

# **FORT LESLEY J. MCNAIR**

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

### **LOCATION**

Fort Lesley J. McNair, is located on Greenleaf Point in the Southwest section of Washington, D.C. at the junction of the Anacostia River and the Washington Channel of the Potomac River. Fort McNair is the 3rd oldest US post in continuous active service.

### **SIZE**

**Acres:** 98.0

**Square Footage of Buildings:** 1,081,846 SF

**Plant Replacement Value:** \$235,962,100

### **HISTORY**

Fort Lesley J. McNair is the 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest US Army Post in continuous use. In 1791, Major Pierre L'Enfant, planner of the new federal district, designated Greenleaf's Point, at the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, as a military reservation for defense of Washington. The fort was destroyed by the British in the War 1812. It was rebuilt by 1817 was served as an arsenal until 1881. The original 28.5 acres was expanded by purchase of 400 foot wide parcel north of the original point in 1826, for construction of a 160 cell U.S. Penitentiary. In 1851, a landfill reclaimed marsh land and in 1857, the present northern boundary was established by purchase. By 1862, the Penitentiary was closed due to military activities on post. Three years later, it was the site of trial and hanging of four Lincoln assassination conspirators. After the arsenal was deactivated in 1881, the fort became a general Army post. Malaria research that led to the control of the disease was conducted at the General Hospital (now dispensary) by Major Walter Reed during the 1890's. In 1903, the post was redesigned into a Beaus Arts campus for the new Army War College and Engineer School. Between then and 1908, the roads and 90% of the existing buildings were constructed. The landfill was completed, leaving the fort's present configuration, to include the acquisition of 9.8 acres of land transferred from GSA and the purchase of 8.5 acres for a total of 106 acres of land at Fort McNair plus the construction of Buildings 33 and 62. All of the pre-1903 buildings were razed, except for Quarters 17, 20, and 21 and some administrative buildings at the northern end of the post. In 1946, the National War College was established in the building previously occupied by the Army War College. The Army Industrial College, redesignated the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, moved on post in 1946. It is now located as the only significant post 1908 structure, completed in 1958. The Inter American Defense College was opened in 1962, and in 1971, the Headquarters of the US Military District of Washington moved on post. In 1976, the Industrial College and National War College were combined to establish the National Defense University (NDU). In 1991, the NDU Academic Operations Center was constructed.

The post has held several names, including the Washington Arsenal (1812-1881), and finally since 1948, Fort Lesley J. McNair. Fort McNair is listed as National Historic Landmark by the Joint Committee on Landmarks, which represents the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts. The post has been nominated as a National Historic District on the National Historic Landmark Register.

**MISSIONS**

The primary mission of Fort McNair is to support the partner activities stationed on the post, including the National Defense University and the Joint Forces Headquarters-National Capital Region/Headquarters, US Army Military District of Washington. Other organizations receiving support from Fort McNair are Company A, 1st Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> US Infantry (The Old Guard), the 767<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Detachment (EOD), and the Center for Military History. It also provides some housing for general and flag officers assigned to various elements of the Department of Defense.

**MAJOR UNITS/TENANTS**

- National Defense University
  - National War College
  - Industrial College of the Armed Forces
- Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region/U.S. Army Military District of Washington Headquarters
- The Old Guard, Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 3<sup>rd</sup> US Infantry (The Old Guard)
- 767<sup>th</sup> Explosive Ordnance Division
- Center for Military History
- Inter-American Defense College

**POPULATION**

	<b>Authorized</b>
Military	523
Civilian	600
Contractor	25
Student	749
Other	93
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,990</b>