Army G8: If not you, then who better to apply talent and education to national security?

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 29 July 2022



Lt. Gen. Erik Peterson congratulates and challenges new graduates, Army War College distance class of 2022, July 29, Carlisle Pa.

Carlisle, Pa. — "Welcome to a celebration of intelligence, discipline, and achievement," said the Army War College Commandant to 377 graduates of the AWC Distance Class of 2022.about the graduation of 377 students. Graduates from the National Guard and Reserve components, and civilian agencies completed the Army War College's two-year distance education program.

"As the graduates raise their heads from their readings and online work, they will trade their educational journey for greater responsibilities," said Maj. Gen. David Hill, at the ceremony at Carlisle Barracks, July 29.

"While you studied and prepared, the nation did not sleep. The international security environment did not pause," said Hill. "You have been doing the job, often responsible for two jobs Years from now I hope you will look

"You are now prepared, in my estimation, for the challenges that await. The security of our nation depends on women and men... like you."

"[N]o one deserves our salute more than our graduates. It is a class that represents the strength of diversity," said Hill. "The strength of this class comes from experiences earned in uniform and in civilian responsibilities," he said, about a class comprising 292 Army officers, 17 Air Force, 11 Marine Corps and 10 Navy. Most of the military officers are Reserve or National Guard, with about 10 percent from the active component.

Civilian students contributed the perspective of the State Dept, Homeland Security, National Geospatial Intelligence, Congressional staffs and others. And, the international perspective was represented by officers from Croatia, Estonia, Greece, and Mexico.

The graduation speaker focused

invest in others.

Hill introduced Lt. Gen. Erik Peterson, listing some of the challenging command and policy positions he'd held, representative of post-graduate responsibilities. Peterson's career demonstrates the power of preparedness and agility in the face of change, said Hill, as he introduced the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff, G-8.

"I'm not going to offer you a lengthy formula or list for success – for every person's journey is as different as your personality, your strengths and weaknesses, your determination and resilience, and the challenges and opportunities you have faced in your lifetime," said Peterson.

"I'm exceptionally proud of all of you and genuinely appreciate the dedication, the commitment, the determination that brought you to this point. Those characteristics will be essential to your future success, and you will be tried and tested time and time again.

"With decades of experience and substantial investment in your professional education... senior leaders will expect you to think critically, challenge assumptions, and thrive in the face of complexity and ambiguity.

"You will be expected to effectively frame and analyze difficult problems, to ask the right questions, to communicate effectively at an executive level, and to produce results.

"You'll be expected to demonstrate and set an example of not just competence and character but, also, of emotional intelligence and intellectual empathy. You'll be expected to build and foster high-performing teams and, most importantly, to develop and invest in the next generation of leaders.

"You earned this," said Peterson. "But, don't discount the good fortune, the environment in which you have been allowed to thrive. And, consider that your relative fortune may imply responsibility and present opportunity....

"I challenge you to share your skill, talent, leadership and education, intellect, and energy... make it a habit, a lifestyle not just a single act.

If not you, then whom? asked Peterson.

"You will make a difference. You will move the needle... through those you touch and those you inspire," concluded Peterson.

Photos of graduation are available at https://www.flickr.com/photos/usawc by Monday, August 1. Find same-day video excerpts at www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege.



steps of Wheellock Bandstand after receiving his diploma during the distance education graduation ceremony, July 29, Carlisle Barracks.



Families gather before the distance education graduation to memorialize this day with a quick picture, Carlisle Barracks, 29 July.



Maj. Gen. David Hill, USAWC Commandant, conveys his faith in the distance education graduates to lead our nation, Carlisle Barracks, July, 29.



Lt. Col. Fernando Sillanueva Sanchez from the Mexican Army stands with his family after his graduation from the Army War College's distance education program, Carlisle Barracks, 29 July.

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