



## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 13, 2006

Media Contact:

Theresa Makrush  
904-359-0981, ext. 3199  
904-505-6157 (mobile)  
[tmakrush@trsg.net](mailto:tmakrush@trsg.net)

## **University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute Officially Opens**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Oct. 13, 2006) -- The only proton therapy treatment facility in the Southeast, the University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute marked its official opening today with a ceremonial dedication of the 98,000-square foot, \$125 million building.

The University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute opening comes eight years since developing the initial proposal for the project and just three years since its groundbreaking. Florida Proton is one of only five proton therapy centers in the country and is affiliated with the UF College of Medicine and the UF Shands Cancer Center, national leaders in cancer treatment and research. Proton therapy is a precise radiation treatment that destroys cancer cells and minimizes damage to healthy tissue. This results in higher cure rates, a low incidence of side effects and fewer long-term effects. Proton therapy is especially beneficial for treating cancer in children and in adult cancers located in sensitive areas like the head, neck, lung, brain, breast and prostate.

“We are proud to celebrate this milestone for cancer treatment in Jacksonville and beyond,” said Stuart Klein, executive director, UF Proton Therapy Institute. “It has taken a collaboration of many public and private sector partners, along with a dedicated team of radiation oncologists, physicists, engineers, computer scientists and community leaders to make this facility happen.”

Notable ceremony speakers included The Honorable John Peyton, mayor of the city of Jacksonville; J. Bernard Machen, president of University of Florida; C. Craig Tisher, M.D., dean of UF’s College of Medicine; Russell B. Newton, Jr., Chairman, Timucuan Asset Management,

Inc.; Pierre Mottet, CEO of IBA; Nancy P. Mendenhall, M.D., medical director of Florida Proton; and Douglas J. Barrett, M.D. senior vice president of UF's Health Affairs.

The University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Florida Proton is dedicated to delivering state-of-the-art cancer treatment and strives to set new standards for treating and curing the disease. The cancer treatment facility houses both conventional radiation and proton therapy, and when it is at capacity will deliver proton therapy to up to 150 patients a day. For more information about Florida Proton, please visit [www.floridaproton.org](http://www.floridaproton.org).

###

fpt-00406