

## New Home for the Armor School

Corps completes massive construction program at Fort Benning

Soldiers of the U.S. Army Armor School arrived at their new home—Fort Benning, Ga.—to state-of-the-art barracks, dining facilities, headquarters, instructional and maintenance facilities customized especially for them. The Savannah district completed a \$1.5 billion construction program, mostly in the Harmony Church training area, in preparation for the soldiers' arrival.

"More than five million square feet of new building space, eight bridges, 200 miles of roads and trails, and 19 ranges were constructed to meet the specialized needs of armor soldiers and their critical requirements,"

said George Condoyiannis, the area engineer of this construction program. "We provided the facility infrastructure that directly supports mission training and power projection capabilities."

The Armor School relocated to Fort Benning from Fort Knox, Ky., joining the U.S. Army Infantry School to form the Maneuver Center of Excellence. The move brought more than 7,500 soldiers and 500,000 pieces of equipment to the new facilities at Harmony Church. The move was part of the Base Realignment and Closure initiative and supported the overarching concept that since infantry and armor fight together, they should live and train



Part of the Harmony Church trainee barracks complex, this dining facility is 55,000 square-feet and can seat 2,600 hungry soldiers at once. *Photo by Kristian Ogden.*



Corps Project Engineers, Tom O'Buckley (Right) and Brian Hilton (Left) assisted the Fort Benning team with the huge task to repair/build roadways equipped to withstand the constant beating from armored vehicles travelling to and from training areas. The task was split into four separate projects, which included building three bridges, two box culverts and hauling more than 637 tons of graded aggregate base for 55 miles of gravel road. *Photo by John Helms.*

The arrival of the first M1A2SEP at the vehicle maintenance instruction facility signified the emerging role of Armor at Fort Benning, Ga. Featuring state-of-the-art classrooms and hands-on training facilities, it required 800,000 cubic yards of concrete to enhance the support for these 70-ton tanks. *Photo by John Helms.*



Named in honor of fallen soldier Pfc. Jesse D. Mizener, the eight buildings on the 42-acre Wheel and Track Sustainment Complex include vehicle maintenance, an engine test bay, paint stripping and paint application buildings. *Photo by Kristian Ogden.*



In less than one year, Dixie Road, the two-lane, main artery through Fort Benning, Ga., expanded to a four-lane thoroughfare. Crews paved 7.12 miles of roadway, raised an existing bridge 12 inches and built a new one which can withstand the heavy loads of armored vehicles. *Photo by John Helms.*

together. To meet the needs for this massive project, the Corps' presence at Fort Benning also underwent significant changes.

"The Fort Benning Area Office ramped up their presence on the installation, increasing the number of personnel from 22 to 108, throughout the last four years in order to execute the largest military construction program in the Southeast," said Condoyiannis.

Working closely with more than 49 different general contractors, the district team coordinated construction efforts for multiple projects, ensuring that each contractor had a clear understanding of the installation's ongoing mission.

"Because of the close coordination between the Corps, the installation, and the contractors, Armor and Infantry soldiers were able to continue operations uninterrupted by the ongoing construction activity," said Condoyiannis. "The success of this unprecedented program, the size and scope of which had never before been attempted by the South Atlantic Division, required a concerted effort by a team of talented industry professionals committed to delivering facilities that the soldiers of the Maneuver Center of Excellence deserved and expected." 

*Story by Rashida Banks and captions by Sandra Hudson, Corporate Communications Office*