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**UNC Health Blue Ridge**

**Ready to Open**

**$38 Million Cancer Center**

**VALDESE, N.C. (August 1, 2023) -** The $38 million Cancer Center at UNC Health Blue Ridge Valdese will have a grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting on Tuesday, Aug. 8, at 5 p.m.

“We’ve waited for this day a long time,” said Chief Operating Officer Jon Mercer. “This facility is beautiful and welcoming to anyone needing treatment. Now, you don’t have to travel for state-of-the-art cancer care.”

The grand opening celebration will include remarks from UNC Health Blue Ridge President & CEO Kathy Bailey, Chairman of the Blue Ridge Board of Directors Jeff Carswell, Radiation Oncologist Dr. Greg Jones, and Medical Oncologist Dr. Wenimar Salvador. Many local officials will be on hand to cut the ribbon with President Tonia Stephenson of the Burke County Chamber of Commerce.

“We are inviting the public to take a tour through the new area, and we have teammates stationed at various spots to answer questions,” Mercer said. Light refreshments will be served.

Greg Jones, MD, only the second radiation oncologist in the Valdese Cancer Center’s 56-year history, says the project has taken a while, but the result is worth the wait. “This Cancer Center is extraordinarily well-equipped, allowing radiation oncology and medical oncology to share an outstanding space with multiple support services. Both departments will be able to use all common forms of treatment, eliminating the need for patients to travel elsewhere.

The new center and Outpatient Infusion Center will move from the right side of the hospital to the left, and the public should be aware of new parking and entrances. New signs will direct everyone where to park.

“A diverse and comprehensive team of frontline teammates have been active participants in the planning and design of the project,” Mercer said. “We wanted to ensure we provide the best care possible for the patients we serve well into the future.”

The cancer and infusion center will be housed in a new 34,272-square-foot addition that features new infusion therapy and treatment areas with private and open space, radiation and chemotherapy exam rooms, consultation areas, and treatment spaces. Equipment includes two new Linear Accelerators, CT Simulator, and Superficial X-ray.

“We will have some much-needed space for education, support, and group therapy,” said Wenimar Salvador, MD, the medical oncologist at the center. “This cancer center is a testament to our commitment to you. This center will bring high-quality healthcare closer to you and your family.”

“We’re grateful that we were part of the team that built this new cancer center,” said Brasfield & Gorrie Regional Vice President and Division Manager Michael Byrd. “The team at UNC Health Blue Ridge Valdese is actively working to serve their community, and it’s humbling to lend our construction expertise to make that possible.”

The design firm working on the project is DLR Group. “We have been working on this project for three years and are so excited to see it come to fruition,” said Heather C. Beard, AIA, DLR Group senior associate. “We are honored to contribute to creating a cohesive and welcoming environment that embodies our shared vision for exceptional healthcare.”

The Valdese Cancer Center was first accredited by the Commission on Cancer in 1972 and is one of the longest-continuously accredited programs in the state.

At the opening event, the Blue Ridge HealthCare Foundation will sell brick pavers that can be personalized for placement in the Cancer Center’s new Serenity Garden. Bricks are $150 each, and some of the already purchased bricks will be displayed in the garden. The public will also have a chance to join the “Keep Shining” donor wall. Information will be available at the open house.

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**About UNC Health Blue Ridge**

UNC Health Blue Ridge ([www.unchealthblueridge.org](http://www.unchealthblueridge.org)) is a not-for-profit community healthcare system providing advanced healthcare and wellness services from more than 40 locations across a three-county region of Western North Carolina. The system includes one hospital with two locations and a continuing care retirement community. Nearly 120 primary care physicians, physician specialists, and extenders in the Blue Ridge Medical Group combine with other physicians on the Medical Staff to serve patients in the region. UNC Health Blue Ridge provides graduate medical education programs for medical school graduates and students in osteopathic medicine. UNCBR is affiliated with UNC Health System ([www.unchealthcare.org](http://www.unchealthcare.org)), a not-for-profit integrated healthcare system owned by the state of North Carolina and based in Chapel Hill

**About Brasfield & Gorrie**

Founded in 1964, Brasfield & Gorrie is one of the nation’s largest privately held construction firms, providing general contracting, design-build, and construction management services for a wide variety of markets. We are skilled in construction best practices, including virtual design and construction, integrated project delivery, and Lean construction, but we are best known for our preconstruction and self-perform expertise and exceptional client service. Brasfield & Gorrie has 13 offices and more than 3,200 employees. Our 2021 revenues were $4.2 billion. Engineering News-Record ranks Brasfield & Gorrie 22nd among the nation’s “Top 400 Contractors” for 2021. Brasfield & Gorrie is ENR Southeast's 2021 Contractor of the Year.

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**About DLR Group**[DLR Group](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http:/www.dlrgroup.com__;!!Kv7QgGdTlhIaqSqT!Llo_oC6cbMC019RtF_2pkTCgg5YLDuGkUcfJcj5bgjmFS0a6X3Z7jChHUe1e_hCTYzE3CPNb38JUTLDV5DNy8Ck%24) is an integrated design firm delivering architecture, engineering, interiors, planning, and building optimization for new construction, renovation, and adaptive reuse. Our promise is to elevate the human experience through design. This promise inspires sustainable design for a diverse group of public and private sector clients, local communities, and our planet. DLR Group is 100 percent employee-owned and fully supports the initiatives and goals of the 2030 Challenge, and is an initial signatory to the China Accord and the AIA 2030 Commitment.

