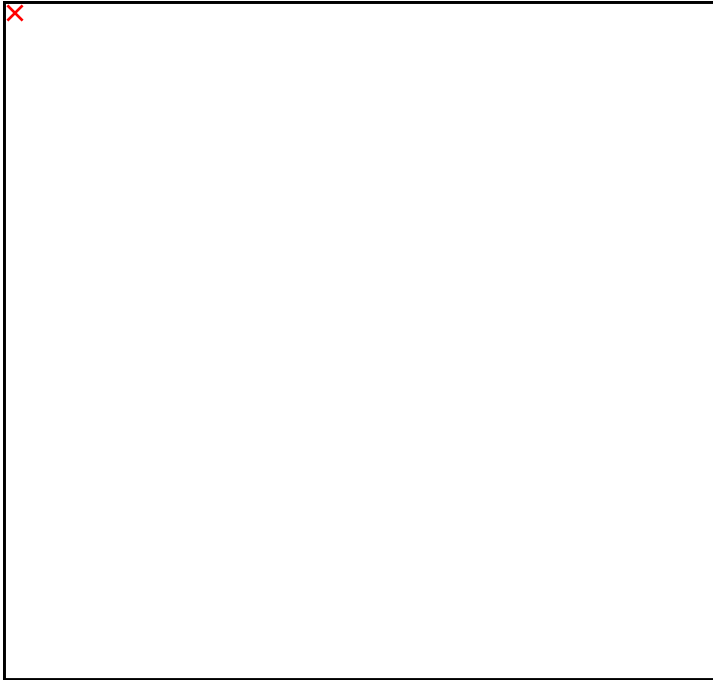


Alumni honored during 108th USAWC birthday

Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office

Alumni honored during 108th USAWC birthday celebration



Maj. Gen. Robert Williams, USAWC Commandant, presents retired Brig. Gen. Jerry Neff with his Outstanding Alumni Award Dec. 7 in Bliss Hall as part of the Army War College 108th birthday celebration. Photo by Megan Clugh.

see [the video](#)

Dec. 7, 2009 -- The Army War College celebrated its 108th birthday today by honoring three outstanding alumni during a ceremony in

Bliss Hall.

Alumni - retired Gen. Frederick Kroesen, retired Brig. Gen. Jerry Neff and retired Col. Buddy Beck - all received their awards from Maj. Gen. Robert Williams, USAWC commandant, after being nominated by their fellow USAWC Foundation members.

"This program is designed to provide a prestigious and visible means of honoring U.S. Army War College graduates who distinguished themselves through outstanding achievement to their community or country," said retired Col. Ruth Collins, CEO, Army War College Foundation, Inc. The program begun in 1996 and are sponsored by the Army War College Foundation, Inc.

The awardees said they were honored by the award and appreciated being back at the Army War College.

"I am so honored," said Neff. "I will remember this day for the rest of my life."

"I sat in those same seats 48 years ago," said Kroesen. "In your next 15-20 years you will use this education to lead our nation. We will have a crisis during this time and we will need your leadership."

Williams told the students that the awardees serve as a reminder of the quality of USAWC graduates.

"They did not serve for money, recognition or glory, they served their nation," he said. "Without a doubt we expect a lot of our graduates. There are no limits to what your education will allow you to do."

Awardees' profiles

- Retired Gen. Frederick Kroesen
 - 1962 USAWC grad
 - Published "Seventy-Five Years with the Army," and numerous scholarly "Thoughts" on strategic issues
 - Senior Fellow of the Institute on Land Warfare, member of the Army Historical Foundation and American Security Council Foundation Boards
- Retired Brig. Gen. Jerry Neff
 - 1995 USAWC DEP grad, retired from the Florida National Guard in 1999
 - Florida Ambassador to U.S. Freedom Team Salute Program, and Florida Employers Support of the Guard and Reserve
- Retired Col. Buddy Beck
 - 1976 USAWC grad.
 - Established Beck PRIDE Center for Wounded Veterans at Arkansas State University
 - This center provides personal rehabilitation, individual development and education, including counseling and testing and family member care. The program started in Oct. 07 with eight wounded warriors and has 52 this year

After the awards, students were shown a video highlighting the 108 years of the Army War College.

Army War College history

Established from the principles learned in the Spanish-American War, the college was founded by Secretary of War Elihu Root, and formally established by General Order 155 on November 27, 1901. Washington Barracks — now called Fort McNair — in Washington, D.C. was chosen as the site.

The first president of the Army War College was Gen. Tasker H. Bliss and the first students attended the College in 1904. The College remained at Washington Barracks until 1940, when it was closed due to World War II. It reopened in 1950 at Fort Leavenworth, and moved one year later to its present location at Carlisle Barracks.

At Carlisle, the Army War College grew steadily as it performed its mission of preparing officers for leadership at the highest levels. The college soon outgrew its main academic building (the current Upton Hall) and transferred to the newly constructed Root Hall in 1967. Two specialized agencies evolved into integral parts of the Army War College: the Strategic Studies Institute, first formed in 1954, and the Military History Institute, established in 1967.

The Center for Strategic Leadership, a state-of-the-art war gaming complex that opened in 1994, contributed another unique dimension to the college and to Carlisle Barracks' history as a distinctive U.S. Army campus. Other organizations like the Army Physical Fitness Research Institute and the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute also contribute greatly to the students' experience.