

Danish general, USAWC Class of 2000 grad inducted into IF Hall of Fame

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Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, USAWC commandant and Maj. Gen. Niels Bundsgaard, Chief of the Danish Defense Personnel Organization, remove the cover of the portrait of Bundsgaard that will be displayed in the Army War College International Fellows Hall of Fame. He is the 32nd IF to be inducted. Photo by Megan Clugh.

Jan. 24, 2011 -- The Army War College honored a distinguished member of the Class of 2000 with an induction into the International Fellows Hall of Fame Jan. 24.

Maj. Gen. Niels Bundsgaard, Chief of the Danish Defence Personnel Organization, the highest position in the Danish armed forces, became the 32nd International Fellow to receive the honor.

Bundsgaard was voted for induction by the fellow members of his USAWC class and the ceremony took place in front of the current USAWC class.

“General Bundsgaard has demonstrated the finest professional competence and courage in his leadership of his nation’s armed forces,” said Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, USAWC commandant. “His connection to the U.S. Army War College – and to you as future strategic leaders of this and other nations – is a vital part of the web of friendship and partnership that connects military professionals during these dangerous and challenging times.”

In 2003, he served as the first Danish commander in Iraq as the Commander, Army Operational Command Denmark (Chief of the Army), and was responsible for the development, training and deployment of the Danish Army from Jan. 2009 to Aug. 2010. He was promoted in 2008 to major

general and served as General Officer Commanding, Danish Division.

Martin said Bundsgaard was an example of the senior leader the USAWC strives to develop.

“You epitomize who we are and what we believe in and all we do – wise, strong and inspired to serve.”

“It is a privilege and an honor to be here and receive this award,” Bundsgaard said.



Bundsgaard talks with Prof. Bob Coon, a professor in the Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, during the Course of Action Development Exercise Jan. 24. Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.

Before receiving his honor in Bliss Hall in front of the Class of 2011, spoke with Martin, Amb. Carol van Voorst, Deputy Commandant for International Affairs, and joined students and International Fellows in an exercise at the Center for Strategic Leadership.

“It’s really amazing to see how truly integrated the class is now, including the international fellows,” he said. “The world we live in now is one where nations cannot do anything solely by themselves, it takes nations working together to solve these complex problems.”

Bundsgaard received an update from Prof. Doug Campbell on the Strategic Decision Making Exercise, something he remembers from his time as a student.

“I remember most of the exercise but what stands out the most were the media interviews,” he said. “While I did not personally take part in one, I remember the impact it had on the students and the game play and the amount of preparation required by all of the students. Overall the exercise was a very valuable experience.”

Bundsgaard took many lessons with him from his year at the Army War College.

“For an officer to be able to take a year and focus on personal development and learning and networking with other military leaders is invaluable,” he said. “It really is invaluable in the long run.”

From an educational standpoint, Bundsgaard said that he was able to gain more insights into the other elements of national power like diplomacy and economic tactics.

“From most of our careers we are so focused on the military aspects and ways to solve problems but this experience really helped open my eyes to these other options,” he said. “I was able to apply those direct lessons during my time in Iraq, which I believe helped me be successful.”

Bundsgaard said that during his time here he formed “two families” with whom his friendships carry on to this day.

“I still keep in touch via email with many of my classmates, both US and the other IFs,” he said. “You really do form relationships here that last a lifetime.”