

USAWC interns receive expert guidance from Army War College researchers and faculty

By Robert Martin, USAWC PAO 06 July 2021



USAWC intern VMI Cadet Thomas Chelednik (right) runs with Army War College Commandant Maj. Gen. David Hill during morning PT at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, 23 June.

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Each year from May to August, the Army War College accepts internships from around the United States. The internship program enables students to acquire real-world experiences, expand communication skills, and experience government functions that enhance future employment opportunities while contributing to vital USAWC and Army projects.

“Interning at the Army War College has enabled me to make connections and learn from military leaders, professors, and other experts that otherwise, I would not have been able to meet,” said VMI Cadet Thomas Chelednik. “For example, conducting PT with the Commandant and his staff was an excellent experience. It allowed me to ask questions and gain insights from long-time Army leaders who I will likely have no chance to speak to in such an informal setting and manner when I commission as a 2nd Lieutenant,” he said after joining the commandant for a run at the Army

Heritage and Education Center, June 23.

Chelednik is one of 40 college students currently interning with the Army War College this year; each applied through a competitive process that considered their academic credentials, research interests, letters of recommendation, and a writing sample.

“This internship is as much about the work as it is developing relationships – relationships with fellow interns, project mentors, and other professionals you meet along the way. It is important to develop those relationships because ultimately those are the most valuable to you now and in the future,” said Chelednik.

Intern research topics were validated through a panel of representatives from across the war college to support USAWC research and wargaming interests, as well as Army and Joint Staff elements.

Madison Littlepage, a recent Dickinson College graduate, now enrolled at George Washington in Security Policy Studies, has been working with Dr. Tony Pfaff, research professor for the Military Profession and Ethics at the Strategic Studies Institute, on rethinking competition and game theory.

“This summer, I am researching Russian competition below the threshold of war to finalize Dr. Pfaff’s Russian case study. I hope to continue working on new and complex problems like the consequences of the militarization of space or Russian disinformation tactics.

“I have vastly improved in taking a large amount of information and distilling it into the important points. Now my analysis is clear and concise, which will be vital in my future career of analyzing the world’s security problems.

“I really enjoy that my work could aid servicemen and my country, but I also see the Civ-mil relationship gap first-hand,” said Littlepage.

Internships enable college and graduate students to acquire research skills, knowledge, and experience in government functions that enhance their academic portfolio. It’s a pathway for narrowing down their future opportunities while exploring government service opportunities and contributing to the Army War College mission, according to the USAWC Intern Program director Scott Braderman.

“By the end of my internship, I will have the opportunity to publish a 1,000-word brief on the inclusion of cyber power as a key metric in our burden-sharing dashboard,” said Chelsea Quilling pursuing her MA in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School at Tufts University.

“I am working with Dr. John Deni on a project that I am responsible for researching publicly available data sets and identifying the most important variables for understanding the true burden carried by each Ally in collective defense.

“I’ve come away with a big lesson that no perfect solution exists. To put it more succinctly, I’m learning that perfect is the enemy of good. As a non-expert, I feel encouraged that I am identifying some of the same patterns and roadblocks as scholars and practitioners that have been thinking deeply about these issues for decades. This has helped me explain the nuances of the gaps and imperfections in our innovative model,” said Quiling.

Student Interns were selected from U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Naval Academy, Penn State, Dickinson College, North Carolina State, George Washington University William & Mary, Fletcher, Carnegie Mellon, Boise State, PSU-Harrisburg, Virginia Military Institute, Humphreys University, Mercyhurst University and Korbel School of international studies.

The USAWC Office of Institutional Assessment manages the intern program. Learn about internships with the US Army War College at <https://cbks.carlisle.army.mil/sites/PVST/Document>