

# NAVFAC awards contract for federal health care facility construction

By **BILL COUCH**  
NAVFAC Midwest Public Affairs

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Midwest is working with Joseph J. Henderson & Son, Inc., of Gurnee, Ill., on the first phase of construction to create the first-ever joint Navy/Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Federal Health Care Facility (FHCF) here.

The \$16 million contract, awarded May 25, includes construction of a staff parking area, four-story parking garage for patients, new site entryway

and traffic light on Green Bay Road, and utility work to prepare for the eventual addition of a new wing to the current North Chicago VA Medical Center.

"We are so proud to be moving forward on this project with J.J. Henderson," said Capt. Bob Gibbs, commanding officer of NAVFAC Midwest. "This is an unprecedented undertaking in terms of partnership between the VA and the Navy, and it's unprecedented in terms of benefits to our service members—past and present—and their families."

The Navy, VA and Henderson are currently finalizing plans for the project. A groundbreaking ceremony is being planned for July 2 to officially kick off construction at the VA site, and completion of the parking and infrastructure project is expected in October 2008.

The Naval health clinic on Naval Station Great Lakes is gradually merging operations with the existing VA staff and facilities. This will provide a full range of modernized medical and support resources for patients while at the same time

eliminating costly duplications that currently exist between the two nearby medical facilities. Following the addition of the new wing—under a separate contract that has not yet been offered—the facility will be the first to use a completely integrated VA/Navy staff and treat recruits, active-duty service members, retirees, family members and veterans.

The overall FHCF is planned for completion in 2010, and is expected to save approximately \$160 million over the projected 40-year life span of the facility.