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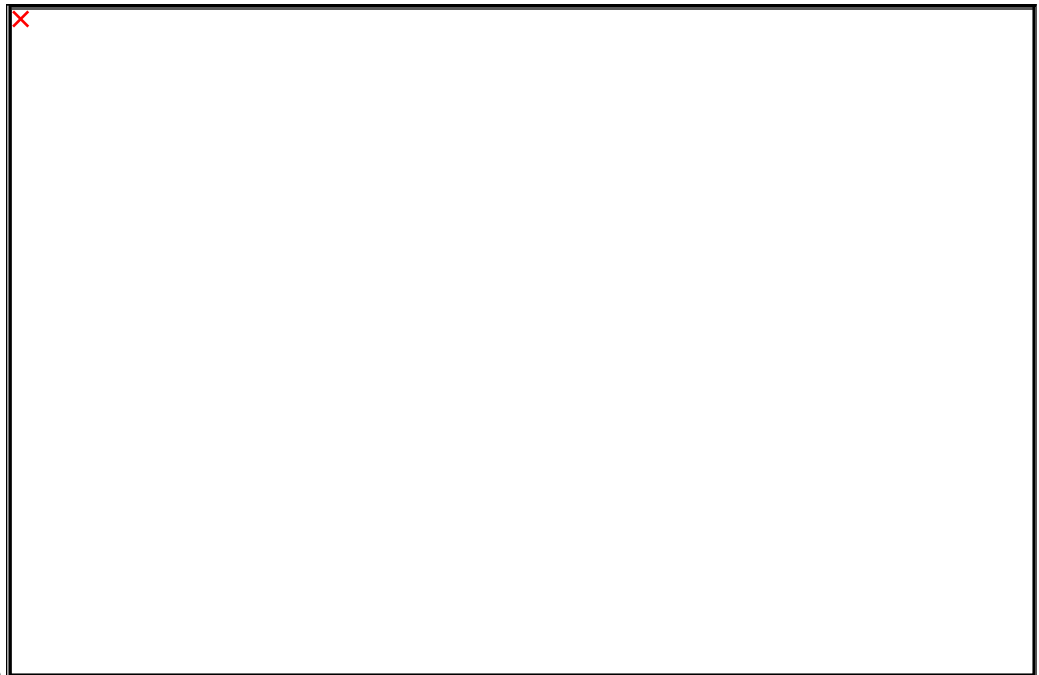
15 participants in inaugural five-week course

The first Strategic Broadening Program introduced strategic-level Army War College education to 15 mid-grade officers, NCOs, and Army civilians at the Center for Strategic Leader Development, July 28 to Aug. 29.

“Having this seminar at the United States Army War College is especially important, allowing us to take advantage of all the opportunities that are in close proximity to Carlisle,” said Lt. Col. Mike Shekleton, who directs the five-week SBP seminar here, incorporating instruction on the fundamentals of strategy; policy and grand strategy; institutional and theater strategy; and applied case studies – with guest speakers, a capstone project, and strategic staff rides. “The Antietam and Gettysburg battlefields, our nation's capital Washington D.C., and our nation's financial capital New York City provided

tangible experiences to illustrate the ideas discussed in the classroom.”

“The intent of the program is to broaden the students so that when they return to the force, they will have sharpened their critical thinking skills and developed new perspectives for looking at and solving problems our Army and nation faces,” said Shekleton.



SBP participants met with retired Gen. David Petraeus for a Q&A session in New York City.

Engagements with Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Ray Odierno, retired Gen. David Petraeus, retired Marine Gen. James Cartwright, among others, allowed the students to see the world through the eyes of strategic leaders.

“The course curriculum provided an understanding of the development and impact of strategy and policy and the many

entities involved in the process,” said Maj. Deborah Engerran, Psy.D., the Army Psychology National Training Coordinator, stationed at the Army Medical Department and School, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. “I applied for the program because of my interest in learning more about global issues and the impact on U.S. policy,” she said, adding that it proved an opportunity to step outside of her comfort zone.

“In the Army, our professional military education is often stove-piped in that we train within our corps or specialties,” said Engerran. “SBP provided the opportunity to interact with a diverse group of Army professionals with different experiences and perspectives,” said Engerran. “I think this adds to the discussion and learning in a way that is less likely to happen within the traditional PME.

Different experiences and perspectives in the class itself complemented the program intent: to broaden students’ exposure, sharpen their critical thinking skills, and develop new perspectives for looking at and solving problems our Army and nation faces, said Shekleton.

“The lessons I learned here will be carried with me for the rest of my career,” said Capt. Keith Twichell, S4, 3rd Battalion, 382nd Regiment Logistics Support Battalion at Fort Riley, Kan. “I learned more about our place as military officers with respect to our political leadership and policy creation from the Washington, D.C. staff ride.”

Chief Warrant Officer James Arnold, a personnel officer at 1st Corps at Fort Lewis, said he appreciated the ability to take a step back and see the bigger picture. “Being able to see the big picture will help as we regionally align to understand what my organization has been tasked to do in the Pacific,” he said about the Rebalance to Asia-Pacific strategy.

“The program has given me an incredible context in which to understand the current direction of our Army and the ability to communicate it effectively to my Soldiers,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Vern Daley, CSM of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team with the 25th Infantry Division, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

Regarding the Antietam Strategic Staff Ride, Daley said, “Walking and talking through the application of strategy in history and evaluating its results gave me a visceral and real understanding of strategy and its application.” Sgt. Maj. Mildred Lonergan, G1 Sergeant Major of the USANATO Brigade in Sembach, Germany noted the power of linking the terrain walk of the Antietam staff ride with the classroom discussions on strategy.

For many of the participants, this was their first exposure in their career to critical thinking and national strategy and policy making.

“As senior NCOs we have to make ourselves relevant and be able to discuss a multitude of topics with our officer counterparts,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Darren Oliphant, CSM of the 3rd Engineer Battalion at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. CSMs and SGMs do not have a lot of opportunity for continuing education after the Sergeants Major Academy, he said.

The Army War College is one of several educational institutions that offer the Strategic Broadening Seminars Program. The

Chief of Staff of the Army-approved broadening opportunity is for majors, captains, mid-grade warrant officers, senior NCOs, and those Army Civilians in the Strategist career program.

The program is part of the 2013 Army Leader Development Strategy, a means to broaden perspectives of future senior Army leaders. The program has been designed to enhance understanding of the development and impact of national security policy and strategy. Participants will develop skills in critical and creative thinking while building professional relationships, developing a strategic perspective, understanding the Army and Joint Force's role in national security, and understanding the application of all elements of national power in securing national interests.

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