

TRADOC commander has open dialogue with USAWC students

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Gen. Martin Dempsey, Commanding General of Training and Doctrine Command, spoke to Army War College students about the Army profession via VTC about Jan. 11. Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.

Jan. 11, 2011 – The stories of Rick Rescorla and Staff Sgt. Sal Giunta couldn't be more different and yet more relevant to the Army profession.

Rescorla, a second lieutenant in the Army who served in the Battle of Ia Drang in Vietnam, saved hundreds of lives while ultimately losing his own at the World Trade Center.

Giunta was recently awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in Afghanistan in Oct 2007.

Gen. Martin Dempsey opened his remarks with these two stories when speaking to Army War College students in a video-teleconference, Jan. 11. The Commanding General of Training and Doctrine Command spoke to the Army's War College students about the Army profession, and offered these stories as examples of the importance and life-long impact of the profession of arms.

The best Soldiers have confidence in the men and women to their left and right, and confidence in the institution. Dempsey reminded the Army colonels and lieutenant colonels of the class to recognize that they are entrusted to develop the institution, and challenged them to consider the changing environment and their role in the future of the Army.

“The environment we live in today is more competitive and we are looking for a way to operate in it,” he said. “It's hard to get you these seats with this OPTEMPO. We're taking you out of theater for a year

... you need to make the best of it.”

He urged them to get behind the new terminology, mission command, and the challenges of balancing the science and art of command. He asked them to participate in the yearlong review of the profession of the Army.

And, he forecast the challenges the Army and its junior officers will face when the OPTEMPO changes. The Army has about two years to change the way it operates in order to continue to inspire junior Soldiers, he said.

“Gen. Dempsey and TRADOC have always done a good job in making sure that leaders have the right education and other tools we need to operate in a VUCA environment,” said Lt. Col. Chuck Grindle, USAWC student. “He has always done a great job in painting the picture to show us what we need to do to get to where we need to be.”

Dempsey also spoke to a fundamental concern for him -- that subordinates never have enough time and that leaders must help them prioritize. “Articulate to the force what you want them to be masters of. If you don’t do that we become very thin in our proficiencies.”

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