

## Norwegian Special Forces Commander becomes 70th member of USAWC International Fellows Hall of Fame

By Robert Martin USAWC PAO 18 December 2019



The Commandant of the Army War College Maj. Gen. John Kem along with Norwegian Maj. Gen. Torgeir Gråtrud raise the curtain to reveal his induction into the International Fellows Hall of Fame during his ceremony in Bliss Hall, Dec. 17.



Maj. Gen. Torgeir Gråtrud from Norway stands with his wife Hanne (left) and his seminar mate from the class of 09' Ms. Cherie Smith after the induction ceremony in Wil Waschoe Auditorium, Dec. 17.



Norwegian Maj. Gen. Torgeir Gråtrud Walks down the hall of flags after his induction ceremony into the International Fellows Hall of Fame with Prof. Dr. Larry Goodson and USAWC student Col. Marc Van Ockenburg of the Netherlands.

“Was the year I spent here vital to me? The answer is a clear yes,” according to Norway’s Maj. Gen. Torgeir Gråtrud, speaking to the students and faculty of the USAWC Class of 2020.

The Army War College gathered to honor Maj. Gen. Gråtrud as a most distinguished member of the Class of 2009. The commander of Norway’s Special Forces since September 2017, he is the 70th USAWC graduate to receive the International honor.

“The network of relationships that I have established with my U.S. and international fellows has proven to be one of the most important aspects of my Carlisle experience,” said Gråtrud. “Wherever I travel in the world, I can always pick up a phone and call a friend to discuss a complicated issue or

### RELATED LINKS

[International Fellows Hall of Fame induction ceremony](#)

just to get access. That is important," he said.

"The critical thinking course was essential because it's need as soon as you hit the floor at your next job," he said. The techniques of critical thinking have proven a good platform for decision-making when dealing with wicked problems, he added

"The negotiation activities and exercises we had [at Carlisle] are day-to-day necessities that make you successful. I have used this and other techniques dealing with national partners and in operational environments.

"International Fellows bring in a different and unknown perspective to the great discussion you are having in your seminars.

"I visited a seminar today, and we were discussing Syria, Kurdistan, Iraq, and Jordan," said Gråtrud. "It's great to bring in new perspectives based on cultural backgrounds, traditions, and history."

Gråtrud is the first recipient since World War II of the St. Olav Medal with Oak Branch, awarded for outstanding personal bravery and leadership during combat operations in Afghanistan in 2005-07.

A native of Lørenskog Norway, Gråtrud enlisted in the Norwegian Infantry in 1981 and earned his commission in 1986, graduating from the Norwegian Army Military Academy. He joined the Norwegian Special Forces in 1990, and has served in a variety of command and staff positions in the Norwegian Defense Forces, NATO and coalition operations.

The U.S. Army War College International Fellows Hall of Fame was established to provide a prestigious and visible means of honoring USAWC International graduates who have attained, through military merit, the highest positions in their nation's armed forces, or who have held an equivalent position by rank or responsibility in a multinational organization.