

## USAWC celebrates International Fellows family members, education, and partnerships at ESL graduation ceremony

By Elena Patton 20 December 2022



*Chris Hill, spouse of USAWC's Commandant Maj. Gen. David Hill, celebrates and congratulates USAWC International Fellows family members at their ESL graduation ceremony, Dec. 14, 2022.*

*Army War College International Fellows family members receive certificates at their ESL graduation ceremony, Dec. 14, 2022.*

Army War College International Fellows family members gathered to celebrate a milestone in their Carlisle experience. Forty-one students from 33 countries walked across the stage at the English as a Second Language Graduation Ceremony.

This is the fourth year the Army War College has partnered with HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College, to provide beginner, intermediate, and advanced ESL courses to the International Fellows family members. This ceremony is the culmination of 10 weeks of coursework and studying, Dec. 14, 2022.

"It is always a joy to get a chance to celebrate and encourage our spouses and their families . . . and this partnership with the HACC and the International Fellows Program is just one example of what makes the War College so great," said the keynote speaker Chris Hill, spouse of USAWC's

Commandant Maj. Gen. David Hill.

“It speaks to our mission of getting out into the community,” said Melinda Franker de Fonte, HACC’s Director of Corporate and Community Education and Training. “We love to be out in the community, partnering with the Army War College.”

The courses address grammar and writing but have a more conversational, interactive focus.

“For me, my English evolution from June to December has changed a lot,” said Adriana Suarez, an IF spouse from Colombia. “My confidence is elevated. I speak more to people since I am not scared to speak English in the moment.”

“I know it is not easy to learn English with all its rules and all its exceptions,” said Hill. “I stand before you only able to speak one language, but in awe of all of you who speak at least two and have the opportunities and bravery to come out and learn one more language or add to your proficiency in English.”

Students learned and improved their English, developed and strengthened friendships, and learned much more. “We did not just learn did not just learn words or grammar . . . we have discovered ourselves, learned about other cultures, understood different perspectives, learned different ways of thinking,” said Klara Kozar Rosulnik, an IF spouse from Slovenia.

HACC offers an opportunity for these students to continue their ESL studies, and many are taking advantage of it.