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## **U.S. Army Celebrates Opening of Army Acquisition Center of Excellence**

**HUNTSVILLE, AL**—The U.S. Army marked the opening of the first Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE) today with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAHuntsville). This facility will provide the Army acquisition workforce with vital education and career development opportunities, while consolidating two previously separate training campuses—at the Institute for Advanced Technology at the University of Texas at Austin, and at the Bevill Center at UAHuntsville—to save time, money, and resources.

Distinguished guests included LTG William N. Phillips, Principal Military Deputy (PMILDEP) to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASAALT) and Director of Acquisition Career Management; William F. Moore, Deputy to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command; and Dr. David B. Williams, President, UAHuntsville.

“We pride ourselves on being the heart of this intellectual community,” Williams said. “I am very, very proud of the many years of partnership we have with the U.S. Army. ... I look forward to learning more about how this partnership will continue to grow.”

Moore echoed the importance of such a partnership. “We have been in the business of training acquisition professionals for almost four decades,” he said. “This is a time to build new partnerships to grow this capability. We want to bring academic excellence to the table.”

In January 2010, LTG N. Ross Thompson III, former PMILDEP to the ASAALT, directed the establishment of an AACoE. By establishing this consolidated training center, the Army will save \$1 million annually while also providing better education and career development opportunities to the Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology Workforce. In turn, the workforce will be better equipped to bring Soldiers the capabilities they need, when they need them.

“What an honor it is for me to be here and take part in something truly special,” Phillips remarked. “This truly is world-class, and many people have contributed to the success of this day.”

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One of the key benefits of this centralized facility at Madison Hall is a greater industry base. Several Army commands have moved or are moving to Huntsville and other facilities throughout the state, providing opportunities to leverage these resources for class speakers, site visits, case studies, and easy access to senior leaders. The AACoE also will provide mentorship opportunities, an improved, consolidated curriculum, and benefits from a government/public institution partnership.

UAHuntsville is deeply involved in research and development, which directly affects Redstone Arsenal, AL, home to more than 50 international, federal, and DOD organizations, and the surrounding acquisition community. The partnership provides the Army space in a college environment that will enhance Soldiers' and Army civilians' learning experiences. The university will provide students lodging and use of its dining facility for rates 22 percent lower than government per diem, which not only saves money, but also allows students to set up study groups and help each other complete group assignments in a centralized location.

“Our new Army Acquisition Center of Excellence is built on that very principle—excellence,” Phillips said. The AACoE, with a staff of 16, will offer the following seven courses: Acquisition Basic (5 weeks), Intermediate Program Management (3 weeks), Intermediate Contracting (4 weeks), Contracting Laboratory (2 weeks), Acquisition Noncommissioned Officer Leadership (1 week), Contracting Officers' Representative (1 week), and Functional Area 51 Intermediate Qualification (4 weeks).

“One of my top priorities as the Director of Acquisition Career Management is advancing career opportunities for the people who work so hard to execute the acquisition, logistics, and technology mission,” Phillips said. “It requires rebalance and growth across the acquisition workforce for us to continue building a world-class, professional corps of military and civilian members focused on our vital mission. What I see as my No. 1 challenge is supporting Soldiers and getting capability into their hands. This can't happen efficiently or effectively without a robust, highly skilled, ethical, and professional acquisition workforce.”

#### **CAPTIONS:**

**Photo36.jpg:** LTG William N. Phillips, Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, and Director of Acquisition Career Management, cuts the ribbon held by William F. Moore, Deputy to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command, and Dr. David B. Williams, President, UAHuntsville, to officially open the Army Acquisition Center of Excellence, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Jan. 25, 2011. (U.S. Army photo.)

**Photo66.jpg:** LTG William N. Phillips, Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, and Director of Acquisition Career Management, addresses students following the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Army Acquisition Center of Excellence, Jan. 25, 2011. (U.S. Army photo.)

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**The U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) supports Army warfighter readiness by developing a world-class professional acquisition workforce, effectively acquiring and stewarding resources and providing customers with the best possible products and services. For more information about USAASC, visit <http://asc.army.mil>.**