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Governor Quinn Announces \$8 Million for National Guard Facility at Heartland Community College

Project Will Add College Classroom Space and Locate Key Guard Domestic Response Unit in Normal

NORMAL – September 10, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today announced \$8 million in state funding for the Illinois Department of Military Affairs and Heartland Community College (HCC) to build an Illinois Army National Guard (ILARNG) facility on the college's campus. Combined with \$10 million in federal military construction funds, the \$18 million project will create and support more than 100 construction jobs. Once completed, 22 full-time and approximately 200 part-time ILARNG soldiers will work out of the facility.

"Our National Guard must be ready to respond to emergencies here in Illinois, as well as across the country," Governor Quinn said. "This project will not only create jobs, it will lead to better educated students and soldiers."

The ILARNG will build headquarters for the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB) and a contract will be awarded at the end of September. After it is built, the new headquarters will receive approximately \$2.8 million in federal funds each year. \$2.7 million of those funds will be invested in the Normal and Bloomington area.

"This partnership allows both the Illinois National Guard and Heartland Community College to make full use of our resources to accomplish both of our missions, and allows two public entities to benefit from the same funds," acting Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard Maj. Gen. Dennis L. Celletti said.

The 404th MEB includes several units with capabilities designed for domestic emergency missions. These include search and extraction teams, mass casualty chemical, nuclear and biological decontamination units, as well as military police, firefighting, engineer and communications units. In addition, the facility will provide easy access to the highway system and airport in the central area of the state, allowing statewide response capability.

"This project will employ more than 100 people during construction, provide educational opportunities and help strengthen our national defense once it's complete. This is a win-win situation for the state of Illinois," Capital Development Board Executive Director Jim Underwood said.

The new facility was designed to receive LEED Silver sustainability level certification and will have approximately 18,000 square feet of shared space, including seven classrooms that HCC will use on weekdays. HCC will allow the Illinois Army National Guard to access its auditorium, fitness center and classrooms during the Guard's training assemblies.

The college is also contributing approximately \$200,000 toward more than 200 parking spaces. Heartland is considering several courses and programs for the facility, including law enforcement training, a traffic safety school, truck driver training and first-responder training.