

Convocation ceremony starts off War College year for Class of 2013

Carol Kerr, Thomas Zimmerman, Public Affairs

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Col. Stephen Maranian, Army War College Class of 2013 Class President, speaks to his fellow classmates, War College staff and faculty in Bliss Hall Aug. 10 during the convocation ceremony that officially kicked off the academic year.

Aug. 10, 2012 -- The Army War College Class of 2013 officially started their 10-month academic course with a convocation ceremony held in Bliss Hall, Aug. 10.

During the ceremony, the 386-member class, their spouses and 90 Army War College Fellows were formally introduced to the USAWC faculty and key staff members. **Dr. Lance Betros**, USAWC Dean of Academic Affairs, served as the master of ceremonies and introduced the War College faculty.

“You have a superb faculty of scholars in a variety of disciplines, the very finest Army, sister services and academics has to offer,” said Betros. “They will help guide and mentor you on your journey.”

He also challenged the students to take full advantage of the opportunities here.

“My message to you is to take maximum advantage of this opportunity for intellectual and professional development,” he said. “You will have ample time to read, research and discuss important issues of national security. Make the most of these 10 precious months.”

“We are assembled at the right place at the right time,” said **Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo**, commandant of The War College, who noted growing recognition of global volatility and complexity.

“We've been calling the world volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous because it has been. But never before has the speed of human interactions had more impact on the futures of our countries.”

“We'll need wise and skilled strategic leaders to protect future generations. This morning, I am very proud to be looking at the next wave,” said Cucolo. “We’re in this together.”

Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, commandant of The War College, talks to the class and their Family Members.

The short ceremony concluded with remarks from the class president, **Col. Stephen Maranian**.

“Our class represents a tremendous breadth of experience and diversity,” said Maranian. “We hail from 68 nations. American students are active and reserve components, uniformed and civilian. We wear the uniforms of the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. We come from every corner of the world and bring with us nearly 10 thousand years of collective experience serving our fellow citizens.

“But we also have much to learn.”

“We will use this year to read, think, and pursue scholarly endeavors,” he continued. “We will learn to challenge assumptions and conventional wisdom, hone our ability to think critically – and we will graduate as competent advisors to the senior leaders of our services and nations.

“We are indeed fortunate for this opportunity to step away from the operational force for a year. Fortunate to trade our blackberries and staff meetings for kindles and seminars ... Fortunate to be fully integrated with the largest international officer population in the history of any senior service college and, for the first time, integrated with the U.S. Army War College Fellows.

“We are fortunate to spend significant amounts of quality time with our loved ones, exercise some well-deserved balance, and focus on becoming better officers and leaders.”

“The decisions we take and advice we give in the years following graduation will have direct impact on the lives of our nations’ most precious resource, so study well,” said the class president to his peers. “I know that we, the students of the Class of 2013, are up to the challenge.”

Class of 2013 breakdown



The U.S. Army War College Class of 2013 consists of 386 students, which include 225 Army (includes Reserve and Guard); 32 Air Force (includes Reserve and Guard); 15 Navy (includes Reserve); 17 Marine Corps (includes Reserve); and one Coast Guard officer. U.S. military officers are board selected and typically have approximately 20 years of service, having reached the rank of lieutenant colonel or colonel.

Twenty-five civilians from the Defense Department, the Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of the Army, Department of State, the National Security Agency, and the Veterans' Administration are also in attendance.

Rounding out the class are 71 International Fellows, senior military officers from 67 different nations representing Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Austria, Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Zambia.

New this year are officers from Benin, Armenia, Vietnam and Kyrgyzstan.