



Army Awards Distance Education Contract

PricewaterhouseCoopers to Form Army University Access Online

Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera announced today the Army has awarded a \$453 million contract to PricewaterhouseCoopers to provide distance education for an estimated 80,000 soldiers over the next five years, equipping them as students with the latest technologies and quality online learning experiences. This initiative places the Army at the leading edge in distance education.

Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, the chairman of the congressional Web-based Education Commission; James J. Schiro, the chief executive officer of PricewaterhouseCoopers; and Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. John M. Keane joined Secretary Caldera for the announcement of this historic online Web portal, scheduled to open in mid-January 2001 at three Army posts in Georgia, Kentucky, and Texas. The contract unites an impressive group of more than a dozen technology providers and an initial set of 29 accredited higher education partners to create a customized, complete online university: Army University Access Online.

"This cutting edge, cyberspace program will provide unprecedented educational opportunities for our soldiers," said Caldera. "It reinforces the Army's long-term commitment to investing in its people. This strategic alliance with PricewaterhouseCoopers and its unique team opens a new doorway to per-

sonal growth — allowing America's soldiers to earn post-secondary degrees or technical certifications online anytime, anywhere, anyplace, while they serve.

"PricewaterhouseCoopers brings unequalled experience in managing large, global and complex programs as well as acknowledged expertise in technology development and in e-Learning strategies," Caldera said. "Together, we will inspire educated, Information Age-savvy soldiers to succeed in the high-technology missions the Army will be asked to perform in the 21st century."

"This is a monumental step for both the Army and our e-Learning Network of partners," said Schiro. "This educational services solution provides the Army, its soldier-students, and the Army Continuing Education Service administrators best-in-class online education programs, technology components, and experienced project management that will ensure the Army's success in delivering distance education programs to its soldiers."

PricewaterhouseCoopers is the world's largest professional services organization. Drawing on the knowledge and skills of more than 150,000 people in 150 countries, it helps clients solve complex business problems and measurably enhances their ability to build value, manage risk, and improve

performance in an Internet-enabled world. The Management Consulting Services practice of PricewaterhouseCoopers helps clients maximize their business performance by integrating strategic change, process improvements, and technology solutions.

The Army first announced its program vision for Army University Access Online July 10 [2000]. This initiative empowers eligible soldiers to obtain college degrees or professional technical certifications using notebook computers and vastly expanded learning opportunities while they serve in the Army.

The Army University Access Online technology package announced today includes a Compaq laptop computer and printer distributed by TurboTek Computers, a standard suite of software and Internet browser, Internet connectivity by Fiberlink, and 24-hour call center support by Precision Response Corporation. Saba will provide online course management and online evaluations while PeopleSoft will develop and integrate the student administration system. Blackboard will provide the virtual classroom environment.

This e-Learning Network features an initial set of accredited higher-education institutions. These schools include members of

the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges – Army Degrees program as well as Historically Black Colleges and Tribal Colleges. These institutions, which reflect the diversity of America, will offer an extensive range of online course offerings, programs, and available degrees to soldier-students. Other schools desiring to enter teaming agreements as part of Army University Online should contact PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Army University Access Online is the latest in a series of dynamic changes to the Army's recruiting and marketing programs designed to enhance and communicate the wide range of opportunities and skills the Army offers potential recruits. The Army is also continuing its efforts to better train and deploy its recruiting force, and communicate Army opportunities as well as by offering innovative new educational programs to recruits. The educational opportunities include the GED Plus, the Army's high school completion program, College First, and Partnership for Youth Success programs.

For more information, call Army Public Affairs, Paul Boyce at 703-697-3447.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at www.dtic.mil/armylink/news/.