

GMC Expanding with Campuses in Dublin and Fayetteville

By Catherine Califf-Dean

Georgia Military College (GMC) is planning to add two additional campus locations in 2015, bringing the total number of educational sites under their guidance to eleven located across the state.

New campuses located in Fayetteville and Dublin will assist in furthering GMC's commitment to providing an affordable and accessible education. Additional campuses are located in Milledgeville, Augusta, Fairburn, Warner Robins, Valdosta, Columbus, Madison, Sandersville, and Stone Mountain, as well as an online campus program.

The school broke ground last October on the 25,000-square-foot campus in Fayetteville, which will house seven classrooms, a computer lab, a biology/chemistry lab, library, learning center, testing center, bookstore, and student lounge.

College and government officials agree the school will significantly help support the educational needs of the area's growing workforce. "We're excited to be working in close partnership with the City of Fayetteville and Fayette County, together with the Board of Education, elected officials, and the business community to understand and serve the educational need," stated Brigadier General Curt Rauhut, GMC executive vice president and chief operating officer.

"It's with great pleasure that I have the honor of welcoming GMC's newest campus to our town. We all know that the wheels of government can grind slowly, but as a government official, it has been delightful to see how quickly GMC has moved from the initial decision to open a campus here to actually putting 'boots on the ground,' as it were," said Greg Clifton, Mayor, Fayetteville, Ga.

School officials chose West Fayetteville as the home of the new campus based on the established business market in the area, which includes Piedmont Fayette Hospital with more than 1,000 employees. Also located in the same area is the Pinewood Atlanta Studios, a multimillion-dollar, full-service film and entertainment studio.

Campus construction is expected to be completed by late spring but for now, GMC students attend classes at the school's temporary location within the Pinewood Atlanta Production Centre. Local enrollment at the campus is expected to reach 500 full-time students within the first five years.

Governor Nathan Deal announced in 2014, the restoration of downtown Dublin's First National Bank Building. The historic landmark, built in 1913, will become home to GMC's new Dublin campus.

The college will collaborate with the Dublin Downtown Development Authority and Walters Management Company to restore "Dublin's Skyscraper" at an estimated cost of \$3.5 million. The campus is anticipated to create three administrative jobs and as many as 50 adjunct faculty positions in the first five years.

"The restoration of Dublin's First National Bank Building into Georgia Military College's new campus will breathe new life into the community," said Rauhut. "This project will expand access to higher education and create jobs and economic development opportunities in the region."

The Dublin campus will occupy the majority of the building and will include amenities targeting students including an IT assistance business, a coffee shop, and study areas. The upper floors will serve as classrooms and faculty offices.

“We are excited to open a campus in Dublin to continue doing what Governor Deal has asked us to do with the Complete College Georgia in providing opportunities for anyone who desires a college education,” said Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, IV, GMC president.

The building’s restoration has been a long-time vision for the Dublin Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The DDA began preparing the building in 2013 for development including obtaining an option to purchase, gaining approval for state and federal historic tax credits, and securing a developer and tenants.

The campus is scheduled to open in the fall of this year. “In keeping with its founding principles, GMC strives to reduce barriers to higher education, to make it easier for students with modest means to earn a college degree and to evolve a curriculum to meet an array of personal, economic, and societal needs,” adds Rauhut.