



Base Realignment and Closure

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Embrace BRAC: Castro, Garr and Popovich team to welcome realignment

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San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro, Garrison Commander Col. Mary Garr and San Antonio Spurs Head Coach Gregg Popovich joined ranks to send a San Antonio welcome message.

Part of an overall community outreach program, the video message is a component of a public service campaign that will include various public service announcements and a website built around the theme "Embrace BRAC," explained John Boggess, vice president of communications for Thompson Marketing, who is producing the campaign.

Slated for launch July 17, the program will provide information on the military's joint basing for relocating Families as well as military and civilian Families already in San Antonio.

"If you look at the word embrace, there's BRAC right in the middle," Boggess said. Under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure, San Antonio is one of 12 locations worldwide where Department of Defense installations are forming joint bases.

Approximately 49 installation functions at Fort Sam Houston will combine with Randolph and Lackland Air Force Bases to form Joint Base San Antonio. Projections suggest 8-10,000 Families will relocate to San Antonio under BRAC and that associated services will be needed to support them and the over 80,000 military and civilian employees, when JBSA is completed in 2011.

Castro points out the economic boost BRAC brings to the city during his segment of the video. "Overall, we're looking at a positive economic impact to San Antonio of more than \$5.5 billion dollars. And a growing San Antonio will only improve the quality of life for current citizens and people relocating to our community."

Realignment has not always been welcome or smooth. Earlier in the process, Air Force officials argued that potential changes to their civilian employees' retirement, medical or other benefits would "have a huge adverse effect" on morale under the Army or Navy systems. Each service also handles readiness, budget and maintenance issues differently, presenting challenges that are being addressed through extensive implementation meetings and workshops, according to an article published on the Fleet Reserve Association's Web site.

Garrison Commander Col. Mary Garr participated in a recent joint basing workshop hosted by Air Education and Training Command at Randolph. Garr said the workshop focused on the right

things to do while assessing service-specific issues appropriately. She said the joint basing team still had a lot of work ahead, but that progress toward laying the foundation for success is impressive.

During the video, Garr highlights opportunities for the community. “San Antonio will have the largest base operation,” she said, citing the more than 152,000 military students that will be training and graduating here once BRAC is completed, bringing more business into the area. She then introduced Poppovich.

“San Antonio is Military City U.S.A.,” said the Spurs head coach during his video piece, adding that BRAC growth “will take this Military City to a championship level. I’m proud of my military background and, as much, I embrace the military.” Poppovich is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy.

“We want to embrace the Families that move to San Antonio and provide a very warm welcome. San Antonio is an extremely friendly town – I call it a town because I grew up here, but it’s a major city,” Boggess said. “At the same time we want the citizens of San Antonio to embrace what is happening with the military.”

A press conference and kick off activities to introduce the Embrace BRAC campaign are scheduled for July 17, 10 a.m. at the Quadrangle.



Garrison Commander Col. Mary Garr, left, rehearses her lines, written on cue cards held by the Embrace BRAC Campaign video production crew.