

# Convocation ceremony starts off USAWC year for Class of 2012

*Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office*

## Convocation ceremony starts off USAWC year for Class of 2012



*Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, Army War College Commandant, welcomes the USAWC Class of 2012 during a convocation ceremony in Bliss Hall Aug. 5. The event served as the official kick-off for the 368-members class as they begin their 10-month resident course in strategic leadership. Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.*

Aug. 5, 2011 -- The Army War College Class of 2012 officially started their 10-month academic course with a convocation ceremony held in Bliss Hall, Aug. 5.

During the ceremony, the 368-members class and their spouses were formally introduced to the USAWC faculty and key staff members. Dr. Bill Johnsen, USAWC Dean of Academic, served as the master of ceremonies.

“You are embarking on a focused year of professional study, what a recent graduate referred to as a structured professional sabbatical,” he said. “In the course of the next 10 months, you will study, reflect, engage in seminar dialogue, in research, and you will write on subjects of professional importance that will help you in your transition to senior leader responsibilities.”

Maj. Gen Gregg Martin, USAWC Commandant, hosted the event and welcomed the students.

“Congratulations class of 2012. Your presence here signals your tremendous achievements to date – and I thank you for your service,” he said. “Your selection to be an Army War College student is a mark of your nation’s trust and confidence in your potential. You represent the best of our nations, with the greatest potential to lead at the strategic level. “

He noted the profound impact the course would have on them both personally and challenged them to take full advantage of the opportunity.

“You come here as leaders,” he said. “You will build on your tactical expertise and learn to use it in a new way. And you will leave as a different kind of leader if you do your part by embracing and engaging the program, and allowing us to guide and help you.

“Our eyes are fixed on the horizon. The motto of the Army War College has long been the Latin phrase ‘prudens futuri’ -- our updated motto, in English, is ‘wisdom and strength for the future.’

You will need both: much will be expected of you, starting your first day on the job after you graduate from the Army War College -- and your path will be uphill, complex, and challenging.”

Martin also took a moment to remind the class that they will be led through this journey by top-notch staff and faculty.

“They have been where you have been, and have been to where you'll be going,” he said. “They'll share their tremendous wealth of professional experience. They are also highly educated – coupling their experience with education at some of the world's best universities. They are passionate about you, and your professional development and education.”

Martin also acknowledged the class of international officers that will study alongside their U.S. counterparts.

“We are proud to welcome the largest class of International Fellows in our history -- reinforcing our view that the powerful seminar experience is fueled and strengthened by multinational, multiservice, interagency, and intergovernmental experiences and ideas,” he said. “They replicate the world you will work in, and the teams you will serve on.”

Martin stressed to the students the need to establish priorities for the next year.

“I want you to be smart and honest with yourself. Determine your priorities wisely,” he said. “After years of demanding assignments, use this year to reset your body, your spirit, your emotions, your inspiration, and your relationships with family and friends.

“Align your professional goals and personal choices – and determine a way to achieve balance – investing not only in your thinking, but in your mental, physical and emotional resilience that are strengthened by your family and friendships.”

As he closed his remarks, Martin provided one last piece of advice.

“Embrace this experience. Engage with an open mind. Invest in yourself and in your family. Make a difference for your profession and your Nation. I wish you the best of luck and look forward to our year together.”

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 05 August 2011