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Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, Chief of the Army Reserve, shakes hands with Army War College Class of 2013 graduate Lt. Col. Gregory Tine, during the graduation ceremony July 26.

Find photos of each graduate at

<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/banner/PhotoAlbum/DDEGraduation2013/default.cfm>

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Two senior Army leaders celebrated, and challenged the newest members of the alumni ‘club’ at today’s ceremony for the 348 graduates of the Army War College Class of 2013 distance education program.

Graduation speaker **Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley**, Chief of the U.S. Army Reserve, challenged the graduates to seek assignments outside of their comfort zone.

“Figure out how you can be a better, broader leader,” he said, challenging the graduates to step out of their comfort zones. “Serve in the interagency ... serve out of your regiment ... serve outside of your component ... serve outside of your Service – and America and the Armed Forces will be better served

for you doing so.”

Talley, a 2003 graduate of the program, recounted lessons of the past 10 years since he sat where the graduates sat today. “This is the same challenge that was issued to my class of 2003 by Secretary [Colin] Powell ... Work to broaden your leadership by taking tough assignments that make you do something different.

“Every day I thought I’d be fired because every day I had an assignment I thought I was incapable of completing,” he said about an unplanned job at the J5 War on Terrorism Directorate, after graduation.

The experience, working as the only non special operators challenge him helped him further develop as a leader, he said.

Talley closed with congratulations.

“Although the world is still a dangerous and complex place, I find assurance and comfort and am humbled by the presence of so many great leaders,” he said to the graduates.



New USAWC graduate Army Lt. Col. Kathleen Porter celebrates with family members, including nephew Christian Porter (right) who sang the National Anthem for the Army War College Class of 2013 graduation.

Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, Army War College Commandant acknowledged the two arduous years of their studies, preparing students for their role as the next wave of strategic leadership for the nation.

“I hope all of you – students and Family Members feel as though it is worth it,” he said. “Economic, governmental, and national security organizations at the strategic level are being presented with some of the most complex issues and challenges our nation and her Armed Forces have faced in decades.

“Be prepared to use your newly acquired, sophisticated intellectual skills,” he said. “We need you – and you are ready.

"Be brave in the often gray and ambiguous environment of service at the strategic level," said Cucolo. "Expect your moral courage to be tested -- frequently -- and recognize that exercising such courage often comes with personal and professional risk. You know how strongly I feel about this -- in the twisting and turning and uncertain strategic environment ahead, always stay on the moral high ground. If you do, you will always be in the right place.

"From your vantage point of the moral high ground ... you will be content and confident knowing you have been true to yourself and those who have trusted you with their lives," he said.

The majority of colonels and lieutenant colonels in the student body have served in Afghanistan and Iraq, or multiple deployments. Their ranks were enhanced by senior civilians with national security responsibilities. They've exchanged perspectives and created friendships during the two-year course with fellow leaders from Canada, Estonia, Lithuania and Moldova.

The graduating class included 309 Army officers (149 National Guard, 126 Army Reserve and 34 Active); 19 Marine Corps (six Reserve and 13 Active); two Navy Reserve officers; two Air Force officers (one Reserve, one Active); four international officers and 11 civilian leaders.

The end of the two-year course was bittersweet for some new graduates.

"It's kind of hard to believe it's over," said graduate **Army Col. Anthony Mohatt**. "It will probably take a few days for that to sink in and be able to look back and fully appreciate this experience."

"This has been an unbelievable experience," said graduate **Army Lt. Col. Jeanette Thompson**. "It was exhausting at times -- but I'm proud to sit here now."

New USAWC graduate Lt. Col. Army Lt. Col. Peter Moons takes the triumphant graduate walk as peers wait in line to accept the Army War College diploma from graduation guest Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley, Chief of U.S. Army Reserve; USAWC Commandant Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo and Provost Dr. Lance Betros.



Special speakers, guests, activities add to resident course

The graduation ceremony marked the end of the two-year distance education experience and followed the final of two 2-week courses in residence at Carlisle. Course speakers included **Gen. John Campbell**, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army; retired **Lt. Gen. Russell Honore**; **Maj. Gen. Glenn Lesniak**, Deputy Commanding General (Support) for the Army Reserve; **Brig. Gen. Michael Bobeck**, Special Assistant To The Director at Army National Guard; and **Dr. David Markowitz**, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7.

“I think each of the speakers and the entire resident course was a perfect way to cap off this experience,” said graduate **Army Lt. Col. Edward Benz**. “Each of the speakers brought a unique perspective to the issues facing us and the world.”

Campbell spoke to the class about a variety of issues including the effects of sequestration, the need for the students to ask the "hard questions," and the important roles they will play in the future of the nation's armed forces.

A special feature of the two-week resident course is the Commandant's National Security Program, which invites civilian guests to join a student seminar and participate in the program.

Each day's guest speaker or panel presentation inspired question-and-answer sessions with the full student body; and focused follow-on discussions in seminar. Discussions explored media impact and academic perspectives on national security strategy development and implementation, the challenges of civil-military relations, the role of domestic politics in national security, globalization, foreign policy, and international security issues.

Honore, well known for serving as commander of Joint Task Force Katrina responsible for coordinating military relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina-affected areas across the Gulf Coast, had a pointed message about thinking outside the box.

“One hundred years ago, two bike makers from Ohio created the first airplane: be like them, be an example of how to get things done,” said Honore. “Don't be afraid to take on the impossible.

“Opportunity lies on the other side of impossible,” he said.

Max Cleland, U.S. Senator from Georgia, 1997-2003, and now secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission, drew from his experiences as Soldier and Statesman in addressing the class.

A junior Army officer during the Vietnam War, he was awarded the Silver Star and the Bronze Star for valorous action in combat, including during the Battle of Khe Sanh on April 4, 1968.

“As leaders, we have to think things through to the end before we commit to boots on the ground,” he

said. “My time in uniform helped impress on me that we have to be crystal clear about our objectives before we make that commitment.”

Students and guests took part in a Gettysburg staff ride in order to better understand what happened, why it happened, and what could be learned and applied to future strategic issues.

Find photos at www.facebook.com/usawc.

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