

Honoring CSM Martinez - a Soldier's CSM, he made Army War College all the better

By Carol Kerr 27 April 2018



New Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Hummel receives the ceremonial NCO sword from Commandant Maj. Gen. John Kem during the Change of Responsibility ceremony, April 27, at the US Army War College. Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Martinez is the outgoing CSM (on



US Army Garrison Command Sgt Major Jamie Lethiecq represents the Soldiers and NCOs of the Army War College and Carlisle Barracks with a token of appreciation for outgoing Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Martinez.



Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Hummel takes his place as USAWC Command Sergeant Major, sharing warmth and humor with his band of brother-family-friends from his hometown of Pittsburgh, as well as his new Army family. Hummel is the 3rd CSM for the U.S. Army W

Commandant Maj. Gen. John Kem welcomed staff, faculty and friends to the Change of Responsibility ceremony for the “world’s greatest war college” today in Bliss Hall, marking the transition from Command Sgt. Major Christopher M. Martinez to Command Sgt. Major Alan K. Hummel. The ceremonial sword was once owned by Secretary of War Elihu Root, who established the U.S. Army War College in 1901.

Root could not have anticipated the expansion of USAWC strategic education that put senior noncommissioned officer education at the forefront of the Army’s commitment to strategic leader development. As the second CSM of the war college, Martinez’s responsibilities include the Nominative Leader Course for the Army’s most senior NCOs.

“CSM Martinez took the role to new levels and became one of the lead



Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Martinez thanks the Army War College community at his Change of Responsibility ceremony, April 27 at Carlisle Barracks.



creators of the Nominative Leader Course which coincides with our approach to develop and train strategic leaders,” said Kem. “He truly has incorporated our vision of creating strategic leaders and cultivated one of the best learning programs for our nominative sergeants major.”

“CSM Martinez had the unique position of dealing with a bunch of unruly colonels,” said Kem, with a smile. “That is not for the faint of heart [yet] ... he has established his role as the pinnacle professional NCO for our organization.” In preparation for the ceremony, Kem said that he had “collected” impressions from across the college. “All of the remarks came back describing CSM Martinez as a leader of character. Someone you can rely on. Someone that you could trust, which is crucial for strategic leaders.

“Like only the best CSMs, CSM Martinez has the unique ability to sense out the pulse of the place. His easy-going demeanor and ability to build trust throughout this command has been pivotal to the USAWC success,” said Kem. “A true testament to his character – a character of humility and selfless service – is through the relationships he has crafted.”

“Like Gen. Omar Bradley was known as a Soldier’s General, CSM Martinez is and always has been a Soldier’s CSM and the Army War College is all the better as a result.”

CSM Martinez: Thank you to the community

Characteristically, Martinez dedicated his remarks to others – offering admiration and gratitude to a host of people on his 30-year journey from Infantry private through his War College years -- with only a single personal anecdote.

Martinez described the day when former Commandant Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp called to let him know he’d been selected for this nominative USAWC position. *Driving through New Mexico at the time, he pulled to the side of the road. As he heard Rapp describe the extensive scope of what lay ahead, he glanced up at the roadside billboard and wondered if it was a special ‘sign’ of things to come: ‘Welcome to Roswell’--with little aliens.* “Over the next few years I would learn so much, and the topic of strategic education would not be so alien to me anymore,” he said.” But it would become so rewarding ... because of the people I would meet.”

“A special thank you to all the Soldiers, NCOs, and Warrant Officers who work in the shadows of the eagles and the oak leaves,” he added. “You are what this Army’s all about, and I’m so proud of every single one of you.



Janet Martinez receives flowers on behalf of her husband, Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Martinez.

may all your wishes and dreams come true.

“This Army, this country wouldn’t be what it is today if it wasn’t for great Americans like you who volunteer to serve,” he said. “You are truly the backbone of the Army.”

“As we sit here on this gorgeous, sometimes rainy Spring afternoon at this historic post ... service members are standing watch around the world. Every Soldier's on their personal journey – their quest – to serve others and hopes to make the world a better place ... they go into harms’ way to protect us and our freedoms. They are the best and very brightest of America and the greatest of all honors that I have ever had, as many have in this room today, is the honor of being one of them.”

He ended his comments with his love for his wife, Janet, and joy and pride for his son David who journeyed with him throughout his commitment to Soldiering.