



**For Immediate Release
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Moore County, NC

Local Construction Company Wins Military Contract

The O'Connor Company of N. C., Inc. has been awarded a \$3.2 million construction contract at Fort Bragg, President Chris Jordan announced today. The O'Connor Company, based in Aberdeen, is a commercial and industrial general contractor with construction projects locally and throughout the United States.

The company has been contracted through the Army Corps of Engineers in Savannah, Georgia to construct a 70,000 square-foot metal building at Fort Bragg that will house an indoor shooting range for Special Operations Forces. The contract is for one year, with ground-breaking anticipated in December, 2006.

Over the past 18 months, the company has been positioning itself to do business with the military by adding staff with highly-skilled, military contracting backgrounds. "We felt it was a good step to start applying for projects that matched the company's strengths and skills, but we knew we needed people who could help us maneuver within the Corp of Engineers' procedures and requirements", said Jordan. This action is part of a strategic initiative to establish a stronger presence in local and regional markets.

The company reviewed many construction opportunities at Fort Bragg before determining that the indoor shooting range building would be a good fit. "Our persistence and effort finally paid off", said Jordan. "This project is the first military contract we've been awarded where we will be the primary general contractor."

Ray Ogden, Executive Director of Moore County Partners in Progress, the County's economic development organization, commented, "We're pleased to see a long-established company like O'Connor enter into the military market. They are proof that Moore County businesses can compete statewide and nationally to win these significant contracts."

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Ogden added, "Several local businesses that I've talked to are concerned about the number of Fort Bragg's contracts that are awarded to out-of-state companies. But at the same time, they feel the process of bidding on these projects is too complicated. Admittedly, it is a long and involved process with lots of paperwork, but fortunately, there are resources where companies can go for assistance."

A primary resource is the North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC) established to help companies identify and bid on military contracts. Based in Fayetteville, the NCMBC has representatives located at community colleges throughout the state. At Sandhills Community College, the representative is Linn Owen, a Business Development Specialist available to assist local businesses tap into the military market.

"Linn has been great at keeping us informed about project opportunities. She is an excellent source of information to help companies get ready to do business with the military, even before they are ready to submit an actual bid", Jordan said.

Owen reports that to date in 2006, Moore County businesses have been awarded contracts at Fort Bragg totaling an estimated \$8 million with additional contract awards by other government agencies. To take advantage of NCMBC's free resources, companies must register at www.matchforce.org, Owen said.

O'Connor Company, with over 60 employees, has experienced significant growth over the past year. Locally, they have been contracted to build The O'Neal School's new 21,000 square-foot Lower School building, the Town of Vass's new Town Hall and Municipal Building, and Sandhills Community College's Business and Technology Building at the Raeford Campus. The company is also the exclusive contractor for all construction in the 105-acre Southern Pines Corporate Park on U.S. Highway 1. Their website is www.oconnorconc.com.

"With military construction expenditures in North Carolina expected to be between \$3 and \$5 billion over the next five years, there are plenty of contracting opportunities for Moore County companies willing to commit the time and effort to go through the bidding process", said Ogden. "I'm sure that the indoor shooting range project will open doors to more military opportunities for O'Connor Company. And Partners in Progress is here to provide any support we can to assist O'Connor and all local businesses in this process."

Moore County Partners in Progress is the economic development organization for the County. For more information, visit www.moorebusiness.org.

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