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Ribbon Cutting for North Florida Land Trust's New Offices in the historic Brewster Hospital building

Jacksonville, Fla., April 4, 2019 – North Florida Land Trust held a grand opening celebration today at their new offices in the historic Brewster Hospital building. NFLT staff and board members were joined by elected officials, supporters, community leaders and members of the Brewster Nurses and Community Alumni Association for a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by an open house to show off the renovations throughout the building.

NFLT was interested in leasing the 5,700 square foot building from the City of Jacksonville because they have outgrown their current office in Riverside. Over the last four years, the nonprofit land conservation has increased their number of projects and added new employees to keep up with the workload. Their staff of 11 needed more room to work and more room for meeting space.

“We are so excited to have this incredible building to work in and even more excited that it has a unique history attached to it,” said Jim McCarthy, president of NFLT. “This property fits well with our mission to preserve natural and working lands and historic places throughout north Florida. We are moving from a 1,300 house to this beautiful property that has lots of historic details. Danis performed the renovations to the building and we are so happy with the results.”

Danis Construction, LLC began preparatory work on the project in late 2018 and the renovation process began in January of this year. The Brewster Hospital building, which was built in 1885, included modifications to the inside to better suit the needs of the land trust. They reconfigured interior rooms to make more functional office space, painted, added new lighting and refinished the original wood floors. Danis modified restrooms and a ramp system to bring the building into compliance with the American with Disabilities Act and added a steel staircase to the back of the building. They also added a new parking lot and did some minor landscaping.

“We are happy to see another historic building put back into use,” said Steve Betz, president of Danis Construction, LLC. “North Florida Land Trust’s commitment to preserving land, as well as the built environment, is to be commended. Their organization continues to do great things in our community and we look forward to seeing what’s next.”

NFLT spent approximately \$391,000 on the renovations. They are seeking donations for a matching grant of \$187,000 from an anonymous donor and a Challenge Grant of \$100,000 from the Delores Barr Weaver Fund. The Challenge Grant must come from new donors to the land trust. To contribute or to become a new supporter of the land trust, visit nflt.org.

Brewster Hospital was built in 1885 and was Jacksonville’s first hospital for African Americans and a training school for nurses. It was moved to its current location at the corner of Monroe and Davis Streets in 2005 and the city did extensive renovations to the building in 2007. NFLT will occupy most of the building, but will designate a room on the first floor that will serve as a memorial to the history of Brewster Hospital and a meeting room for the Brewster Hospital Nurses Association.

About North Florida Land Trust

North Florida Land Trust is a nonprofit organization that champions environmental protection in its primary, 10-county focus area of Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Union and Volusia counties. NFLT is also expanding its reach to the west of the state. NFLT was founded in 1999 and has protected thousands of acres of environmentally significant land including property at Big Talbot Island, the River Branch Preserve, Pumpkin Hill, Moccasin Slough, along the St. Mary's River and other valued natural areas predominantly in Northeast Florida. NFLT is funded largely by private and corporate contributions and works closely with private landowners and public agencies at all levels of government, not-for-profit partners, and foundations. For more information, visit nflt.org.