

History in the making, ATEC breaks ground at APG



Story and photo by

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The U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command's move to Aberdeen Proving Ground is one step closer to fruition as ATEC held its ground breaking ceremony near Swan Creek Inn and the post office in the Aberdeen Area Sept. 10.

ATEC's headquarters is currently based in Alexandria, Va. The command will be moving to APG as part of Base Realignment and Closure legislation. The 142,500 square foot facility will support approximately 600 ATEC and U.S. Army Evaluation Center employees.

The building was designed by WDG Architecture and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. The \$49.4 million contract was awarded in March. Construction will be performed by Foulger-Pratt Construction. ATEC conducts testing for all branches of the military and maintains a large customer base that includes the Department of Defense, National Security Agency, Joint Chiefs of Staff, allied foreign countries and Congress. ATEC employs

Major General Roger A. Nadeau, commanding general, U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, addresses his workforce and other distinguished guests at ATEC's Ground Breaking Ceremony Sept. 10 for its new headquarters building to be built on Aberdeen Proving Ground with a projected completion date of June 2011.

approximately 10,000 military, civilian and contract employees who are highly skilled test officers, engineers, scientists, technicians, researchers and evaluators. ATEC is involved in more than 1,100 tests daily that encompass everything from individual weapons to National Missile Defense systems. The annual budget for the command is in excess of half a billion dollars.

The ceremony opened with an invocation by ATEC's Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Harry A. Rauch to bless those who will build the headquarters and those who will one day work there.

Opening remarks were given by Col. Orlando W. Ortiz, APG Garrison and deputy installation commander.

"Bringing the Army Test and Evaluation Command headquarters here is a significant step toward making APG an integrated center for Soldier-focused systems by linking test and evaluation with research and development and acquisition," Ortiz stated in his remarks. "Aberdeen Proving Ground is committed to supporting ATEC in every way, linking your vision with ours."

Major Gen. Roger A. Nadeau, ATEC's commanding general is no stranger to APG. Prior to accepting command of ATEC in 2007, he served as the commander of APG and the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command from October 2004 to June 2007. He stated that when he was with RDECOM and first heard of organizations impacted by BRAC coming to APG, it "seemed decades away."

Nadeau is excited about the move and what it means for APG and ATEC.

"BRAC is an enabler. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take this transformation as far as we are willing to go. From my perspective, it is history here today," Nadeau said.

Taking part in the ground breaking were Nadeau and ATEC's Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen R. Flood, Ortiz, Brian Simmons from AEC, Lt. Col. John Osborn of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, John P. Barron from Foulger-Pratt Construction and Eric Liebmann of WDG Architecture.

ATEC will be joining other commands moving to APG because of BRAC such as the Communications-Electronics Command and the Communications-Electronics Research, Development, and Engineering Center as part of the APG 2012.

The estimated completion date for the building is June 2011.