

Gen. David G. Perkins offers congratulations and words of encouragement

Gen. David G. Perkins offers congratulations and words of encouragement

Find photos from the ceremony at www.facebook.com/usawc

Find videos from the ceremony at www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege

Two years of reading Clausewitz while on vacation, missing soccer games, date nights and trying to find a reliable internet connection downrange to make that last-minute forum post all came to a fruitful end July 24 as the Army War College Distance Education Class of 2015 graduated under a sunny sky on the historic Parade Grounds of Carlisle Barracks.



“What a superb day, not only in terms of the weather, but superb because of the significance of the achievements of these students who have excelled in a tough, but vitally important and relevant program here at the Army War College,” said Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp, Army War College Commandant. “This class exemplifies grit, determination and professionalism. My thanks to you for your great attitude and effort over the past 24 months and to the faculty and staff of the U.S. Army War College for your professionalism and skills as teachers and mentors. Being the gold standard for strategic leader and idea

development comes from having a world-class faculty. Thank you.”

Graduation speaker General David G. Perkins, Commanding General of the U.S. Army

Training and Doctrine Command, offered congratulations and words of encouragement and challenges for the future.

Gen. David G. Perkins speaks to the Distance Education Class of 2015 during their graduation ceremony on the historic Carlisle parade ground, Carlisle Barracks, July 24.

“Your challenge is to take the skills you have learned here, lead from the front and help and develop others,” said Perkins. He said that this event signifies the end of “Phase One” of their careers, the next phase as strategic leaders will be just as important.

“In your next ‘resident phase,’ you will be graded not by the outstanding faculty of the U.S. Army War College, but by those you lead every day,” he said. “You have to take these attributes and turn them into competencies. You have to do this every day for the rest of your career.

Wonder every day, what is my grade today.”

The graduating class of 366 represents the men and women of the Joint Force, drawing from all branches of our military, federal agencies and multinational environments -- with 336 Army officers who are predominantly Reserve and National Guard officers; 3 Air Force; 8 Marine Corps; as well as 8 international officers from the countries of Armenia, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Moldova, Slovakia, Spain, and Trinidad & Tobago; and 11 senior civilians in federal agencies that work with DoD. All have completed the demanding course comprising two years of distance instruction and four weeks of resident instruction at Carlisle. The Class of 2015 has achieved the highest goals of professional military education, each student demonstrating a high degree of dedication and perseverance.



Supportive families filled the audience, with military colleagues and dozens of general officers on hand to congratulate them on the hard-earned achievement.

There was an empty seat however, as the class lost one of its own, Col. Robert Smothers, who died suddenly earlier this year. His wife, Julie Smothers and their children Lee and Brooke accepted a diploma and honorary master’s degree during the ceremony.



The graduation ceremony marked the end of the two-year program and their second two-week residence course. Each day included a guest speaker or a panel presentation and a general theme for discussion like the 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.

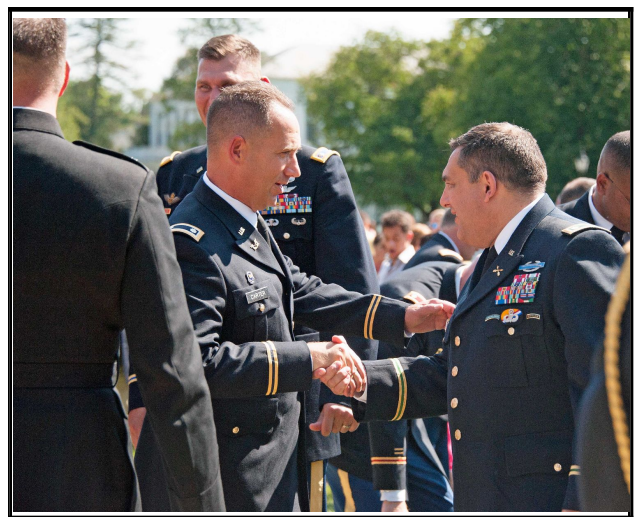
Two very happy class of 2015 Distance Education graduates congratulate each other after receiving their diplomas during their ceremony on the historic Carlisle parade grounds, Carlisle Barracks, July 24.

One of those speakers was Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh, who delivered the capstone address July 23 in Bliss Hall. McHugh offered parting thoughts about future challenges, and acknowledged the graduating students' ongoing commitment to developing their own leadership skills to further benefit the Army and the nation.

"The kinds of leaders - the kinds of service men and women - we require are those who are able to adapt to a shifting security landscape. These are the sorts of individuals who do not just react to change and uncertainty but lead through it. They do not just manage risk and the unknown. Rather, they embrace it to generate opportunity. People who know how to take incredibly complex problems and deliver options, not ultimatums," said McHugh.

The lessons from the course will serve them well in their careers according to a few of the students.

"I believe I and the Pennsylvania Army National Guard will reap immediate and future dividends," said Lt. Col. Tyrone Twyman, Deputy G3, PAARNG Army Staff Element JFHQ, Ft. Indiantown Gap, Pa., of his time as a student. "I feel from a personal standpoint that my technical and personal leadership skills have been greatly enhanced. The PAARNG in my opinion will benefit greatly from my ability to apply strategic level thinking skills and processes, learned over the past two years, to current, as well as future domestic and national level challenges/issues."



"I deployed twice to the Middle East in the last six years," said Lt. Col. Marlene Markotan,

Commander

3/80th BN, 2nd Brigade (Cyber/Signal). “The Army War College taught me the importance of understanding the national military objectives of the US and how my mission fit into the larger picture.”

“The USAWC has provided me with a much deeper understanding of the way our National Military Strategy is developed,” said Lt. Col. Laura A. Mchugh, G1, JFHQ-1, Ft. Indiantown Gap, Pa. “I have also gained a deeper appreciation for how our decisions at the National level impact the world.”

Several instructors and students were also honored during the ceremony.

The Commandant’s Award for Distinction in Research

Col. Markus T. Kreitmayr

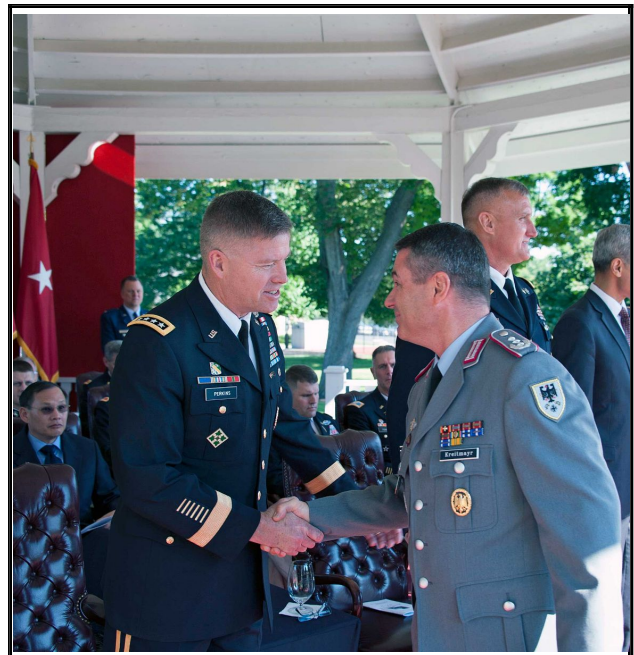
“Back to Business – NATO and the Concept of Collective Defense”

Project Adviser: Colonel Douglas V. Mastriano, DMSPO

Gen. Perkins congratulates 2015 Distance Education graduate German Col. Markus T. Kreitmayr on receiving the Commandants Award for Distinction in Research during his class graduation ceremony on the historic Carlisle parade ground, Carlisle Barracks, July 24

2015 Distance Education Award Winners

The AWC Foundation Award for Outstanding Program Research Project



Col. Garrick M. Harmon

“Resurrecting Kennan? The Search for a New Grand U.S. Strategy”

Project Adviser: Colonel (Retired) Jonathan D. Beard, DDE

Col. George Elias Katsos

“The United States Global Health Strategy with a Focus on the Department of Defense”

Project Adviser: Dr. Ricky W. Streight, DDE

Col. Matthew D. Morton

“Remembering the Past, Looking to the Future”

Project Adviser: Dr. Jeffrey L. Groh, DDE

Scott T. Redeker

“Strategy-Based Costing”

Project Adviser: Colonel (Retired) Jonathan D. Beard, DDE

The AWC Foundation Lifetime Alumni Membership Award

Col. Jack Albert Otteson

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 24 July 2015