

# IFs link with Shippensburg Univ Army ROTC cadets

**USAWC International Fellows meet Army ROTC cadets slated for cultural-and-language immersion in their home countries**



When Army ROTC cadets of Shippensburg University celebrated the past year at the annual Dining Out, some were looking ahead to overseas immersion experiences. Thirteen cadets will spend part of their Summer break in one of 11 countries, and some met senior officers from those nations at the event at Carlisle Barracks, April 28.

The Army cadets will experience life and work on language skills in Cape Verde, Korea, Malaysia, Moldova, Bulgaria, Indonesia, Georgia, Namibia, Peru, Thailand and Tanzania through the ROTC Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency Program.

CULP Immersion into foreign cultures exposes cadets to the different lifestyles, economic standing and world perspectives of other countries. Meeting the International Fellows who study at the Army War College, 23 miles away, is a head start on the immersion experience.

*Cadet Sean Fitzgerald (center) meets Mexican Brig. Gen. Iram Moreno-Gutierrez and Thailand's Brig. Jittapol Kanthavijit at the Shippensburg University Army ROTC Dining Out. Fitzgerald traveled to Tanzania with CULP two years ago, and extended an invitation to the USAWC International Fellows to attend his commissioning ceremony, May 5.*

"We'd like to begin a tradition of inviting the International Fellows to attend our Dining Out, and link

students with IF from the country they will visit," said Maj. Jim Struna, assistant professor of Military Science at Shippensburg University.

Cadet Command continues to offer other opportunities in lieu of Airborne and Air Assault to broaden the Cadet's experience, said Struna.

"Cadet Sean Fitzgerald was the first cadet to participate in CULP from Shippensburg until this year," said Struna. "Based on Fitzgerald's positive experience, we identified this as great recruiting and retention opportunity and strongly encouraged participation."

Instead of going home for three and a half months, the cadets will spend a month learning how the Army works and experience firsthand the humanitarian and military-to-military missions that the Army is involved in, he added.

The Army considers CULP an important investment in developing commissioned officers who possess the right blend of language and cultural skills required to support global operations in the 21st century, according to Cadet Command. As they learn about how others around the world view the United States, the cadets learn more about themselves. The immersion experience can include up to three distinct venues, including humanitarian service, host nation military-to-military contact, and education on social, cultural and historical aspects of the country. In 2011, 455 ROTC cadets participated in Army Cadet Command's CULP program.

CULP slots are awarded on a competitive basis and take into account several factors, such as GPA, physical fitness, an essay, and other pertinent selection criteria.

The trips last approximately one month, which encompasses the deployment as well as a five-day Soldier readiness process.