

Defense and Industry partner for the day, anticipate future partnerships

By Public Affairs Staff 28 February 2018



Defense industry representatives filled the seminars of the Army War College for the School's annual Industry Day, Feb. 27. Anchoring the day-long set of engagements were the three keynote speakers, representing a large defense corporation point of view, that of small business, and insights from the Army. The large-group series launched follow-on small-group discussions in 24 seminars, each joined by an experienced industry representative and, in many cases, by a fellow at Defense Acquisition University.

"Think critically about this necessary partnership," urged Maj. Gen. John Kem, foreshadowing a later discussion point in seminar. Industry risk analysis is critical to their business, he noted, and better understanding of military requirements diminishes risk and cost.

The Commandant set the context for the full student body, in Bliss Hall. The daylong series of Defense-industry engagements with industry representatives offered a specific way to examine one of the topics woven

through the curriculum -- how to guide and support national security. Understanding Defense processes like acquisition is fundamental to the students' goal, to acknowledge both players in the relationship; to consider opportunities for refinement; and to recognize how senior leaders influence organizations and effect change.

Boeing Defense Space and Security

Boeing President and CEO **Leanne Caret** began her formal remarks about the defense-industry partnership by focusing on Boeing leadership and development, as a case study in a large corporation's approach to defense contracts. She positioned the complexity of corporate systems and military systems in an environment of peer industry competition and competition from military adversaries. She juxtaposed perceptions about bottom-line focus with the corporation's people motivated to help military troops come home.

Students shape the discussion focus when they ask the questions, and Caret addressed a wide-ranging scope of their concerns: space operations in a contested environment, decision-making about what not to keep doing; cyber security programs, balancing cost-consciousness and risk considerations with customer requirements; implications of intellectual property in an industry that required \$26 billion to develop one 787 aircraft.

SYNEXXUS, Inc.

Gregory Glaros, SYNEXXUS Chief Executive Officer and Chief Technical Officer, spoke to the small business perspective. Glaros relayed the past decade's speed of change and flow of information, leading to the rise of new industrial leaders like Amazon, Tesla and Uber. He suggested this shift in information flow could influence the acquisition process; the industrial base of today will not be the industrial base of tomorrow.

Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology)

Jeffrey White, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (ALT) and USAWC Class of 2000 graduate, provided the government's side of the relationship with commercial industry through an overview of the Army Acquisition process.

He brought up the Army's investment in the "big 6" of modernization -- long-range precision fires, air and missile defense, combat vehicles,

vertical integration and greater autonomy – and the importance of partnering with the defense industry to build these next generation Army platforms. White reviewed acquisition reform in the development of new technologies, accelerating testing, and increasing financial accountability.

Seminar time to re-examine guest speakers' remarks

When students reconvened in seminar to examine the issues raised in the large-group setting, they had an expert in every room.

Seminar 17's representative was a virtual translator, drawing from his former military experience in the Pentagon as well as his current work in shaping major military equipment. People, and talent management, emerged as the critical nodes in the DoD acquisition process, in his opinion. Students extended the discussion into the roles of leaders for organizational influence that drive change. From many angles, they addressed the premise that when industry does not need DoD, the partnership must adapt.

In seminar 17, students tested their ideas with a Lockheed Martin representative who was able, as well, to refer to insights from his military career and his corporate work. They explored the differences, benefits and challenges faced by both large and small companies during the development and acquisition process. They continued about how companies determine acceptable risk in new development projects, and how different programs within the DoD can work to minimize the amount of risk for both DoD and the defense industry.