

Students ‘tackle’ missile defense issues

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Riki Ellison, chairman and founder of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance and former NFL linebacker, spoke with Army War College students a

missile defense issues Sept. 22 in Bliss Hall. Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.

Sept. 22, 2009 - Army War College students were able to talk with a person who became an “agile leader” in a much different profession Sept. 22 when Riki Ellison, chairman and founder of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance and former NFL linebacker and three-time Super Bowl champion, spoke to them about current trends in the country’s missile defense program.

Lt. Col. Virvitine Sharpe said she was eager to what see Ellison had to say.

“This morning I had Theory of War and Strategy class and have been learning from my peers, which is a different approach that I love,” she said. “I am looking forward to what he has to say about missile defense.”

The day started off with a discussion in Seminar 11, where the students and their guest talked about issues facing missile defense and whether or not space was going to be the next global battleground. The group then moved to Bliss Hall for a discussion with three other seminars. The issue has taken on prominence lately, especially after President Barack Obama decided to discontinue the development of a European missile defense system.

Ellison spoke about what missile defense means for the country today.

"I am talking about what the country has in place now and the President's decision last Thursday and the relevance of that decision," Ellison said. "I am also going to probe the class on the future of missile defense."

Lt. Col. Tony Teolis said he found the presentation very relevant.

"I found it very relevant to today's political environment and how the new administration makes our policy in conjunction with US and Europe defense and strategy," Teolis said after the presentation.

For Ellison, the lecture proved to be a welcome challenge.

"This was a little challenging since this clientele is very well-informed and very well-educated on the topic," he said. "But I think it went well."

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