

France honors former commandant Huntoon

Former commandant Huntoon honored by France



June 18, 2014 -- The Embassy of France in the United States hosted a commemorative ceremony that honored a former commandant of the Army War College as part of the anniversary celebration of the June 18th Appeal, a famous speech delivered by General Charles de Gaulle in 1940.

Retired Lt. Gen. David Huntoon, a former Army War College Commandant, was awarded the medal of the National Order of Merit in the, awarded for U.S. citizens who have rendered exceptional services to France in recent years.

Col. Laura Varhola, retired Lt. Gen David Huntoon and retired Maj. Gen. Christopher Leins pause at the French Embassy after receiving French honors.

While serving with the 18th U.S. Airborne Corps, Huntoon was deployed as a senior war plans officer in Operations DESERT

SHIELD/DESERT STORM. In that capacity he worked closely with French Armed Forces, coordinating and planning with the 6th Light Armored Division of the French Army, in what was then the first collaboration of US-French Forces at that level since World War II.

As an exemplary and charismatic general officer, he has always been very attentive to the quality of the French-American relationship and never failed to give special consideration to France and its military leaders, said Ambassador to the United States Francois Delattre. For these reasons, the President of the French Republic awarded Huntoon the medal of the National Order of Merit in the rank of Knight.

Retired Maj. Gen. Christopher Leins, an Army War College graduate, was also honored for his work with the French Armed Forces while assigned as Deputy Commander of the Combined Joint Task Force in Djibouti, and also as Director of Political Military African Affairs in the Strategic Plans and Policy Division at the U.S. Joint Staff. In recognition of his support to France's mission in Mali, the President of the Republic awarded Leins the medal of the National Order of Merit with the rank of Officer.



Col. Laura Varhola was also awarded the medal of the National Order of Merit with the Rank of Knight in a ceremony.

The French Embassy brings honor to the de Gaulle address by awarding medals to U.S. citizens who have rendered exceptional services to France.

Huntoon served as the US Army War College commandant until 2008 when he became Director of the Army Staff.