

## FACT SHEET

### **OVERVIEW**

Today's high-tech young men and women are continually bombarded with information about their world through a burgeoning social media environment. Accurate information about the military experience is often drowned out, or the information that does get through projects mixed messages or inaccuracies. The Army Experience Center (AEC) provides hands-on virtual reality experiences and simulations for young men and women, their parents and other influencers to see, touch and learn firsthand what it means to be in the Army. In doing so, they are enabled to have fully informed and meaningful discussions about the Army and its many opportunities.

The AEC is the centerpiece of the Army Experience pilot program. The pilot program is designed to test and evaluate new marketing strategies. Visitors to the AEC will virtually experience many aspects of the Army through hands-on interactive displays and educational opportunities. Located at Franklin Mills Mall in Philadelphia, Pa., the AEC is a 14,500-square-foot, state-of-the-art educational facility. The AEC uses interactive technologies and simulations along with online and in-person learning programs to inform visitors about the many career, training and education opportunities available in the United States Army. The AEC is a hub for community outreach activities.

Taking a new approach to telling the Army story, the AEC makes a connection between the Army and the nation's young men and women and communicates the value of service to their country, to the Army, and to themselves. The center provides opportunities for visitors to experience the hi-tech Army through virtual experiences as well as interaction with Soldiers. The center showcases today's Soldiers and tells their stories of how becoming Army Strong® has positively impacted their lives.

The AEC leverages the success the Army has had with its interactive and online marketing campaigns and offerings. The Army has combined new and engaging Army content with marketing tools, such as the *America's Army* game, the Virtual Army Experience and the Strength in Action Zones, to create this experiential center that resonates with young adults. Visitors will not only learn about careers in the Army, but also will be exposed to the Army's values, teamwork focus, and technologically advanced equipment.

### **THE EXPERIENCE**

The Army is made up of dedicated, high-quality individuals who are "Army Strong" and equipped with cutting-edge technologies to accomplish very complex missions. The AEC highlights these aspects of Soldiering by placing participants in technology simulations as Soldiers in Army operations. This experience allows participants to see how technology, training and teamwork combine to make the Army the world's premier land power. Visitors

also learn about the breadth of career choices and the multitude of benefits, including education, training, health care and quality of life, available to Soldiers. AEC visitors develop a greater appreciation for Soldiers and learn how the Army has influenced Soldiers' lives by making them physically, mentally and emotionally strong, self-assured and confident individuals, things which bring success in the Army and throughout life. The AEC introduces individuals to Soldiers, whose stories help young men and women decide whether there's a match between their life objectives and Army opportunities.

### **INSIDE THE AEC**

With a view toward a fun and engaging encounter, the high-tech experience will include real Soldiers leading visitors through Army equipment simulators, interactive installations and Army online education programs.

- **Registration Area**—All ages are allowed to visit the AEC, but to participate in AEC activities visitors must be at least 13. Many of the gaming activities are rated T for Teen by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). Visitors must register and provide their age and basic contact information, which will be used to send information about upcoming AEC events.
- **Career Navigators**—Visitors can use interactive career navigators to map out prospective careers in the Army. A number of videos showcase career paths.
- **Simulator Area**—Several simulators will be located at the facility. Many are based on applications developed on the *America's Army* game platform. They include:
  - An Apache helicopter simulator in which a pilot and copilot experience the aircraft and its weapons systems.
  - A Black Hawk helicopter simulator with four door-gunner positions.
  - An armored HMMWV simulator with positions for a driver and several gunners.
- **Gaming Arena**—Visitors can play *America's Army*, the Army's official computer game, as well as other games (rated T for Teen). There will be a number of Xbox 360® consoles plus networked PCs for video games.
- **Tactical Operations Center (TOC)**—The TOC highlights Army career opportunities in communications, command and control, military intelligence and technology. A dual-purpose area, the TOC is used for group presentations and online education.
- **Retail**—Offers Army-branded merchandise and snacks.
- **Cafe & Lounge**—Area for hanging out or talking with Soldiers.

The Army will run the AEC as a pilot program for up to two years, analyzing results of its various innovations along the way. At this time, the Army has no plans in place to replicate the AEC in other markets across the country.

For additional information on the AEC, visit **[TheArmyExperience.com](http://TheArmyExperience.com)**.