

# War College-wide attention focuses on Prevention, Response to Sexual Assault, Harrassment

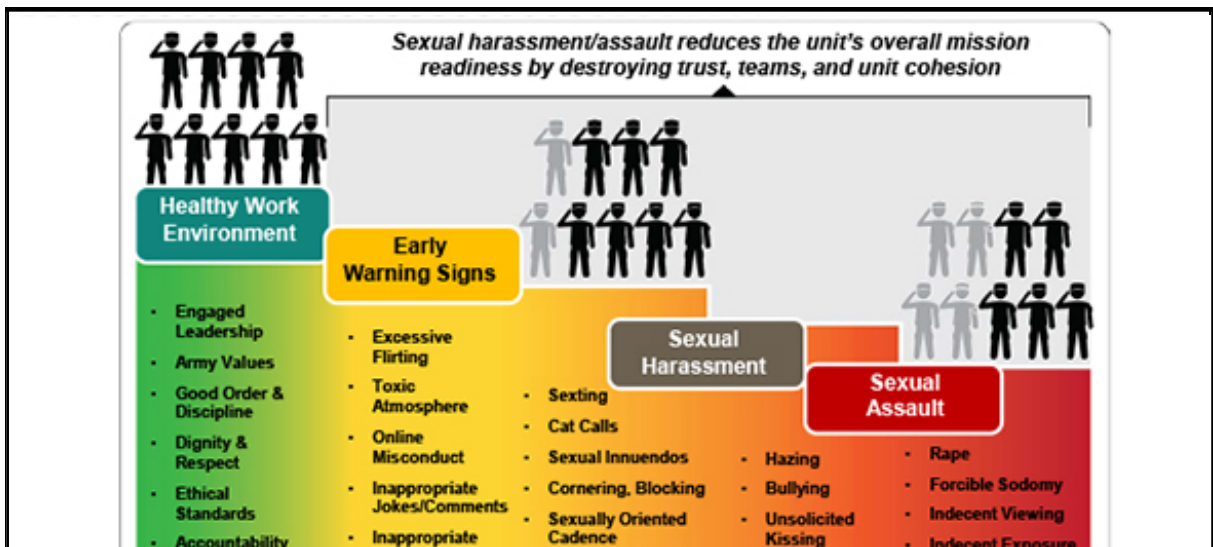
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Aug. 21, 2017 -- When the Commandant convenes a SHARP Summit at the Army War College, the intent is to raise college-wide awareness and commitment to policies and responsibilities to enforce processes, hold accountable those who would harass or assault, and support victims.

For the leader-students in the audience, the summit was far more than a conversation about policy. Commandant Maj. Gen. John Kem charged the speakers to put the focus on best practices for leaders. He charged the student body and faculty to continue to discuss the challenge, in seminar, and recognize how they as senior leaders can sway, or direct, their units' understanding and commitment.

"Think about your role in the culture and climate," said Kem. "As much as we've improved in the last five or six years, it's about ... maintaining the momentum. The question is, how low can we drive it?" he said about the possibility of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

"It's all of us who have to make it happen," he said. You have the power and





responsibility to create a unit climate where your peers will see your actions and your subordinates will see your commitment, said former CID special agent Russell Strand, who addressed the audience along with Pamela Jacobs, advocate attorney, and Monique Ferrell, director of the U.S. Army SHARP Program Office. In addition to a panel of speakers who talked through a what-if scenario, the speakers surrounded the issue of sexual crime from multiple perspectives: victim support, law enforcement investigation, legal policies, commanders' roles, and the fundamental theme of command climate.

***Monique Ferrell brought attention to the continuum of leader engagement needed to not only response to sexual assault and harassment but to create unit-wide commitment to prevention (above)***

"You will have the visibility of people in your formations and the responsibility for readiness," said Ferrell. "Brigade commanders and equivalents are recognized as the echelon of leaders who are resourced with medical and legal professionals, and the congressionally-mandated full-time SARCs and victim advocates that are assigned to organizations," she said, referring to Sexual Assault Response Coordinators.

As the summit came to a close, Command Sgt. Major Christopher Martinez reminded leaders of the enduring effort ahead.

"This is a war of exhaustion where each one of our generations has to have the will to be able to stand up for what is right every single day, hooking and jabbing and continuing to fight sexual harassment and sexual assault inside of our units," said Martinez. "We're always going to have new people rotating into our Army ... new to the Army values. It's going to be a long fight.

"It's going to come down to our will to overcome this and treat everyone with dignity and respect," he said.