



Media Advisory



July 13, 2009

For Immediate Release |

Contact: william.dowell2@us.army.mil

Release # 0930

TARDEC to Support Southeastern Michigan Automotive-Robotics Initiative

DETROIT ARSENAL, WARREN, MI — In efforts to partner Michigan's automotive-based companies with Department of Defense (DOD) robotic requirements, several organizations are coming together to create an Automotive-Robotics Cluster July 28 and 29 at Oakland University, Rochester, MI.

The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International Great Lakes Chapter (AVUSI-GLC) is hosting the event at the Oakland Center to initiate business planning for a Robotics Cluster Initiative.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) and U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) are co-hosting the event. Other organizations involved include the DOD Office of Small Business Programs, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and Automation Alley.

“The goal of the initiative is to create a roadmap and help identify Michigan automotive-based corporations to grow the emerging robotics cluster in Michigan,” explained Dave Thomas, AVUSI-GLC President and TARDEC Intelligent Ground Systems Director. “We are hoping to expand the Defense Department’s Mentor-Protégé Robotics Initiative by helping these corporations compete for prime contract and subcontract awards.”

The DOD Mentor-Protégé Program assists small businesses (Protégés) to successfully compete for contracts by partnering with large companies (Mentors) under individual, project-based agreements.

“Michigan has the people, expertise and academic institutions to build on,” Thomas said.

During the workshop, the SBA will host a small business resource center workshop to provide information about resources available through the SBA, DOD, MEDC and other economic development authorities.

For more information about registering for the event visit www.auvsigreatlakes.org.

###

Editors and members of the Trade Media:

Interviews with the following people may be arranged or additional people may be available:



Media Advisory



- American Re-Investment Recovery Act
 - Karen Mills, SBA Administrator
- Opportunities for Regional Economic Development and Recovery
 - Cliff Hudson, SBA
- Academic Perspective
 - Dr. Pieter Frick, Oakland University Engineering and Computer Science Dean
- Army Manned and Unmanned Ground Vehicle Research and Development
 - Dr. Grace Bochenek, TARDEC Director
- National Automotive Center (NAC) Business and Battery Initiative Processes
 - Paul Skalny, NAC Director
- Michigan Diversification Opportunities – The Transition from Automotive to Defense
 - Ron Moffett, MEDC Defense Contract Coordination Center, Field Operations Director
- Critical Unmet Research Needs in Unmanned Ground Vehicles and Robotics
 - A. Galip Ulsoy, Ground Robotics Research Center, University of Michigan
- Dual Use Presentation and Small Business Innovative Research
 - John Bedz, Automation Alley
 - Pete DeSante, NAC
 - Jim Maniero, NAC

There are two photos available for use with this release. Caption information follows. To download the photos, go to <http://www.tardec.info/pressreleases/>.

iRobotWarrior700.jpg

During training, an iRobot Warrior 700 robot sorts through debris to uncover a possible explosive device. TARDEC and its Robotics Initiative partners are creating a roadmap for companies like iRobot to work with Michigan's traditionally automotive-based companies as part of the DOD Mentor-Protégé Robotics Initiative. (Photo courtesy of iRobot.)

090710-A-1234F-001.jpg

From improvised explosive device removal to casualty extraction, like this Autonomous Solutions Incorporated CHAOS robot loading a "wounded" Marine during a casualty evacuation scenario at Cobra Gold 2009, Michigan has the people, expertise and academic



Media Advisory



institutions to help meet the DOD robotic requirements. TARDEC, AVUIS-GLC, the SBA, Oakland University, MEDC, DOD Office of Small Business Programs and the MEDC are initiating business planning for a Michigan-based Robotics Cluster Initiative. (U.S. Army TARDEC photo by Lonnie Freiburger.)

TARDEC is the Nation's laboratory for Ground Systems Integration to ensure U.S. Soldiers continue to be the best-equipped and most lethal, survivable and sustainable fighting force on Earth. For additional information or to schedule an interview with a TARDEC subject-matter expert, please contact Bill Dowell at (586) 574-6683, william.dowell2@us.army.mil.

Follow us on twitter at http://twitter.com/TARDEC_PAO.