

National Security Seminar week begins at USAWC

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 01 June 2022



168 guests receive a welcome briefing from Maj. Gen. David Hill, USAWC Commandant, to begin NSS week.

National Security Seminar is underway at the United States Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. This week, 160 guests, a cross section of Americans varied geographic regions and diverse backgrounds are exchanging ideas with USAWC students in candid dialogue about national security. This is the capstone educational event for students, and it includes daily keynote presentations from distinguished experts to set the theme and tone for the day's seminar discussions from USAWC faculty, June 6-9.

Each guest is nominated by someone who recognizes the value the nominee will bring to the seminar. The guests usually do not have an association with the military. NSS enables them to become personally acquainted with future U.S. government and international strategic leaders, thinkers, and advisors. In turn, students better understand the society they serve and gain a greater appreciation for the diverse opinions among the civilian leadership.

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The event kicked off with a social for the guests. Guests networked with one another, and communicated their keen interest and eagerness to learn.

“I am looking forward to learning how we can help the military do its job best,” said Michael Wilhelmi, Xcel Energy Community Relations Manager.

“The government structure is siloed. This event will allow me to better understand the needs of the Army,” said Cristina Jorge-Tunon, Principal Operating Budget Analyst for Maryland’s Department of Budget and Management.

That’s what this week is all about: building networks and maintaining connections with strategic partners.

“We cannot do it [address the national security issues] alone,” said Kabah Ealy, about addressing national security issues. Chief Legal Officer for MINACT, Inc., she said, “Unity is best.”

[Military personnel] are partners and friends in crisis response, and live in and contribute to our communities,” said Tamara Bennett, director of Membership and Engagement for the American Public Works Association.

Sunday, June 5, guests received an official welcome from Maj. Gen. David Hill, USAWC Commandant. He provided them an overview, situating this week in the context of the of the academic year and emphasizing the importance of NSS week to students and nation.

“There are skills we work to build throughout the year, but it is my personal opinion that the most enduring outcome of the experience here is the professional networks that are built, said Hill. “The leaders to your left and right in the seminar rooms that you will join are ones that they’ll collaborate with on the most perplexing national security challenges... and now you are part of that enduring network,” said Hill.

Each day, a keynote speaker will draw on experience and expertise to address one of the NSS themes. Following each large group lecture, NSS guests join one of the 16-student seminars for in-depth discussion of the topic prompted by the keynoter.

This year’s NSS themes explore the Secretary of the Army’s priorities: to put the Army on a sustainable strategic path amidst this uncertainty; to ensure the Army becomes more data-centric and can conduct operations in contested environments; to continue our efforts to be resilient in the face of climate change; to build positive command climates at scale across all

Army formations; to reduce harmful behaviors in our Army; to strategically adapt the way we recruit and retain talent into the Army to sustain the all-volunteer force.

The keynote speakers are:

Ambassador Ivo Daalder, president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Rosa Brooks, Georgetown University Chair of Law and Policy

Mackenzie Eaglen, Resident AEI fellow

Retired Lt. Gen. Tom Spoehr, Heritage Foundation's director of the Center for National Defense

Check back for daily updates, highlighting the day's speakers and event.

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