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**N.C.'S ECONOMY TO BENEFIT FROM FRC EAST/UNC COLLABORATION
Effort Supports State's Defense Industry Cluster Strategy**

RALEIGH – The N.C. Military Foundation announced that Fleet Readiness Center East and the University of North Carolina system will join forces to meet the emerging needs of the U.S. military and provide unique research and learning opportunities for UNC students and faculty. The collaboration—identified by the Foundation as part of its efforts to grow the state's defense economy through increased collaboration between the military, government, industry and academia—was formalized in a memorandum of agreement signed by Col. L.S. Loch, Commanding Officer, FRC East and Dr. Steven Leath, Vice President for Research, UNC, and with the full support of Gov. Bev Perdue.

“This collaboration will strengthen the state's ties to one of the most important military facilities in the world, provide unique academic and research opportunities for students and faculty and grow the state's defense economy,” said Gov. Perdue. “Even more important, this collaboration will enhance the safety and capabilities of our military service personnel.”

FRC East at Cherry Point provides maintenance, engineering and logistics support worldwide for Navy and Marine Corps aviation as well as other armed services, federal agencies and foreign governments. A Department of Defense (DOD) Vertical Lift Center of Excellence, FRC East is recognized as one of the world's most efficient and forward-looking industry partners.

“This memorandum of agreement will serve as a cornerstone by which the University of North Carolina is engaged in bringing innovative solutions to bear on the maintenance issues of FRC East,” said Col. Loch.

Under the agreement, FRC East will identify technical requirements and needs to fulfill its goal of being the military's preferred provider of vertical lift aviation through state-of-the art technology and research. Current fields of interest include data collection/data management; modeling and simulation/analysis; composite materials; non-destructive inspection; dimensional measurement; direct digital manufacturing; cleaning; stripping/coating removal; surface finishing; coating/plating; and energy and water.

In turn, UNC will identify ongoing R&D projects and capacities related to maintenance, repair, and overhaul technologies throughout its 16 constituent universities. Successful team efforts will be shared throughout the DOD's maintenance, repair, and overhaul facilities, creating even more opportunities for UNC students and faculty. The collaboration will also provide opportunities for UNC students and faculty to develop and potentially commercialize defense-related innovations.

“We’re entering an exciting collaboration where the research assets of North Carolina’s public universities will be brought directly to bear on the lives and work of military personnel in our State and beyond,” said UNC’s Leath.

Both partners will work to develop proposals for external funding to advance these opportunities.

The collaboration supports the strategy put forth in the Foundation’s *2009 N.C. Defense Asset Inventory and Target Industry Cluster Analysis – A Strategy for Growing North Carolina’s Defense and Homeland Economy*; embraced by Gov. Perdue last month. The analysis identifies six markets where the state’s industry, academic and R&D capacity coincides with the emerging needs of the DoD and the Department of Homeland Security. Of the six markets, Performance Materials and RESET Support Activities represent highly-promising economic development opportunities for the state. Both markets will benefit from the FRC East/UNC collaboration.

“The Foundation was deliberate in its analysis and resulting recommendations. We wanted to make sure our strategic recommendations were sound, actionable and broad in their impact. This agreement is further proof that the Foundation’s focus on growing the state’s defense economy through increased collaboration and innovation will succeed,” said Will Austin, director of the N.C. Military Foundation.

The agreement is effective immediately.

About the N.C. Military Foundation: The Foundation is a not-for-profit, privately funded, business development organization focused on growing the state’s \$23.4 billion defense and homeland security industry and generating new long-term investment and job opportunities for North Carolina citizens. In carrying out its mission, the Foundation identifies emerging defense and homeland security priorities that fall within the state’s core strengths, and works with leaders in government, business, and academia to capitalize on them. The Foundation’s Board of Directors is chaired by General William F. “Buck” Kernan, USA, (Ret.). Fred Day, Progress Energy Carolinas President and CEO from 2003 to 2007, serves as the board’s vice-chair.

In July, the Foundation and Gov. Bev Perdue released [*The 2009 North Carolina Defense Asset Inventory and Target Industry Cluster Analysis—A Strategy for Growing North Carolina’s Defense and Homeland Security Economy*](#). The report identifies six defense and homeland security markets that the state should target for growth.

About FRC East: FRC East is based at MCAS Cherry Point, and is North Carolina’s largest industrial employer east of I-95. Its workforce has earned a reputation for excellence in providing world-class maintenance, engineering and logistics support for Navy and Marine Corps aviation, as well as other branches of the U.S. armed services, federal agencies and foreign governments. Learn more at <http://www.navair.navy.mil/frce/>.

About UNC: UNC is a multi-campus university system composed of all 16 of North Carolina’s public institutions that grant baccalaureate and graduate degrees, as well as the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics, the nation’s first public residential high school for gifted students. UNC has received over \$1 billion in external-sponsored research funding each year for the last five years. Learn more at www.northcarolina.edu.

