

## CG, Army Futures Command -- Modernization must be constant

By Robert Martin, Public Affairs Office 27 January 2021



*General John Murray, Commanding General, Army Futures Command, spoke to the USAWC student body, Feb. 26.*

General John Murray, Commanding General of Army Futures Command, spoke to the USAWC student body, Feb. 26. Murray discussed Army priorities, but it was clear that people are his number one priority. Nothing

will be accomplished without them, he said. He addressed the importance of continually modernizing our force and competing and winning on future battlefields.

"Modernization can't be episodic; it's got to be constant," said Murray. "You have to think about modernizing constantly from now and forever."

"This is about the future. This is not about me or the people of my generation, and in many cases, to be honest with you and I was in your seat not that far removed, many of you won't see most of this. It's about the generations of soldiers yet to come. It's the young officer that are joining the Army, that's what motivates me."

"The future of our army is our ability to compete and win on future battlefields," said Murray

"Gen Murray's comments about Army modernization being "consistent and not episodic" and the Army having a "revolutionary and not evolutionary approach" was itself revolutionary," said Col. Shari Bennett, class president. "The military is a traditional organization that takes a long time to change."

"AFC is breaking down traditional Army bureaucracies to change how we will approach the complexities we are sure to encounter in the next war. It's a huge undertaking that is critical for us to remain the most advanced and capable military in the world. I'm excited about the possibilities that innovation and technology concepts will bring to our force," she said.

Murray also emphasized future structure decisions in the modernization enterprise. He has responsibility for forced designs of force development -- what structure and types of organizations we will need to fight.

"Gen. Murray's overview of Futures Command provided a helpful framework and background for our Defense Management course," said Col. Toby Curto.

"Persistent, not episodic ... a revolution not just evolution ... and a campaign of learning to drive modernization -- three ideas that he emphasized to highlight the focus of modernization efforts."

"Finally, it was encouraging to hear that despite the complex and uncertain future environment, the Army particularly, and the DoD more generally, are moving in the right direction to assess, prepare for, and counter future threats," Curto said.

As for the future of the battlefield, Gen. Murray expressed the importance of AI and machine learning to help future leaders make sense of all the data they will receive on ground troops.

"Future ground combat will occur at speeds that stress human decision making," said Col. Douglas Winton, chair of the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations. "For the Army to be successful against peer adversaries, Futures Command is developing concepts and capabilities to incorporate artificial intelligence and machine learning into its command-and-control systems to enable the integration of capabilities from all Services and employed from all domains to support the actions on the ground."

"This integration will cause the Army to reconsider its career fields and talent management procedures to better account for data managers and data scientists," said Winton.

U.S. Army Fellows in a wide array of Universities throughout the U.S. Think Tanks, Government agencies, and industry were also able to tie into today's presentation.

"Gen. Murray gave us a good insight into how the Army is grappling with modernization as the world has shifted into a different technological phase," said Col. Robert Wisham, U.S. Army Fellow at the University of Texas - Austin. "Replacing systems such as the Bradley, M4 carbine, or the UH-60 with just incrementally more capable hardware isn't enough."

"The effort of the CFTs has certainly pushed the ball forward at an accelerated rate on the material side. However, I think if AFC leverages new capabilities such as the Army Applications Lab and the Army Software Factory, they could shift the paradigm of the end-user-focused capabilities getting into the hands of operational units much faster than we ever have."

"Many units are standing up their innovation cells and attacking problems locally or within their commands. XVIII ABN Corps with Project Ridgeway, the Pacific Northwest Tech Bridge at JBLM, 1st CAV, and particularly some SOCOM elements have been organizing at the grassroots level and having real success. I think that might be one of the big near-term opportunities that AFC could capitalize on shortly," said Wisham.