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Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, Army War College Commandant, speaks to the Class of 2014 during the convocation ceremony Aug. 9 in Bliss Hall as the faculty look on.

The 385-member resident class, 90 USAWC Fellows, and 9 CSA Army

Senior Fellows were formally introduced to the Army War College faculty and key staff members in a formal ceremony to mark the new academic year. This is one of the largest classes in history, and includes the largest body of 77 International Fellows.

The Army War College Class of 2014 officially started their 10-month academic course with a convocation ceremony held in Bliss Hall, Aug. 9. **Provost Dr. Lance Betros** introduced the War College faculty – a mix of academic professionals and uniformed practitioners of the art of war and the application of strategy.

“This year you will focus your intellectual energies on the issues associated with the global application of Landpower at the strategic level,” said Betros. “To assist you in your studies is a superb faculty of dedicated teachers, scholars and professional in a variety of disciplines. They are the very finest our Army, the sister services, federal agencies and academia have to offer.

“They will guide you, lead you and mentor you. They are your partners for the next year and, we hope, long into the future,” he said.

Betros urged the students to take advantage of the opportunities of this year.

“Your experience at Carlisle Barracks, and other institutions for the Fellows, will likely be the last time in your professional careers for prolonged study and reflection. You have ten precious months – make the most of them.”

Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, War College Commandant, challenged the class to influence history this academic year.

“Here you sit, Class of ’14, at a true strategic inflection point in the United States,” he said. “It is real. You could not be in a better place to have meaningful impact on the dialogue and play a role in our nation’s future.

“Ladies and gentlemen, faculty and students, we have a chance this year greater than any in the last decade to influence national outcomes with our academic output, our writing, research and discourse. There is no question in my mind that this group of 500 dedicated professional sitting here in Bliss Hall, actually this entire War College, is more than ever relevant to our nation’s needs.”

A new chapter in USAWC history was reflected when Cucolo introduced students, faculty and staff to the first command sergeant major for the Army War College. The significance of Cmd. Sgt. Major Malcolm Parrish at this time in the College was reflected in a formal Assumption of Responsibility ceremony, and in Betros’ comments about his role.



During the convocation ceremony, Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm Parrish assumed responsibility as the first Army War College Command Sergeant Major. Here he accepts responsibility from Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, War College Commandant.

“Starting this year we will widen our focus to include preparing the most senior non-commissioned officers for service at the strategic level,” said Betros. “The arrival of **Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm Parrish**, the very first command sergeant major of the U.S. Army War College, represents the start of this initiative. He will advise the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Sergeant Major of the Army on how best to deliver strategic education to the non-commissioned officer corps.”

Student Class President Col. Ken Kamper introduced a note of levity as he characterized, for the student body, the diversity of experiences among them.

“Our class represents a tremendous breath of experience and diversity,” he said. “Our 77 international classmates hail from 66 countries. American students represent not only all the services, including both active and reserve components, but civilians as well from across a wide variety of intergovernmental and interagency positions.

“We bring with us nearly 10,000 years of leadership and service to our fellow citizens. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience in our class,” he said.

The vast array of experience across the class suggests why the year will be beneficial to each student, he said.

“By and large most of our leadership experience has been at the tactical and operational level,” he said. “Those -- some in our class as well -- with experience at the strategic level know strategy and policy at the strategic level is a constantly evolving art, and there is always much to be learned.”

He echoed the provost’s message to design wisely their personal version of the Carlisle Experience.

“In this complex world the Carlisle Experience is an amazing opportunity which has been granted to each of us,” he said. “It is an opportunity to gain perspective and balance, to learn, to read and write, to contemplate and reflect, to participate in dialog and discussion, to learn to question and explore all assumptions—all of this will help each of us grow and develop the skills, attributes and competencies of senior national security leaders. We are called, we will be called upon, as we graduate, to exercise strategic leadership in a variety of roles—may our leadership be guided by the light of learning and reason.”

Following convocation, a coffee social with students, spouses, faculty and staff served as opportunity to find old friends from earlier assignments and start new relationships.



The students applaud as Class President Col. Ken Kamper speaks about the operational and tactical experience of the class.



Spouses included in welcome activities

Student spouses met separately with the commandant who welcomed them and shared his vision for the students' year to develop the professional identity and skills of a strategic leader.

We built this program for overarching outcomes, Cucolo said to the spouses. Students are expected to embrace a new identity as senior national security leader at the strategic level, which entails mastery of peer leadership, reflecting thinking and visioning, courageous communications, leading and stewarding the Profession of Arms and serving as its exemplar, and self-actualizing. Families have a role in helping students rethink their professional identity, he said.

Cucolo recognized the experience and leadership that is resident among the student spouses.

“We know how to take care of ourselves, and are committed to look out for others,” he said about joining a unique military community in an outpost of pride and military tradition. Student spouses can select from a range of opportunities as rich as the students – and often overlapping. For example, personal development opportunities include Military Family Program, FLAGS, elective auditing, programs at the Army Heritage and Education Center, and NoonTime Lectures, among others.