

Remember one thing today – Colonels play offense

By Robert Martin, USAWC PAO 10 June 2023



Gen. James Rainey the commanding General of the U.S. Army Futures Command congratulates Lt. Col. Batzaya Odsuren of Kazakhstan as he graduates from the U.S. War College, June 9, 2023

RELATED LINKS

[Class of 2023 graduation ceremony](#)

Carlisle, Pa. – On June 10, 2023, 371 military officers and leaders walked the historic parade field during their graduation ceremony at the Army War College. They are prepared to meet future and current challenges as they graduate by leading, advising, and planning into 2030 and beyond.

“Today, we celebrate not only your completion of an educational journey but the beginning of a new chapter in your careers as strategic thinkers, leaders, and doers,” said Maj. Gen. David Hill, the 53rd Commandant of the Army War College, at a ceremony at Carlisle Barracks, June 9. He opened the ceremony by acknowledging the unique experience of being a student at AWC.

“You all worked relentlessly and diligently to navigate the riggor of our academic program; you debated, examined, and dissected significate national and international security concerns. You will now return to your service. vour various government institutions. and vour home countries to

apply this knowledge. To inspire others and to lead in an uncertain future." said Hill.

The graduates will make an immediate leap into new responsibilities, noted Hill. Students will assume strategic leadership roles in the combined, joint force, making decisions, shaping policies, and executing missions with global impact.

Graduating today from the USAWC's master's program in Strategic Studies are the following: 222 Army officers, 6 Navy, 23 Air Force, 14 Marines, 1 Coast Guard, 4 Space Force, 27 federal agencies civilians, and 76 International Fellows from 73 different countries.

Gen. James Rainey, Commanding General of U.S. Army's Futures Command in Austin, TX. joined friends, families, faculty members, and defense attachés to congratulate the class of 2023.

"I am really encouraged as I look out at the crowd and see the joint flavor and the partner flavor of this class," said Rainey. "Because we are not going to deter anybody by ourselves as a nation or as an Army, and we are surely not going to win a war against a superpower existential war without partners and allies," he said.

"I am going to tell you five things that are not going change about the future of war," Rainey said. "it's a contest of wills between humans, the land domain is essential to joint operations, the U.S. and its partners will remain a value-based military, wars are not short, technology rarely delivers the dramatic change that people think it's going to make."

"They are two requirements; I ask you to take on the rest of the time you serve in your next assignment. It is to take care of your people and develop leaders. Build your bench. You're here [Army War College] because people put extra time into you. But, be that colonel that is all about solving problems, taking care of people, and making young people better," Rainey said.

If you remember one thing from this speech today – Colonels play offense – if you are on your heels, you're doing it wrong," he said. "You guys play offense, solve problems; if it gets past you, it's going to be a general officer problem; it just gets harder and more painful and then passes back to you, so just knock it out at your level. Fail forward if you are going to fail – Colonels play offense," he stated.
