

# Press Release

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## **Middle Georgia Named 2019 ‘Great American Defense Community’ by the Association of Defense Communities**



Warner Robins, GA. - The Middle Georgia region is one of five communities across the country named to the 2019 Class of Great American Defense Communities, by the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) in conjunction with USAA, the program’s official sponsor. The award is given to military communities and regions that help improve the quality of life for service members and military families.

Middle Georgia was named the 2019 Great American Defense Community for the strong actions taken to support the needs of Robins Air Force Base (RAFB). Middle Georgia worked to eliminate the encroachment threat to Robins using over \$30 million in local, state and federal funds. The community also came together to donate land and other support for the establishment of the Veterans Education Career Transition Resource (VECTR) Center. In addition, Robins AFB approved the first-ever Air Force partnership agreement with the VECTR center allowing transitioning active duty members to stay in vacant dorms at no cost to the service members. The colleges and universities have come to the table to build partnerships that benefit both the base and community. Mercer University and Robins Air Force Base Educational Partnership Agreement enables Mercer and Robins personnel the opportunity to share not only knowledge and learning, but resources and facilities. Georgia Institute of Technology Research Institute (GTRI) provides RAFB immediate reaction to customer needs with extensive reach-back to GTRI’s Atlanta-based laboratories through their partnership. Finally, the Middle Georgia STEM Alliance was created to facilitate the collaboration of industry, military and academia with the mission of growing the supply of STEM-skilled workers to meet the demands required by a robust economy and the skilled workers needed at Robins AFB.

“We in Middle Georgia have always known it is a great place to live and raise a family and Georgia has always been avid supporters of the Military. It is great to see Middle Georgia recognized nationally for something we are very proud of and have know for years!” said Dan Slagle the Chairman of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership.

“The saying in Middle Georgia, EDIMGIAFAD, Every Day in Middle Georgia is Armed Forces Appreciation Day, is more than just a saying as demonstrated daily by the partnerships the community builds to support Robins AFB and their mission,” said the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership’s President/CEO, Chrissy Miner. “The community strives to help improve the qualify of life of service members and their families and this national recognition is a credit to the work the community and installation does working with, caring for, and supporting our military community.”

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NOTE: The Great American Defense Communities program is designed to recognize the overall support that communities and regions in the US provide to service members and military families. Communities are chosen through a competitive nomination process based on community building and integration, support and collaboration, educational and employment opportunities, and family support.