## NEW U.S. MEDICAL SIMULATION CENTER

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is building a Medical Simulation Center for Excellence at the new Orlando Veterans Affairs Medical Center, currently under construction. The Medical Simulation Center will be the nationwide training and planning home for the Simulated Learning Enhancement and Advanced Research Network (SimLEARN), the VA's new medical simulation system that will help the VA improve care and treatment for veterans across the country.

The 35,000 square-foot Orlando facility will bring physicians and other medical professionals from throughout the country to train in the latest medical simulation technology such as surgical robotics and simulated patients. It is scheduled to open in December 2011; however, temporary space at the current Orlando VA Medical Center will be used to support the SimLEARN mission in the interim.

## 60th Anniversary, Team Orlando Celebrates

**Team Orlando celebrated** the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was the foundation of the National Center of Excellence for modeling and simulation and reponsibility for nearly $4 billion annually in the procurement for US service training products. The March 19, 1950 MOU, for the cooperative joint evaluation, research and development of training devices was signed by the Secretaries of the Navy and Army, and was commemorated on that day this year in a ceremony at Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division's (NAWCTSD) outdoor annex in Central Florida Research Park.

"Sixty years ago, a seed in the form of an MOU between the Navy and the Army that was planted in Port Washington, New York to send Navy and Army Participation Group personnel to the Navy Special Device Center, NAWCTSD's predecessor, has led to the phenomenal team that we have today," said NAWCTSD Commander Captain Harry "Smokey" Robinson at the event. "Those pioneers understood the importance of the work they were doing to train the Warfighters of their day."

During the mid-1960's, that core group moved to Orlando's Naval Training Center to join an existing Army training agency, which today is the Army's Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI). In 1988, they moved to the then-fledgling Central Florida Research Park near the University of Central Florida (UCF).

During the ceremony, some of the personnel who had been employees at the Center since the beginning reflected on how the technology employed for training systems has advanced. One early problem described was that flight simulators driven by analog computers and early graphics generators could not be made to simulate landings. During those early times, much work was conducted converting punch-card programmed analog computing devices to digital.

Since that time, more than 160 contracting companies, governmental agencies and organizations and academia, many in residence in the park, have joined Team Orlando. Other military and government agencies in residence include the Air Force Agency for Modeling and Simulation (AFAMS), the Marine Corps Product Manager for Training Systems (PMTRASYS), a Coast Guard training office, the Joint Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) Co-Lab, the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. The major academic partner is UCF's Institute for Simulation and Training (IST). – *Chuck Weirauch*