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For Immediate Release

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U.S. Army TARDEC Receives 2010 Greatest Invention Award for Robot Deployment System

U.S. ARMY DETROIT ARSENAL, Warren, Mich. – Associates from the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) received a 2010 Army Greatest Invention Award for a cost-efficient robotic route clearing solution during the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Army military and civilian officials honored scientific contributions to developing superior equipment and technology in support of Soldiers across the globe. About 150 people gathered Oct. 10 for the U.S. Army Greatest Inventions of 2010 ceremony to recognize award recipients and showcase winning technologies.

During the ceremony, TARDEC Director Dr. Grace M. Bochenek and engineers Shawn Keller and William Easterday were presented the award for the RG-31 Robot Deployment System (RDS) developed by TARDEC's Center for Ground Vehicle Development and Integration along with Product Manger Assured Mobility Systems.



The Robot Deployment System enables Soldiers to deploy and operate road clearance robots safely.

“This type of work goes to the heart of what we aim to accomplish every day at TARDEC,” said Bochenek. “This is an innovative, quickly-achieved solution to a vital challenge being faced by warfighters. Again this year, the most rewarding part of this recognition is realizing our work made a difference for Soldiers.”

The need for a low-cost and lightweight solution in transporting and deploying route clearance robots in combat brought on the development of the TARDEC RDS. The system enables Soldiers to comfortably transport, deploy and operate route clearance robots from the protected area inside the vehicle.

RDS kits allow for route clearance units to use the full range of robotics capabilities without having to physically unload and deploy the equipment out the back of the vehicle by hand, exposing them to enemy threats. The system will have a positive impact on how Soldiers transport, deploy, and engage roadside threats in combat for years to come, officials said.

“The contributions made by these teams promise to improve the well being of Soldiers and the Army's capability to contribute to quality of life and our national security,” said Maj. Gen. Nick Justice, U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command commanding general.

The Army’s Greatest Inventions awards are truly Soldiers’ Choice Awards, Justice wrote in an announcement to the Army’s research, development and engineering workforce. “All of the nominated inventions demonstrate significant contributions to the warfighter,” he said.

A panel of noncommissioned officers with recent combat experience as well as hands-on, practical experience – in addition to a panel of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command field grade officers – judged the nominations.

ABOUT TARDEC

Headquartered at the U.S. Army Detroit Arsenal in Warren, MI, TARDEC is the Nation’s laboratory for advanced military automotive technology and serves as the Ground Systems Integrator for all Department of Defense (DOD) manned and unmanned ground vehicle systems. With roots dating back to the World War II era, TARDEC is a full life-cycle, systems engineering support provider-of-first-choice for all DOD ground combat and combat support weapons, equipment and vehicle systems. TARDEC develops and integrates the right technology solutions to improve Current Force effectiveness and provides superior capabilities for Future Force integration. TARDEC’s technical, scientific and engineering staff lead cutting-edge research and development in Ground Systems Survivability; Power and Mobility; Ground Vehicle Robotics; Force Projection; and Vehicle Electronics and Architecture. TARDEC is a major research, development and engineering center for Research, Development and Engineering Command and an enterprise partner in the TACOM Life Cycle Management Command. www.tardec.army.mil

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Photos of the event are available here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/rdecom/6232988517/in/photostream>

Video of the RDS in action is available here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeGnx6j0LfE&feature=channel_video_title