

Bryan Kirk wins USAWC Public Speaking Competition

By Curt Keester 22 May 2018



Army Lt. Col. Bryan Kirk accepts the first place trophy for the annual USAWC Public Speaking Competition from David Bennett, master of ceremonies, May 16. The topic of Kirk's winning presentation was, 'Winning When the Character of War is Changing.'



This year's competitors are (from left to right) DOD Civilian Mr. Danny Barron, Army Lt. Col. Timothy Brower, Army Col. William Ashmore, Army Lt. Col. Bryan Kirk, Marine Lt. Col John Colombero, and Army Col. Eric Lopez.

CARLISLE, Pa. (May 16, 2018) – After a spirited competition, Army Lt. Col. Bryan Kirk walked away with the title of top Army War College public speaker for his presentation entitled, “Winning When the Character of War is Changing.”

Six War College students with a gift for communication competed in the annual USAWC Public Speaking Competition in the Command Conference Room, May 16. The participating War College students, Army Col. William Ashmore, DOD Civilian Mr. Danny Barron, Army Lt. Col. Timothy Brower, Marine Lt. Col John Colombero, Army Lt. Col. Bryan Kirk and Army Col. Eric Lopez, all of whom spoke in front of an assembled crowd and judges.

“I thought it was a great opportunity,” said Kirk. “It’s interesting to think about public speaking. When I got here I joined the Eisenhower Program,

which is probably going to end up being one of the best experiences I had here.

“When they asked why I joined I said, ‘I enjoy speaking publicly, and I like to think I’m good at it. But if I really stop and think about it, all of my audiences are in formation where they have to be there, so I’m not sure that’s a fair assessment.’ I felt the Eisenhower Program was a good opportunity to grow and learn and practice with challenging environments ... because of that I almost felt professionally I was obligated to participate in the speaking program, because of the investment that was made in me here.

“I talk to my kids a lot about always trying to challenge yourself -- you have to participate. And if my kids had this opportunity, I’d probably make them do it, so professionally and personally I thought, why would I not.” Kirk said he was surprised by his win, because there are many good, knowledgeable and prepared public speakers at the War College.

The speakers were invited to speak on any aspect or dimension of the theme and advocate for a course of action. The competition objective was to present a speech that is fundamentally persuasive in character, and 5-7 minutes in length.

Speakers and Topics:

- Army Col. William Ashmore, “The Time to Recognize Taiwan as a Sovereign State is Now!”
- Mr. Danny Barron, “The National Threat Posed by EMP – America’s Greatest Strategic Failure.”
- Army Lt. Col. Timothy Brower, “A Call to Character.”
- Marine Lt. Col John Colombero, “Creating Strategic Stakeholders.”
- Army Lt. Col. Bryan Kirk, “Winning When the Character of War is Changing.”
- Army Col. Eric Lopez, “A dangerous Divide: Closing the Civ Mil Gap in America.”

The master of ceremonies for the event was David Bennett, DCLM, and the judges were Amy Sprenkle, Chief of Judges, Col. Ken Adgie, Deputy Commandant, Prof. Chuck Allen, DCLM, Ruth Collins, CEO, Army War College Foundation, and Dr. Carol Kerr, Legislative Liaison/Public Affairs Officer. Kelly Cobb was the timekeeper.

Kirk will be recognized at graduation, June 8, with a certificate and cash award, and his name will be added to the list of names on the USAWC Speaking Competition Trophy displayed in the Root Hall Library.

