

# Montenegrin Officer at USAWC Receives Legion of Merit

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by Lt. Col. Mark McCann, USAWC Public Affairs



**Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, commandant of the U.S. Army War College, presents Lt. Col. Rajko Pesic, representing the Army of Montenegro, with the Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer) during a ceremony at Carlisle Barracks Monday. Pesic, currently an International Fellow in the Army War College's Class of 2012, received the award for his achievements serving as Montenegro's first-ever Defense, Military, Naval, and Air Attache in the United States**

**from 2008 until he arrived at Carlisle Barracks last summer (Photo by Megan Clugh).**

CARLISLE BARRACKS, Pa. – May 1, 2012 – Montenegro's first-ever Defense, Military, and Naval Attache received the U.S. military's Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer) during a ceremony here yesterday.

Lt. Col Rajko Pesic, an international fellow who also is the first officer from Montenegro to attend the Army War College, received the award for his achievements as military attaché in Washington, D.C., from 2008 until arriving at Carlisle Barracks last year to attend the 10-month strategic leader education course here.

"I am very honored and privileged to be the first officer from Montenegro to receive this medal," Pesic said. "It is important not only for me, but for Montenegro."

In a brief ceremony, attended by Montenegro's ambassador to the U.S., Srdan Darmanovic, and presided over by Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, commandant of the Army War College, Pesic was recognized for establishing the attaché office, setting the course for the office's future, and establishing

relationships with several U.S. and international military representatives.

“Lt. Col. Pesic provided assistance and knowledge as a military liaison essential to Montenegro’s increased presence as a cooperative partner in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization,” read the award citation. “His efforts fostered a strong relationship between Montenegro, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization members, and the United States.”

According to the Army regulation governing military awards, AR 600-8-22, the Legion of Merit may be awarded to friendly foreign government or military members in one of four “degrees.” In order of precedence, degrees are:

- Degree of Chief Commander, awarded to a foreign chief of state or head of government;
- Degree of Commander, awarded to the foreign equivalent to the Army Chief of Staff or higher, but not a chief of state;
- Degree of Officer, for general officers in positions below Chief of Staff level, ranks equivalent to colonel for service in positions normally held by general officers in the U.S. Army, and foreign military attaches;
- and, Degree of Legionnaire, for all other foreign personnel.

Following completion of his studies here, Pesic will return home to Montenegro, after serving almost four years in the United States, to assume duties yet to be determined.