

Army War College celebrates Pride Month Observance with dynamic speaker

By Alex Pinnell, Public Affairs Office 20 June 2018



Shaashawn Dial enters Wil Washcoe Auditorium, making contacts with shared backgrounds and interests as preface to her remarks about diversity, inclusion, and respect. Dial was featured speaker for the National Pride Month event for the leaders, staff

Shaashawn Dial spoke at the Army War College on June 18, 2018 about diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion for the Pride Month Observance.

Deputy Commandant Col. Ken Adgie introduced Dial with his perspective about the importance of diverse backgrounds and a climate of respect.

Dial wears many different hats. As an LGBT advocate, she is past president of the board of directors of the LGBT Center of Central PA. As a media personality, known as The Voice, she is a radio broadcaster and founder-owner of Voycetress Media, LLC. As a student, she is a Ph.D. candidate at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. And, in this military community, she noted As an Army ‘brat,’ she was adept in speaking to this military community about navigating LGBT terminology and identity in the

workplace respectfully and without exclusion.

This event honored the legacy of LGBT service members, civilian employees, and family members by acknowledging their sacrifices and achievements. It is scheduled, nationally, in remembrance of the June 1969 Stonewall Riots in Greenwich Village, New York City, often seen as the catalyst for the current LGBT rights movement in the United States.

True to her love of poetry, Dial began her remarks with a list poem about her personal experiences, and then discussed her recommendations, to “Eat, Embrace, Engage, and Enjoy.” Each action represents an important part of understanding diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion, she explained.

Topics included how to navigate implicit bias, equity vs. equality, cultural humility, and how to proactively engage with marginalized communities. Concerning leadership, Dial recommended encouraging diversity by asking tough questions about who is advantaged, represented, ignored, or tokenized in an organization. She also provided attendees with a document on recognizing micro-aggressions and the messages they send. Ultimately, she stated that this process is a “journey of joy,” and to enjoy the various points of view and productive discussions that take place when an organization values inclusion and diverse thoughts, backgrounds, and experiences.

The Pride Month Observance is just one part of the Army War College’s larger commitment to supporting a community of diversity and respect.