.00 USD.

That price has given St. Croix this new state-of-the-art center. Williams-Octalien stated, "Don't mind these walls out here. The equipment inside this facility is no where near close to what we have seen in the Virgin Islands in a very, very long time."

JFL-North is a state-of-the-art, 54-bed facility designed to replace JFL-Main. This 55,000 sq. ft. facility houses 54 inpatient beds, 14 medical/surgical beds, 13 emergency room beds, 4 fast track beds, 4 behavioral health beds, and 4 operating rooms. While the space is smaller than the current state, JFL-North is also equipped with new and improved technology to include a 128-slice CT machine. These improvements equip JFL staff with the necessary resources to deliver high quality healthcare to our St. Croix community.

Executive Director Smalls highlighted the broader timeline for the JFL project referring to this opening as Phase 1. "We are about to embark on what I like to refer to as Phase 1, which is the transition of patients from JFLH to JFL North," stated Smalls. "Concurrently, this month, we will commence with Phase 2, the construction of the Critical Administrative Building on the southern side of JFL North, which will provide a direct connection to the VICC, thereby enabling staff and patients to move between each of the facilities. This 6,500 square feet building will serve as the main entrance to JFL North and will house non-clinical functions that directly support patient care."

Gov. JUAN F. LUIS HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER

Upon completion of Phase 2, demolition will begin on the current JFL structure. The timeline for the completion of the new permanent structure is 6-7 years once demolition begins.

Governor Bryan finished out the speeches. "Today we cut the ribbon on a brand new frontier of health care providing in the Virgin Islands, stated Bryan. "I'm doing my part to make sure Virgin Islanders stay healthy and live their best life."

The day concluded with invitees touring the facility and meeting many of the staff that will be running the various units. JFL will hold Open Houses for the community on March 10, from 4:00 – 7:00; and on March 11 and 12, from 1:00 – 5:00. The community is invited to come tour the facility and see for themselves. No reservation is required to attend. Parking will be available at Island Center. Additionally, JFL's Human Resource department will be on hand with job applications for those seeking employment.

###

Photo Credit: JFL staff
Photo Caption: CEO Doug Koch, Executive Leadership, and members of the staff of JFL anticipate the Ribbon Cutting on March 7, 2023.