

## June 2, 2006 MountainTop Technologies developing training for Air Force anesthesiologists

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Johnstown, PA - Congressman John Murtha said today at the Showcase for Commerce that a Johnstown company is developing an on-line training program to train Air Force anesthesiologists to administer a special pain-relief procedure to wounded military personnel. On hand for the announcement was the Air Force Medical Service's Col. Peter F. Demitry, assistant Air Force surgeon general, who oversees the program.

MountainTop Technologies is developing the Virtual Medical Trainer program for the Air Force Medical Service. The program will teach practitioners to insert into patients a small catheter to dispense painkilling medication. The procedure eliminates the need for general anesthesia and effectively blocks pain for several days after surgery, allowing quicker post-operative therapy and faster recovery.

The pain-block procedure was developed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and piloted on the battlefields of Iraq by Lt. Col. Trip Buckenmaier, chief of Walter Reed's Regional Anesthesia Section and director of the Army Regional Anesthesia and Pain Management Initiative. Col. Buckenmaier also trained anesthesiologists at Memorial Medical Center, which is one of only a handful of hospitals across the country routinely offering the procedure, through a partnership between the John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute and Walter Reed. Murtha supported funding for both initiatives and has worked closely with the military and local companies such as MountainTop and health-care facilities such as UPMC and Memorial to deploy advanced medical care and training systems for military medical caregivers who treat the wounded when they return from the battlefield.

"I've visited wounded soldiers at Walter Reed and orthopedic patients at Memorial who were delighted with this pain block," Murtha said. "I'm pleased that the Army and the Air Force are working together to make the technology available to even more of our military personnel. MountainTop's recognized expertise in Web-based virtual training made it the logical choice to develop a program that will allow Air Force anesthesiologists to receive the proper training without leaving their bases."