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CARLISLE BARRACKS, Pa. – The U.S. Army War College hosts its graduation ceremony Friday, July 26 at 9 a.m. at the Wheelock Bandstand on the historic parade field of Carlisle Barracks, celebrating the accomplishments of the distance education Class of 2013.

The 348 graduates of the Class of 2013 includes officers of the U.S. Army (149 National Guard, 126 Army Reserve, 34 Active), the U.S. Marine Corps (six Reserve and 13 Active); the U.S. Navy Reserve (2), the U.S. Air Force (one Reserve, one Active), and 11 federal Civilian leaders and senior international officers representing Canada, Estonia, Lithuania and Moldova.

The guest speaker is the Chief of the U.S. Army Reserve, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, a graduate of the U.S. Army War College. As the Army Reserve Chief, Talley develops Army Reserve budgets, training programs and policy decisions; manages the Army Reserve troop program units, individual mobilization augmentees, and the Active Guard/Reserve program; and serves as the appropriations director for all Army Reserve funds. He commands all Army Reserve troop program units worldwide, with total end strength of 205,000 Soldiers and 12,600 civilians, and an operating budget of more than \$9 billion dollars. His former assignment was as Special Assistant to the Army's Vice Chief of Staff.

The distance education program offers a curriculum equivalent to the USAWC resident education program -- both leading to the Master's of Strategic Studies for those who complete all academic requirements. The two-year program is largely internet-based, with online forums and two 2-week phases in residence at Carlisle Barracks.

The final resident phase, July 14 - July 26, was highlighted by a Gettysburg strategic staff ride; lectures from Army War College experts in international negotiations, leadership assessments, strategic Landpower, cyber security, Muslim perspectives, the Army Profession, the Middle East and implications for U.S. policy. The busy two weeks included personalized wellness assessments, and opportunities to socialize with fellow students.

Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. John F. Campbell addressed the class in a candid discussion of current and emerging issues of importance to senior military leaders. Each day of the resident phase incorporates a special presentation followed by seminar discussion. Maj. Gen. Glenn Lesniak and Brig. Gen. Michael Bobeck led discussions in Reserve Component perspectives. The Army's G1 and G8, discussed Strategic Challenges in Resourcing, and the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7 dr. David Markowitz addressed Landpower. Dr. Mara Karlin, Principal Director for Strategy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, spoke to the Army War College Class of 2013 about the complex and growing array of strategic challenges that face the nation and its armed forces. The Honorable Max Cleland addressed the class and its civilian guests on strategic leadership.

Former "Voice" contestant Christian Porter, a Pa. native and nephew of Class of 2013 grad Lt. Col. Kathleen Porter, will sing the national anthem during the ceremony. Musical support for the ceremony will be provided by the 28th Division Band of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. And, the honor fires will be provided by the 1st Battalion, 108th Field Artillery of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division.

The U.S. Army War College educates and further develops leaders for service at the strategic level and advances knowledge in the global application of Land Power. Since 1901, the Army War College has educated the senior leaders who served at the nation's highest military positions in war and peace. In case of inclement weather, gate guards and signage will direct visitors to the indoor ceremony site.