

Past, present, and future soldiers gathered to honor veterans

By Elena Patton 18 November 2022



USAWC Deputy Commandant Kimo Gallahue administered the Oath of Enlistment at the college's Veterans Day Celebration Nov. 11, 2022.

Past, present, and future soldiers gathered to honor those who have served. Fifteen young men and women took the Oath of Enlistment, a commitment to serve and carry on the legacy of our veterans.

USAWC student Lt. Col. Clay Huffman delivered the keynote address for the Veterans Day celebration, USAWC Deputy Commandant Kimo Gallahue administered the Oath of Enlistment, and the Carlisle Town Band played the Armed Forces Medley for family, friends, veterans, service members, and Future Soldiers, Nov. 11, 2022.

“Today we are celebrating Veterans Day and the 18 million veterans that currently live in the United States,” said Huffman. “We are honoring the sacrifices they have made throughout their careers.”

Huffam talked about the Army’s “Recruit to Veteran” initiative. “It is very important that the new recruits coming into the military see how we take

care of our veterans," said Huffman. "How we take care of veterans is a good example of how they will be treated throughout their career in the Army."

Huffman reflected on his own enlistment journey. "Like some of the recruits in the room, I entered this Army journey with virtually no exposure to the military as a cadet in ROTC over 20 years ago," said Huffman. "My goal was to serve four years. Instead, I found myself connecting with the Army values and my exceptional teammates in both challenging and exciting environments."

"Thirty-nine years ago last month, I took the Oath of Enlistment, and I didn't plan to stay in the Army at the time," said Gallahue before administering the oath. "But the Army offered me this opportunity to be everything that Clay talked about for my family and me. It is my honor to administer this oath."

Yulitza Velez De Luna, a Future Soldier, is looking forward to her work in small arms repair because she has always enjoyed fixing things and being a problem-solver. She is the first person in her family to enlist in the military.

"I am grateful for those who fought for us, and I am just here to be like them," she said.

Now that COVID restrictions have been lifted, many family members of the Future Soldiers were able to attend the ceremony and witness their children take the oath.

"I get to have my family in front of me. They can see me do this," said Future Soldier Austin Simmons. "It's very important."

"We are very proud of him because it means a lot that he is doing it, Terry Gunnarsson, whose son RJ took the oath. RJ is following in the footsteps of his grandparents who served, fulfilling a long-term goal, said Terry.