

Collins Hall delivers strategic lessons to thousands

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The family of Gen. J. Lawton "Lightning" Joe Collins, whom Collins Hall is named for, receive a tour of the facility by Col. Eric Ashworth, director, Operations & Gaming Division. CSL serves as a high-technology senior leader experiential education center.

Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.

Aug. 23, 2010 -- Gen. J. Lawton "Lightning Joe" Collins was a man who saw the big picture, looked at issues with an eye to the future and knew the value of education. It's only fitting that Collins Hall, a building named in his honor and home of the Center for Strategic Leadership, has continued to evolve to serve future leaders since it was first opened in 1994.

Collins, a World War II veteran and former Chief of Staff of the Army, led the effort to reopen the USAWC at Carlisle in 1950. Members of his family got to see first-hand the changes of the facility named in his honor and learn more about the evolving ways the center adapts to an ever-changing world during a tour of the facility Aug. 23. The man leading the charge for many of the new initiatives and strategic games, Col. Eric Ashworth, head of the Operations and Gaming Division, provided the family an overview of the facility and explained how it continues to prepare tomorrow's strategic leaders and support Army and DoD leadership.

"Gen. Collins believed in the value of higher education in our military which made him the perfect selection when naming the new strategic wargaming facility for the Army," said Ashworth. "CSL continues today to serve as the Army's high-technology senior leader experiential education center. The center's conferences, wargames, and other learning events keeps Gen. Collins' vision alive."

CSL hosts an average of 80 conferences and 520 educational events annually with an estimated 7,000 attendees.

Collins Hall has stayed true to its roots as a “strategic gaming center,” as it was originally called, by providing a physical setting and an online environment for Army War College students and senior national security leaders to receive strategic level education through the use of information technology, war games, simulations and exercises with an emphasis on joint level strategic planning. CSL is the only strategic simulation organization that works in an interagency community, bringing together worldwide resources to create strategic level replications for educational purposes. Exercises such as Unified Quest and the Strategic Decision Making Exercise, are used by military and government leaders to test concepts within a strategic-minded environment.

“The people of the United States have a presumption that based upon the resources provided to the Army, its senior leaders know how to employ them and protect the country,” said Prof. Doug Campbell, CSL director. “Here at CSL, we provide the education for those senior leaders to continue to deliver on that presumption.”

Staff ride program partners CSL with civilian leaders

CSL also hosts civilian business and military leaders for a Strategic Leader Staff Ride. During the three-day event, leadership experts from the Army War College engage in discussions with government, academic and business leaders to understand strategy and planning in a historical context.

For more about Collins Hall and the Center for Strategic Leadership visit <http://www.csl.army.mil/>