



# Harris County Hospital District

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Eagle Scout Donates Artwork to Ben Taub for Patients' Enjoyment**

HOUSTON (Oct. 30, 2006) – Many people walking into Ben Taub General Hospital's Radiation Therapy Department for their appointment may wish they were relaxing on a tropical beach, instead.

Thanks to the generosity and talent of one local teenager, now they can enjoy the sights of a tropical paradise — even if it's just for a couple of minutes.

The once barren and sterile walls of the radiation therapy treatment room area are now decorated with original artwork designed and painted by Tommy Le, a local Eagle Scout.

Le's artwork is designed to look as though you are looking out a window to a tropical destination, a difficult skill to master because of the forced perception necessary to achieve the desired effect.

“Instead of just drawing a sky with a tree branch or a sky and a plane, I decided to draw something more challenging, more realistic,” Le said. “A tropical scene tends to provide a more relaxing environment. The blue of the sea and the green of the trees create a calm, cool feeling.”

Le was born in Vietnam, but later moved to the United States with his family. A senior at Kempner High School, Le is active in several organizations, including the Boy Scouts of America, which he joined in 1998.

Eagle Scout is the highest level attainable in the Boy Scouts, and is only reached by about 5 percent of all scouts. To earn this honor, Le had to fulfill demanding requirements in the areas of leadership, service and outdoor skills.

Le contacted Lynn Friedman, assistant administrator for patient and public affairs, about painting a mural. But Friedman knew a bigger need existed in radiation therapy and suggested a painting for the treatment area.

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Le spent more than 200 hours planning and working on the artwork. His troop, number 498, and other friends also spent more than 200 hours helping him, while his father, Lieng Quang Le, spent 50 hours helping his son make the frames for the artwork.

“It has been a pleasure this summer to have painted these three canvases, and donated them to Ben Taub, which is such a great cause,” Le said. “I chose this Eagle Scout project because it involved art, a passion of mine.”

Le proved to be very resourceful, successfully lobbying John Gilbreath, the manager of Texas Art Supplies, to donate art supplies worth \$200. Le then raised the \$300 needed to pay for the window trim and framing materials.

The project, which took nearly two months to complete, is an inspiration to staff and patients.

“The new pieces of art make the area more inviting for patients,” said Michael T. Daniels, manager of radiation therapy and nuclear medicine. “It also helps lower patients’ anxiety levels.”

“The area is very serene,” said one radiation therapy patient. “I have a beach house, and when I’m here it reminds me of my house and inspires me to write music.”

After high school, Le plans on attending either the University of Texas or Texas A&M, majoring in architecture.

During college he wants to participate in the Air Force ROTC program where, upon graduation, he could receive a commission in the U.S. Air Force as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant, then go on to serve in the armed services.

The Harris County Hospital District is the public health care system for the nation’s third most populous county. It provides more than 1.1 million health care visits each year to uninsured and underinsured residents of Harris County. The district operates Ben Taub General Hospital, Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital, Quentin Mease Community Hospital, 12 community health centers, a dental center, eight school-based clinics, 13 homeless shelter clinics and four mobile health units.

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