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Research University*

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BRAC Commission

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Received

August 1, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark St., Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

I am appealing to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission to reverse the Department of Defense recommendation relocating functions of CECOM, CERDEC, and various PEO personnel to other facilities, most notably those of the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Ft. Meade and Ft. Belvoir.

I am convinced that there is a strong and compelling case for the reversal based upon the track record of accomplishment by Ft. Monmouth personnel and the integrated technical support community, the danger to the war-fighter posed by disrupting the base's ongoing mission at Ft. Monmouth, and the important contributions to be made directly to the Homeland Defense effort here in one of the nation's most vulnerable areas. Others will document the facts that support these points.

As one of the state's leaders in developing and implementing programs for regional economic growth, NJIT is keenly aware of the importance of industry-specific skills in the workforce. High-tech indicators are necessary but not sufficient. The workforce is more than the advanced degree professionals, and industry recognizes the importance to their efficiency of having employees at all skill levels that understand the nuances of their particular trade. New Jersey has arguably been the birthplace of modern telecommunications from the dominance of AT&T in landline and RCA in broadcast. Even after considerable re-arrangements in the industry, there is a deep seated expertise in our workforce that will persist for years to come. The needs of this workforce have shaped instructional and research programs at this, and other universities in the state that is not likely to be reflected in other regions that lack the same industrial footprint.

I would like to take this opportunity to make the case for the importance of substantial linkages between Ft. Monmouth and the research and development enterprise of New Jersey. In particular, I want to point out university partnerships that are directly tied to advancing the base's core mission and go well beyond classroom instruction and traditional degree programs.

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NJIT is the technological research university of the New Jersey public system of higher education. With principal studies in engineering, the physical sciences, management and architecture, it has a total enrollment of over 8800 matriculants, graduates over 60 Ph.D.'s per year across 18 different disciplinary programs. It conducts over \$75M per year in research which places it in the top ten nationally of universities dedicated principally to engineering and science. Its laboratories are equipped with state of the art instrumentation suitable for working at the nano-scale, and it has various production centers that fabricate working physical prototypes and pilot-scale materials production. The Class-10 clean-room of the NJIT micro-fabrication center is a resource for producing micro-electronics and integrated MEMS-based sensor systems that is part of the DARPA MEMS-exchange program to support DoD research.

Wireless communications, advanced signal processing, networking and cyber security represent a substantial portion of our academic research effort. Our Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, where much of this work is conducted has been designated in the university's strategic plan for growth to national recognition, and I am concentrating investments on this group in pursuit of that goal. This department has been central to many on-going R&D collaborations with Ft. Monmouth. NJIT has led the creation of three centers of excellence rooted in this department that are relevant to CECOM needs – the Center for Wireless Communications and Signal Processing Research, the New Jersey Center for Wireless Telecommunications, and the New Jersey Wireless and Networking Internet Security Center. The investigator relationships developed in this context led to deep institutional ties and resulted in the creation of custom, on-base, advanced degree programs. They have also resulted in substantial partnerships with the defense industry contractors that support the base including CACI, Raytheon, BAE, Northrop-Grumman, Boeing, MITRE and others, extending to large scale programs such as TEFOS and S-3.

While this has been the historical core for interaction, other campus units are of growing importance to the base's mission. Our College of Computing Sciences includes degree offerings from the departments of Computer Science and Information Systems. All aspects from databases and algorithms to human-computer interface design are core to this college that is one of the few such constructs in the country. In addition, advanced imaging and sensor work such as our pioneering efforts in Tera-Hertz imaging for detecting concealed explosives conducted in our Physics Department connect us to technology programs at the base.

We fully anticipate the continued growth of these activities to embrace our industrial Ph.D. format that allows the candidate substantial latitude to conduct dissertation projects at their job site and with joint supervision by university faculty and mentors from the employment site. Given the rapid change to all aspects of sensors, information and communications technologies it is especially critical to maintaining workforce superiority that base personnel and support contractors have maximum access to both the research and instructional programs that proximate and relevant universities such as ours offer.

Just a year ago, at signing ceremonies at Fort Monmouth, former Governor McGreevey designated NJIT as the New Jersey Homeland Security Technology Systems Center by Executive Order. This is a State funded Center. Fort Monmouth was chosen as the site for the ceremony to create this Center for two reasons: Fort Monmouth has been a

strategic partner with NJIT in adapting defense technologies for homeland security use and conversely, the adaptation of homeland security technologies for defense use.

NJIT's is creating systems concepts for reducing the state's vulnerability, identify and integrate relevant technologies in pilot studies, and to create performance and interoperability standards that guide public sector investments. Ft. Monmouth is an invaluable partner based on their deep and broad expertise in all aspects of C4ISR. We have agreed to form an alliance to facilitate the adoption of uniform standards for communications and information systems across the defense, homeland defense and homeland security sectors.

In addition to the research and development focus at NJIT, it is a statewide leader in technology business incubation and an active leader in regional economic development. It maintains three incubators with over 150,000 square feet of space and has graduated more than 50 companies with a 5 year persistence rate of 85%. This activity magnifies the resources available from core university assets to foster new companies with technologies that support the base mission. One of our graduates, Phacil, is a minority owned business that provides systems integration and advanced engineering services to Ft. Monmouth.

In an era of instant, global communications, it is easy to overlook the importance of co-location to meaningful collaboration. Our relationships with the base are deep and forged over a long period of time.

I hope that the collective expression of support from the state's educational institutions will be part of an overwhelming case for reversing the DoD recommendation and keeping our base open and working at full capacity to protect our soldiers at war and our citizens at home and abroad.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Altenkirch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "A".

Robert A. Altenkirch, Ph.D.
President