Academic Institutions, Navy announce Engineering Education

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. -- A partnership of higher education and naval organizations -- the University of Maryland's A. James Clark School of Engineering, the College of Southern Maryland, the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center and the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division -- will undertake a program to explore joint education and research efforts and establish four-year aerospace and mechanical engineering bachelor of science degree programs in Southern Maryland, in close proximity to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

No such degrees are available in the region at present. The partnership seeks to increase the number of people in Southern Maryland prepared to provide advanced engineering skills to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station and companies that work with it. Efforts are planned to publicize the educational opportunity to area high school students as well, in what is termed a STEM project (promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics as career options for young people).

"Increasing the number of highly qualified engineering graduates is important for national security, and our economic and international competitiveness," said University of Maryland President C. D. Mote, Jr. "The University is excited to be collaborating with our partners in Southern Maryland and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station towards this end. This is the right partnership at the right time."

The new program will entail a multi-year initiative encompassing education and research activities, starting in the fall of 2009.

The educational component of the program will enable qualified College of Southern Maryland students to take University of Maryland engineering classes in three ways: by attending classes televised by the university's Clark School and presented at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center, by attending classes offered by Clark School adjunct faculty at the center and by attending Clark School classes in College Park on the campus of the University of Maryland.
The research component of the program will address the technical needs of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD), including avionics, rotorcraft, air vehicles and unmanned systems, propulsion and power, manufacturing, and human systems. The research will advance the state of knowledge in particular areas of direct interest to the Navy.

“NAWCAD has world-class engineering facilities. In partnership with these educational institutions, who offer world-class learning experiences, we’ll lay the foundation for the future of Naval aviation,” said Rear Adm. Donald Gaddis, NAWCAD commander.

About the University of Maryland

The University of Maryland is a leader in research to strengthen U.S. national security and the nation's armed forces. The university's wide array of work in these areas includes multidisciplinary research -- led by the A. James Clark School of Engineering -- through which Maryland engineers and scientists are developing bio-inspired miniature autonomous vehicles (http://www.terp.umd.edu/4.0/engineering) that can give soldiers' awareness of complex terrain before they enter it; and electromagnetic technologies that will form a basis for all-electric ships, speed-of-light weapons and advanced communication technologies that the Navy anticipates deploying in the future.

It also includes intelligence and security research conducted by many university centers and institutes including the Center for Advanced Study of Language; the new Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA); the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), creator of the world's largest unclassified database of terrorism attacks; and the University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies (UMIACS), developer of the SOMA Terror Organization Portal (STOP) and other language and behavior analysis software tools that can help analysts, soldiers and others, understand and communicate with friend and foe.

Visit the University of Maryland homepage at www.umd.edu and the A. James Clark School of Engineering homepage at www.eng.umd.edu.

About the College of Southern Maryland

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM), a regional college with locations in La Plata, Leonardtown, Lexington Park, Prince Frederick and Waldorf, is committed to academic excellence, affordable tuition, workforce development and cultural enrichment. Over its 50-year history, CSM has remained progressive in its delivery of high-quality courses, programs and services to more than 16,000 graduates and a growing number of students of all ages.

A Silver Level Maryland Quality Award recipient of the 2008 Maryland Performance Excellence Awards (MPEA), CSM helps individuals realize their educational goals by offering programs of study that lead to 66 associate degrees, 35 certificates or 34 letters of recommendation, which include an increasing number of online programs, as well as a growing number of local bachelor degree opportunities through partnering universities.

Through its Institute of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (ISTEM), CSM is committed to meeting the needs of our local workforce by educating students who have a passion for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. CSM offers outreach programs to middle and high school students, transfer opportunities to universities for completion of bachelor's degrees, and training to local K-12 mathematics teachers. For information on CSM, call 301-934-7765 or visit www.csmd.edu.

About the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center

The Southern Maryland Higher Education Center was established by legislation in 1994. The SMHEC presents over 90 academic programs, in the fields of engineering, information security, management, nursing, social work, and education. Included are 16 upper-division bachelor's degrees, 47 master's degrees, numerous graduate certification programs and graduate certificate programs, a Ph.D. in education and three Ph.D.s in engineering. A new Doctorate in Executive Leadership from George Washington University will start in Spring 2009 at SMHEC.

About 300 courses per year are currently offered at high-tech, centrally-located campus, including those from 34 academic programs in engineering. These provide the workforce in Southern Maryland with unprecedented access to higher education opportunities. SMHEC currently has 9 University partners offering over 90 on-site academic programs at SMHEC, located at 44219 Airport Road, California, MD 20619. For information call Dr. Cynthia Shoemaker at 301-737-2500 ext. 204, or check www.smhec.org.

About the Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division
The Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) is the Navy's full spectrum research, development, test and evaluation, engineering, and fleet support center for Naval Aviation. Product areas include aircraft systems technology, propulsion, flight test and engineering, avionics design and production, and aircraft-platform interface. NAWCAD is the preeminent technical resource for Naval Aviation forces, and supports the interests of national security around the globe.