

The engine driving economic change

FORT MEADE, AAEDC CO-HOST MEDIA ROUNDTABLE

October 11, 2018 Larry Whitley SoundOff Cover Story 0

“The mission overall is to provide defense for our nation, for our cyber networks.”

Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Brian S. Cullen delivered that comment as Fort Meade and some of its major tenant organizations met with public media outlets to discuss the economics of Fort Meade’s impact on the community outside its gates specifically and on the state of Maryland in general.

The media roundtable, conducted Oct. 3 at Pershing Hall, was a product of the Anne Arundel County Economic Development Corporation’s effort to highlight how both the state and Anne Arundel County are impacted economically by Fort Meade and its employees.

“The Fort Meade community has grown, especially over the last two decades, and it’s definitely transitioning in terms of the national security efforts that go on here,” said Rosa Cruz, vice president for communication for the AAEDC, a major organizer of the roundtable.

“Fort Meade’s strategic partnerships with local schools and universities are aimed at facilitating the development of programs, which create the workforce and warfighter of the future.”

The Fort Meade transition, Cruz said, is targeted “obviously” toward cyber.

“So there’s a lot more cyber work here, a lot more professionals coming here with their families, and they are moving into our county,” Cruz said.

Media representatives from WJZ-TV, WTTG-FOX5, NextGov.com, Technical.ly Baltimore, Washington Technology, Maryland Public Television, Bloomberg News, Federal News Radio, and the Economic Alliance of Baltimore took part in the media roundtable.

Their interests revolved around cyber operations and technology associated with science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, education.

Fort Meade officials noted that the installation’s population is larger than the city of Annapolis. About 40 percent of Fort Meade’s employees reside in Anne Arundel County, with an additional 24 percent in Howard County.

In addition, Fort Meade projects cyber-related employment growth of between 4,000 to 7,000 jobs between now and 2024

“We generate roughly \$27 billion in total output and about \$13 billion in total wages,” said Chad Jones, Fort Meade public affairs officer. “Ninety-three percent of Fort Meade employees reside in Maryland, representing a payroll of more than \$6 billion.”

Jones noted that, locally, \$800 million in procurement activities are generated annually to Anne Arundel County businesses, part of an approximate \$7.4 billion statewide spending budget for the installation for Maryland businesses.

Fort Meade's strategic partnerships with local schools and universities are aimed at facilitating the development of programs that create the workforce and warfighter of the future.

One of the supporting initiatives is the cyber curriculum project being instituted by Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

Additionally, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and the Raytheon Corporation have selected Fort Meade as one of their newest Centers for Innovation.

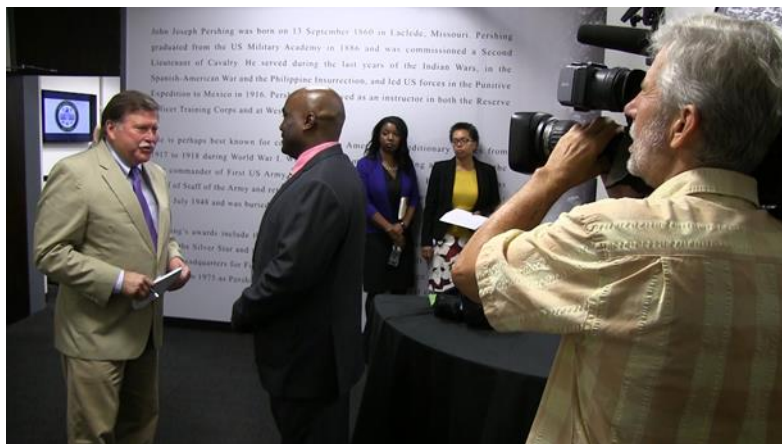
The center will focus the partnership of Fort Meade, BGCA and Raytheon to help provide opportunities and develop STEM skills for youths served by BGCA and local school systems.

"We support Fort Meade and its families here in Anne Arundel County," said Cruz, as the AAEDC representative. "We understand that they are on the frontlines of the new cyber battle [domain], working long hours.

"Anne Arundel County is the home of Fort Meade. ... We try to have a quality of life here in Anne Arundel County that is attractive to the families of the people that live and work at Fort Meade, and that includes having a really great school system."

As the Army's second largest military installation based on employee population, Fort Meade continues to build its status as the nation's platform for intelligence, information and cyber operations.

Fort Meade is the home of U.S. Cyber Command, the National Security Agency, the Defense Information Systems Agency, the Defense Information School, cyber elements of each of the military services, and numerous other federal and state organizations.



WJZ-TV reporter Alex DeMetrick interviews ReCharde Johnson, senior civilian with the 781st Military Intelligence Battalion, during the media roundtable on Oct. 3 at Pershing Hall.



Robin Leon, international portfolio manager for the Defense Information Systems Agency, discusses the employee's perspective on the region's quality of life.



Chad Jones, Fort Meade public affairs officer, is interviewed by reporter Robert Barnard of WTTG FOX5 News about Fort Meade's impact on the region.



During an interview with Scott Maucione of Federal News Radio, Sgt. Joshua Chambers (center) and Pfc. Charles Bodjanac of the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade give the employee's perspective on the region's quality of life.