

U.S. ARMY OPENS 'ARMY EXPERIENCE CENTER' IN PHILADELPHIA

HIGH-TECH FACILITY ALLOWS VISITORS TO EXPERIENCE MANY ASPECTS OF ARMY

Philadelphia (August 29, 2008)—The U.S. Army today opened the Army Experience Center (AEC), a state-of-the-art educational facility where visitors can virtually experience many aspects of Army life. Located inside Franklin Mills Mall in Philadelphia, the 14,500-square-foot facility is the centerpiece of the Army Experience Pilot Program to test and evaluate new marketing strategies.

The facility features a number of interactive simulations and online learning programs to inform visitors about the many Army careers, training and educational opportunities. AEC visitors will virtually experience the Army through hands-on interactive displays and educational technologies.

"The Army offers the next generation of volunteers an opportunity to serve our nation as well as excellence in education, training, technology and career opportunities to succeed now and in the future," says Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army. "Potential recruits are afforded a unique opportunity through the Army Experience Center to learn what it means to be the best-led, best-trained and best-equipped Army in the world by allowing them to virtually experience multiple aspects of the Army."

The AEC provides Philadelphians and other mid-Atlantic residents a unique opportunity to learn about aspects of the Army they may not be familiar with. Participants can experience the Army for themselves through interaction with high-tech virtual experiences, real-world technologies and with Soldiers. The AEC will also be a hub for education and community outreach programs. Staff will partner with educational institutions to bring programs and interactive career resources to the Philadelphia area.

The AEC highlights how Soldiers are equipped with cutting-edge technologies to accomplish complex missions by putting visitors in the roles of Soldiers and providing them hands-on interaction with mission simulations. The experience allows participants to see how technology, training and teamwork combine to make the Army the world's premier land power.

"The Army is a learning organization that constantly strives to improve its operations and we've found that virtual experiences are an effective way to communicate the value of Army service," says Edward Walters, Chief Marketing Officer and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army. "The Army has had great success with experiential marketing and communications, including the *America's Army* game and the Virtual Army Experience, and has leveraged the knowledge and experience from both properties for the AEC."



An AEC visit includes Soldiers leading people through Army equipment simulators, interactive installations, and a number of online education programs. Participant activity areas include a Command and Control Center, where high-tech briefings are conducted; a Career Navigator to interactively explore 150+ Army career opportunities; realistic Army simulators that include an Apache helicopter, a Black Hawk helicopter, and an Armored Humvee vehicle. There also are gaming areas featuring Xbox 360 pods, networked personal computers for gaming via a local area network, and games that include *America's Army*, the official game of the U.S. Army. Through these experiences, visitors learn about the breadth of career choices and a multitude of education, training, health care and quality-of-life benefits available to Soldiers.

"AEC visitors will have a better understanding of the training and career opportunities afforded our Soldiers, and the high-tech nature of our institution," Walters adds. "After talking with our Soldiers, participants will have a greater appreciation for the nation's 'Army Strong' men and women and how their Army careers and adherence to Army Values have positively impacted their future and the future of our country."

For more information about the Army Experience Center, go to www.TheArmyExperience.com.
For more information about the U.S. Army, go to www.goarmy.com.

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