

Date: September 14, 2015

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Live Like Bella® Childhood Cancer Foundation partners with Miami Cancer Institute at Baptist Health South Florida for innovative Pediatric Proton Radiation Oncology Program

September 14, 2015 – MIAMI, Fla. - Live Like Bella® Childhood Cancer Foundation is pleased to announce a partnership with Baptist Health South Florida to fund the Live Like Bella® Pediatric Proton Radiation Oncology Program at Miami Cancer Institute.

The new Miami Cancer Institute at Baptist Health South Florida will offer comprehensive clinical services, state-of-the-art technology and an innovative research facility. A milestone for Miami, the \$430 million facility will be the first in South Florida – and one of the few facilities in America – to offer proton therapy. This sophisticated treatment destroys cancer cells with precisely targeted doses of radiation while avoiding healthy tissue. For the first time, children battling cancer in South Florida, Latin America and the Caribbean will have convenient access to proton therapy.

The Pediatric Proton Radiation Oncology Program area within Miami Cancer Institute will display “Live Like Bella” in bright red letters, representing the Foundation’s logo written in Bella Rodriguez-Torres’ own handwriting, captured prior to her passing from childhood cancer in 2013.

Through a generous gift and in partnership with the Live Like Bella® Foundation, researchers at Miami Cancer Institute will be able to conduct clinical trials and provide treatments specifically for pediatric cancer patients receiving proton radiation therapy.

“We are thrilled to support this innovative treatment for children from our community and the many abroad who will soon be able to travel to Miami to receive it,” said Raymond Rodriguez-Torres, Chairman of Live Like Bella® and Bella’s father, at the sold-out Bella’s Ball Saturday night. “Bella was one of the first children from South Florida to receive proton radiation in 2007. Our family had to travel and be away from home for many months. It is a privilege to support such an important project that will help generations of children and families right in their own backyard.”

About Live Like Bella®:

Live Like Bella® was founded in June 2013 in memory of Bella Rodriguez-Torres, who passed away at the tender age of 10 from Rhabdomyosarcoma, an aggressive childhood cancer. In her six-year battle she inspired millions to #LiveLikeBella and we are dedicated to finding a cure for pediatric cancer by funding innovative pediatric cancer research. Our Foundation also provides support for families with children currently in treatment and provides memorial assistance for families who have lost a child to cancer. For more information visit www.LiveLikeBella.org

About Miami Cancer Institute:

Miami Cancer Institute offers comprehensive cancer services and is expanding its clinical services, clinical trials and state-of-the-art technology, including offering the first proton therapy treatment in South Florida, Latin America and the Caribbean. The Cancer Institute, designed to be a world-class clinical center and research facility, will move into its new spectacular facility in 2016. Miami Cancer Institute is part of Baptist Health South Florida, the largest healthcare organization in the region, with seven hospitals (Baptist Hospital, Baptist Children’s Hospital, Doctors Hospital, Homestead Hospital, Mariners Hospital, South Miami Hospital and West Kendall Baptist Hospital) and nearly 50 outpatient and urgent care facilities spanning three counties. The not-for-profit, faith-based Baptist Health has more than 16,000 employees and 2,200 affiliated physicians and also includes Baptist Outpatient Services and internationally renowned centers of excellence. Baptist Health Foundation, the organization’s fundraising arm, supports services at all hospitals and facilities. Baptist Health is listed by *Fortune* magazine as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For in America (#23 in the nation) and has remained on the list for 15 years. It was also recognized as one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies for the fourth year in a row by the Ethisphere Institute. Visit BaptistHealth.net.

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