

New, Efficient Building at Great Lakes Will Support Drug Screening Lab

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GREAT LAKES, Ill. (NNS) -- Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Midwest awarded a construction contract Aug. 22 to a Chicago-based small business to build a new, energy-efficient laboratory on Naval Station Great Lakes (NSGL) to support the Navy's screening program for illegal drug use.

Blinderman Construction Co. was selected from among several bids by small businesses across the U.S. to build the new Navy Drug Screening Laboratory (NDSL) Great Lakes facility under a \$14.8-million firm-fixed-price contract.

"The staff of NDSL and I are certainly excited to see this project awarded," said Cmdr. Aaron Moore, NDSL Great Lakes commanding officer. "This new building has been designed with our mission in mind, as well as the quality of life for the approximately 70 hard-working mission partners employed here."

The mission of NDSL Great Lakes is to ensure warfighter readiness by deterring illegal drug use through forensic drug testing. The command provides drug sample testing for Department of Defense activities in the Midwest, including military entrance processing stations and Recruit Training Command Great Lakes.

"Building a new home for the drug screening lab will allow them to operate more efficiently, with a layout that better supports their processes and a structure that can accommodate their sensitive, specialized equipment," said Cmdr. Mike Crafts, public works officer for Naval Station Great Lakes. "It will also be a better use of taxpayer dollars than trying to renovate their existing home."

NDSL Great Lakes currently resides in building 38H, a World War II-era building that originally housed the obstetrics ward of the former Naval Hospital Great Lakes. A study conducted in 2008 identified several building system deficiencies, including 1940s-era wiring, electrical transformers and structural elements that could no longer safely support the lab equipment's power requirements or physical weight.

"Building 38H has exceeded its useful service life for supporting the drug screening lab," said Crafts. "We will, however, evaluate it for potential reuse by other organizations at Great Lakes, and we'll continue to consult with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and other interested parties regarding the building's future disposition."

NAVFAC Midwest Deputy for Small Business Jan Kaiser pointed out the project's benefit to the local economy, as well as its lasting impact on the base.

"Navy leadership supports efforts to set aside contracts for small business concerns, and it's

great that not only was this project set aside for a small business, but also that the most competitive bid came from a local company," said Kaiser. "This project is a highly visible one, and I know that our contract partner will do great work as they add this new, important facility to Great Lakes--one that will last for many years."

"This award continues NAVFAC Midwest's record of exceeding all its small business goals for the last two years while delivering critical services to our Navy and Marine Corps supported commands," added Kaiser.

According to the contract, the new, two-story building will be designed to be energy efficient and meet certification requirements under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program. Construction is expected to be completed by December 2014.