

# Students recognized by Army leadership for suicide research project

*By Dr. Thomas Williams*

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*Dr. Thomas Williams joins with USAWC students Army Lt. Col. Robert Walter, Army Lt. Col. Timothy Holman, Army Col. Keith Lostroh, Veterans Affairs Civilian Jennifer Jessup, DoD Civilian Gloria Duck to receive congratulations from Commandant Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo. Williams is director of the Senior Leader Development and Resiliency Program of The War College, and*

*mentor of the students' research and analysis into preventing suicide.*

During the Army-wide Suicide Stand-Down Day this past September, the 2013 class of U.S. Army War College students were asked to leverage their strategic thinking skills from their very first course work and take a comprehensive look at policy, process, and practices related to the record suicides within the military.

The varied experiences, perspectives, and personal experiences served as the catalyst for collective wisdom of 385 Army War College students in 24 different seminars to then bring forth and brief then Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Lloyd Austin.

Austin expressed great appreciation for Army War College students' and their insights and encouraged students to carry-on by exploring suicide within military as their Strategic Research Project. Five students came forward to answer the call, representing the USAR, National Guard, Active Duty, Veterans Administration, and Department of the Army civilians.

Their SRP entitled, "Preventing Suicide: A Mission Too Big to Fail" was recently briefed to Army's

Suicide Senior Review Group, chaired by VCSA General John Campbell. Each of the students were selected because of their background and interest, as well as their demonstrated abilities. These five students helped address a serious societal military issue by completing this very demanding and time-sensitive study. With the support and encouragement of the other three, two of the five then were selected to represent the USAWC in presenting the study results and recommendations to the senior Army leadership during the VCSA chaired March 2013 Suicide Senior Review Group at the Pentagon.

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