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*Robert Martin, Public Affairs Office*

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Carlisle Barracks and the local community said goodbye for the last time to the 50th Commandant of the U.S. Army War College today at the formal retirement ceremony for Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp July 28.

U.S. Army general officers, 70 classmates from the United States Military Academy, family, colleagues, and government representatives attended the ceremony honoring his more than three decades of service to the United States Army. Rapp had received many honors and medals for his leadership and service, including: Three Distinguished Service Medals, two Legions of Merit and two Bronze Star Medals. At the ceremony, he was presented with the Secretary of the Army's Public Service Award and the Distinguished Service Medal, which characterized him as "the epitome of the professional officer, a warrior-scholar who genuinely understands the importance of mission accomplishment while caring for Soldiers and Families ... demonstrating by personal example the importance of life-long learning to the profession of arms."



Presiding over Rapp's retirement was Gen. David Perkins, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

**Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp stands with his daughter 2nd Lt. Anna, his wife Debbie and son David after his retirement ceremony in Bliss Hall, July 28.**

Perkins spoke of Gen. Rapp's selfless style, contributions to the Army, and daily role-modeling of what right looks like. He noted the decades of Rapp family service to Army and country, continuing with the next generation of three children who have chosen to serve as Army Soldiers: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Anna Rapp and two sons David and Robby, both cadets at the United States

Military Academy.

Rapp did not speak of his accomplishments during his tenure at the Army War College. Instead, he focused on his family and the friendships that had a deep impact and contributed to his ability to live a life of service. He called out his friends present at his wedding 28 years ago, former bosses, roommates and classmates at West Point, and noncommissioned officers who had positively shaped his career.

“Debbie and I have been absolutely blessed and honored beyond words to finish our Army journey here at Carlisle Barracks,” said Rapp. “We did not get here on our own -- not even close -- so let me start with family because frankly that’s where it all starts.

“If I can see any further today that is because I am standing on the shoulders of giants,” he said about his mother and father, his four sisters, and Debbie’s family.

“I need to thank Debbie, my soul mate. Marrying her was the best decision I have ever made,” said Rapp. “She has always led by example wherever we have been. Every place we have gone she has rolled up her sleeves and done more than her share of the tasks. Ours has been a partnership, and any success attributed to me is rightfully directed to her as well.”



**Debbie Rapp's father retired USAF navigator Col. Tony Biggi gives Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp his final salute during Rapp's retirement ceremony, Bliss Hall, July 28**

In closing, Rapp quoted Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman: “It’s enough that the world knows that I am a Soldier.’ I would add that is enough for the world to know that I am in the company of Soldiers,” Rapp said. “The Army and what has made it so special are the people and the public trust that we enjoy and work hard for every day.

“Over this long journey, I have learned much from so many. I have learned empathy and humility, the need for lifelong learning, the value of effort and persistence, the foundational needs for value and vision, the imperative of taking the harder right over the easier wrong, the need for creativity, and the beauty and sensibility of love,” he said.

*Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Bill Rapp will be moving to the Boston area after departing Carlisle Barracks as he starts his next chapter as a professor at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government .*

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 02 August 2017