



Base Realignment and Closure

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Installation Management Command opens new headquarters on FSH

By Tim Hipps
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Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch and five representatives of the Soldiers, civilians and family members served by the U.S. Army Installation Management Command officially opened the command's new headquarters campus Aug. 19.

The ceremony officially completed IMCOM's Base Realignment and Closure-mandated move from Arlington and Crystal City, Va., and Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., to historic Fort Sam Houston, an Army stronghold since 1876.

Lynch, IMCOM commanding general and Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, cut the ribbon alongside IMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, IMCOM headquarters 2011 Stalwart Award winner Wanda Stover, IMCOM Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Sgt. Jeremy Blake, Fort Sam Houston Army Community Services Volunteer of the Year Nikki Longoria and Fort Sam Houston Youth Volunteer of the Year Imani Trice-Gayden.

"I'd like to thank the magnificent workforce here at IMCOM," Lynch told the crowd of about 700 gathered beneath blue skies on an 84-degree morning as a Texas breeze blew through the six-building complex.

"We're going to dedicate a building, but the building is nothing without the people. For the remarkable Soldiers and civilians who work at IMCOM headquarters, thank you for what you do every day because you're making a difference.

"I tell people you've got a choice in life, you can read history or you can make history, and indeed you're making history on a daily basis," the general added.

The newly constructed headquarters building in the center of the campus was inspired by the surrounding Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings. It incorporates environmental practices supported by the Army's Strategy for the Environment.

The facility is designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver certification, a national benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings. This achievement required planning by the client, building owner, architects, engineers and contractors.

"I had the chance to recognize almost 150 individuals who were intimately involved in the construction of this facility Aug. 18 and it's a magnificent facility, no doubt," Lynch said. "If you take the time to read the details in the program, you'll see it's a 300,000-square-foot facility that cost our nation about \$120 million and it's exactly what we needed and expected. The building itself is superb.

“This building, the way it’s constructed, allowed us to reduce our energy consumption by 24 percent. I know that for a fact because when I’m sitting in my office and typing emails, if my fingers are not wildly active, the lights go out.

“I also know we’ve reduced the water consumption in this facility by 50 percent,” Lynch said. “You have to lead by example, so the building itself is superb and for the folks who’ve had anything to do with the construction of the building, you have our appreciation.”

The purpose of the building, however, exceeds the perfection of the facility.

“Our purpose is to provide our Soldiers, our civilians, and their families with a quality of life commensurate with their quality of service – that’s our purpose,” Lynch said. “And that purpose will never change.”

Lynch vowed to help the Department of Defense with the nation’s struggle to reduce a \$14.3-trillion debt.

“As a result of the ends being the same and the means being reduced, we have to modify our ways,” Lynch said. “And how we’re going to modify those ways is a function of this building. We’re going to spend time in this building talking about how we can indeed continue to accomplish the end state with reduced resources.

“I spend zero time worrying about our Army or our other services because of the service members. I’m just so proud of what they do. When they look in the mirror the reflection back is somebody who sacrificed themselves for the greater good, and they continue to re-enlist in droves. As I say all the time, I’m humbled to be in their presence, all the time,” he said.

Lynch worries more about the impact of war upon military families than the troops themselves.

“I’m worried to death about the impact on our families,” he said. “Ten years of war has taken a toll. Ten years of war are difficult for our family members.”

Lynch pointed out that 146,279 children went to bed the night before while their mother or father was deployed.

“And oh, by the way, their mom or dad had been deployed to combat two or three times before,” he said. “That is having a significant impact on our children and it’s evidenced by behavior in schools and academic performance. What we do at IMCOM is focus on efforts to mitigate that impact.

“So it’s not just a building. It’s a people with a passion to focus on our purpose, and this facility and this campus gives that opportunity to do that.”

Lynch applauded civic leaders of San Antonio for welcoming IMCOM to “Military City USA.”

“We know that we can establish this as our home because the people of San Antonio have made us feel so, so very welcome, and we promise to return the favor,” Lynch said.

“We promise to establish a relationship with the leadership and the people of San Antonio, so together we can work towards that purpose of providing our Soldiers, our civilians and their families with the quality of life that is commensurate with their quality of service.”

IMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola seconded that sentiment while speaking about the “unabashed compassion” of IMCOM Soldiers and civilians.

“I say to you here today that we at this campus are more than equal to the challenges of today and those that we must confront tomorrow,” Ciotola said. “That we shall, that we must, commit ourselves to doing it more efficiently and effectively. That those who yearn for the knowledge and insight required to take our Army and our nation down a new path need only do this simple thing: come to San Antonio, come to Fort Sam Houston, and while you’re at it, come to Installation Management Command.

“As a community, as your Army, as a command, we’ll show you the way, and we’ll do all that is required.”