

Air base competes for award UNC-G second to require laptops

Stands to receive at least \$100K

BY ALEXANDER HAL TILEMANN
STAFF WRITER

North Carolina's Pope Air Force Base is one of three finalists for the 2006 Air Mobility Command Installation Excellence Award worth \$100,000.

"To be a finalist is a testament to the hard work of the people stationed here at Pope," said Lt. Mark Hanson, chief of media release at Pope.

Pope most recently has been in the news as one of the bases recommended for possible closure by the base realignment and closure commission, which evaluates and reorganizes military infrastructure.

The base's position as a finalist for this award will not have any

effect on this recommendation, Hanson said.

"The people stationed here do as they would at any other time and do whatever is necessary once Congress makes the final call," he said.

But the matter is in Congress's hands now that the President has concurred with the report, Hanson added.

What would be done with the money if Pope were to win has yet to be decided.

Pope recently won an air mobility award of \$30,000, which was donated to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Hanson said.

To be considered for the Air Mobility Command award, bases

must submit their installations for review. The Air Force then chooses the top three installations and sends an inspection team to each base to determine the winner.

Pope is a finalist among the Air Mobility Command.

The other two finalists for the award are Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina and Travis Air Force Base in California.

The inspection team arrived in Fayetteville on Monday to review Pope for the award. The award will be presented in 2006.

There are similar awards for the other commands, such as the Air Combat Command and the Air Education and Training Command. The winners of each command then compete against each other for the Air Force Commander in Chief Installation Award.

The Commander in Chief award was instituted in the mid-1980s by President Ronald Reagan.

The award "recognizes the outstanding and innovative efforts of the people who operate and maintain U.S. military installations," according to the Department of Defense.

The winner of the 2004 Commander in Chief award, Beale Air Force Base in California, used its award money to construct a running track and heritage park, among other things, said Capt. Mike Andrew, chief of the public affairs office for Beale.

Beale won the award based on factors including its environmental work, communication, quality of life and team problem solving, he said.

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

BY PAUL KIERNAN
STAFF WRITER

Beginning in the fall of 2007, UNC-Greensboro will require all incoming freshmen to purchase laptop computers.

"We're laying all the groundwork now," said UNC-G Chancellor Patricia Sullivan. "We're wiring the campus, doing the faculty training."

Chapel Hill is now the only campus in the UNC system that requires its freshmen to have their own laptops — a rule that took effect in 2000.

But cost issues will factor into the equation in Greensboro more so than at Chapel Hill, said Senior Associate Provost J. Allan Boyette.

"In contrast to UNC-Chapel Hill, we have a comparatively needier student population, as defined by the financial aid office," Boyette said.

Price estimates vary, but Boyette said the university hopes to offer laptops for between \$1,000 and \$1,500 apiece.

"We are shooting for as low-cost, reliable machine as possible," he said.

According to the Carolina Computing Initiative Web site, students at UNC-CH have a choice to pay either \$1,802 or \$2,522 for a laptop, depending on which of the two available models they choose.

Like students at Chapel Hill, freshmen at UNC-G will buy laptops through the university from a selected vendor, Boyette said.

While a vendor has not yet been chosen, a faculty committee is working to find the best machine to sell to students, he added.

The same committee also will

decide how to provide software configuration and student customer support — other factors contributing to the total price of the computers.

Meanwhile, the university's Academic Affairs and Information Technology and Planning offices are directing the project, which will include the installation of wireless Internet access throughout campus by the fall of 2006.

Boyette said university officials have met with a student advisory group that strongly supports the project.

"Students are really calling for this, asking 'why aren't we further ahead (technologically)?"

In the fall of 2004, 60 percent of incoming freshmen came to school with their own laptops.

"We've seen a gradual transition to laptops from desktop machines," Boyette said. "Laptops are just more versatile."

Matt Hill, chairman of the legislative committee of the student senate at UNC-G, has worked on the project with university staff.

"I believe it's a good idea because everyone should have a computer, but not everyone can afford one," he said.

Hill said that if the cost of laptops is figured into financial aid programs, the requirement will help ensure that all students have equal access to useful learning technology.

"The university must find a way to where low-income students won't be adversely affected by the requirement."

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Chapel Hill recruits State planner

BY JAKE POTTER
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Though UNC is the town's largest employer and arguably the best local source of academic expertise, municipal officials have opted to have an N.C. State University expert look over the draft plans for a major downtown development project.

The town has asked Marvin Malecha, dean of the College of Design at N.C. State, to help review plans for mixed-use developments slated to be built on lots 2 and 5.

The project could post an \$8 million public bill.

Malecha will do the work free of charge, and Town Manager Cal Horton has indicated that if Malecha's work requires more labor than anticipated, the town could

compensate the design school with scholarship funds.

"I'm there really to offer my opinion of whether this will be a project the city will be proud of," Malecha said.

"My charge is to offer an opinion about what the best course of action is and therefore make commentary. And because I'm an independent voice, my comments aren't necessarily bound by the economy of the city."

Horton said they went with Malecha — who holds a master's degree in architecture from Harvard University — instead of someone affiliated with the University simply because of the project's nature.

"There's no design school here," he said. "This is not about city and

regional planning, it's about architecture."

Malecha is more than qualified for the work anyhow, Horton said.

"We wanted to select somebody that was highly confident to do the work," he said. "He's provided this kind of service before."

Horton added that the town had previously worked with Peter Batchelor, another member of N.C. State's design program.

Malecha's work largely will consist of cooperating with town consultant Ram Development Co.

"He'll be working with architect engineers to apply the town's design standards and provide insight to the project," Horton said.

University business professor Nick Didow thinks the town's choice

reflects efforts to get the best man for the job more than friendly rivalry.

"We don't have anybody on our faculty who's an architect," he said. "There's people with urban design experience but no one with building design experience."

Emil Malizia, chair of the University's City and Regional Planning department, said the town wasn't wrong to choose someone outside the University, but the department is happy to help if needed.

"If State's willing to take this one, we'd love to help in the future," he said.

University Editor Brian Hudson contributed to this article. Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

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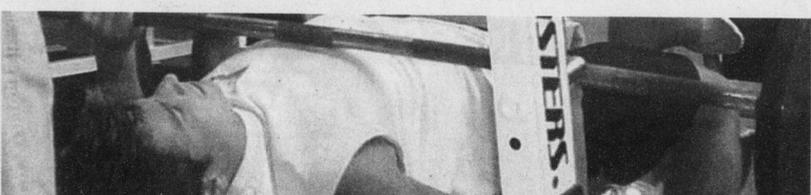


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