

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 28, 2009

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## **Port of Corpus Christi and Texas A&M University System to create research and training center at Naval Station Ingleside**

(CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas) – The Port of Corpus Christi and the Texas A&M University System announced today the creation of a dynamic and far-reaching partnership to develop research and training on 1,009 acres at the Naval Station Ingleside and adjacent property.

The agreement was approved Tuesday on a 6-0 vote (Commissioner Judy Hawley was unable to attend) before a standing room only audience at the Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center. Under the agreement, the A&M System will manage the redevelopment of the site, which includes 576 acres at Naval Station Ingleside, and 433 adjacent acres owned by The Port of Corpus Christi. The Naval Station land reverts to the port when the base closes in September 2010 in accordance with a 2005 decision from the Base Realignment and Closure commission.

“This is a historic and monumental day, a defining moment for the Port of Corpus Christi,” said Ruben Bonilla, Chairman of The Port of Corpus Christi. “The A&M System brings to our partnership the experience and power of one of the world’s flagship university systems along with a wide range of academic excellence and advanced study programs in bio technology, energy, transportation, technology commercialization, engineering and health sciences. Any one of each would be well-suited for Naval Station Ingleside.”

At its height of activity, the 17-year-old Naval Station Ingleside employed approximately 3,000 military and civilian personnel and created another 2,000 indirect jobs in the area. The PCCA has been active in seeking a major institution to bring a new economic engine to the area and began talks with the A&M System several months ago.

“We are honored that the Port is working with the Texas A&M System to expand research opportunities in the Coastal Bend through the development of renewable energy technology,” said Michael D. McKinney, M.D., chancellor of the A&M System. “The innovations that will follow as a result of this important agreement reflect a wide-ranging commitment by the A&M System to lead the way in cutting-edge research to improve all our lives and bring jobs to Texans. A great university system with a rich land-grant heritage can reach out to all aspects of our society, and in the redevelopment of Naval Station Ingleside we are doing just that.”

Speaking at the Port Commission meeting, McKinney praised the port and the area’s leadership for taking on a “tough job” and not giving in to the problems that followed the announcement of the closing of the Naval Station, but instead “taking control of your destiny.” McKinney said that while the exact nature of the research and commercial relocations that will come to the base are still being worked out, the system’s plan will be in place before the station closes. “This project has the potential to be the nation’s leader in world-class energy research and development. With the help of our many partners, including Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, the Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES), the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), and many other of the fantastic resources and brilliant minds from the system, we will create a wealth of opportunities in energy, engineering, education, training, production and other jobs that are both good for Texas and

exportable. We also have the assets of the base, which gives us tremendous potential that will draw ships back to the pier and people to work on those ships.”

“This partnership will foster commercial and community ties between the largest land-grant university in Texas and one of the most beautiful and resource-rich areas of our state,” said Guy Diedrich, vice chancellor for federal relations and commercialization. “This represents a new chapter for Ingleside, and for the system. In the dynamic economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is vital to realize strategic partnerships between institutions of education and economic leaders, since each is dependent on the other.” Diedrich, and Dennis Beal, director of industry alliances for the system’s Office of Technology Commercialization, led the system’s efforts to create the Ingleside project, working closely with Corpus Christi businessman Larry Urban and Tom Moore, project manager of Naval Station Ingleside Redevelopment.

The Port of Corpus Christi serves as the 7<sup>th</sup> largest port in the U.S. in terms of tons and the economic engine of the Coastal Bend whose mission statement is to *“serve as a regional economic development catalyst while protecting and enhancing its existing industrial base and simultaneously working to diversify its international maritime cargo business.”*

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