

An opportunity to educate others elsewhere

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(November 9, 2009)--U.S. Army War College professor Charles Allen participated in a series of panel discussions at Boston College moderated by media representatives like MSNBC's Rachel Maddow and *Vanity Fair* editor Cullen Murphy.

The Nov. 7 session, "Soldiers and Citizens: Military and Civic Culture in America" was held as Boston College's sixth annual Mass Humanities fall symposium and featured topics such as diversity in the armed forces, conscription versus a volunteer force, and the divide between military and civilian cultures.

"Overall, people were really curious and there was a great turnout," Allen said. "The audience was engaged and it was a great opportunity for [panelists] to help inform people about these important topics that face our nation."

Allen was one of the panelists on the symposium who weighed in on diversity in the armed forces and the relationship between military culture and civil society in the United States, sharing experiences from his point of view and 30-year career in the United States Army.

"I had plenty to add to the diversity panel having served as an African American in the Army and growing up in Cleveland, Ohio," Allen said. "It was also interesting to hear what my fellow panelists had to say and to provide my perspective on the progress and challenges within the military."

Allen was accompanied by other panelists such as Michael L. Weinstein, founder and president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, on "Diversity in Uniform: Race, gender, class, sexuality and religion in the armed forces" and Paul Rieckhoff, founder and executive director of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America on the panel for "United We Serve: The all-volunteer force, national service, and democracy."