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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Local Heroes & Innovators Recognized by City and Chamber**

*Today Proclaimed Phalanx Defense Systems Day by City*

GAINESVILLE, FL – The Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to honor Phalanx Defense Systems, LLC and its hard armor division, DKX Armor for the creation of innovative armor technology directly responsible for saving the life of an Illinois-based law federal enforcement officer and former US Army Combat veteran. City Mayor Ed Braddy proclaimed March 19, “Phalanx Defense Systems Day.”

“We are pleased and honored to have played a role in protecting Officer Hakim, who has shown great dedication to protecting his country both as a law enforcement member and a veteran,” said Phalanx CEO James Coats. “As much as we are honored by this recognition, we are equally humbled by the fact that our armor has allowed a man to return home to his family.”

In the last six months, Phalanx entered into contracts with agencies such as US Customs and Border Patrol, the United States Navy, and our own Alachua County Sheriff’s Office.

“Without the invaluable work of our nation’s first responders, the work the rest of us do would not be possible,” said Gainesville Area Chamber Chairman John Carlson. “Phalanx is contributing to our economy as a member of our valuable manufacturing industry, and has saved a life in the process. We are proud that Phalanx calls Gainesville home.”

Officer David Hakim, Team Leader for the DuPage Sheriff’s Special Operations Team in Dupage County, Illinois, was on duty when struck with a 12-gauge shotgun slug fired from the floor below. Though Officer Hakim was seriously injured, the DKX Armor plate he was wearing caused the round to change direction after impact, ultimately mitigating the severity of the injuries he sustained.

“...Without this piece of gear the round would certainly have struck me higher and with much more force resulting in certain paralysis or even death,” Hakim said. “I am grateful to be walking and am on the road to recovery.”

Phalanx Defense Systems was founded by partners James Coats, John Perkins and Justin Mowitz in 2012, and has since grown to a team of over 20 people. Phalanx designs and builds lightweight, buoyant, high-performance ballistic systems and hard armor plates used daily in the line of duty by first responders.

***About the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce***

*Formed in 1924, the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in the Gainesville area. Representing over 1,300 members that employ more than 70,000 employees, the Chamber is leading the effort in making the Gainesville region a global hub for talent, innovation, and opportunity. The Chamber is 5-star accredited by the United States Chamber of Commerce, putting it in the top 1% of all Chambers nationwide. Learn more at [www.GainesvilleChamber.com](http://www.GainesvilleChamber.com) or call us at 352.334.7100.*