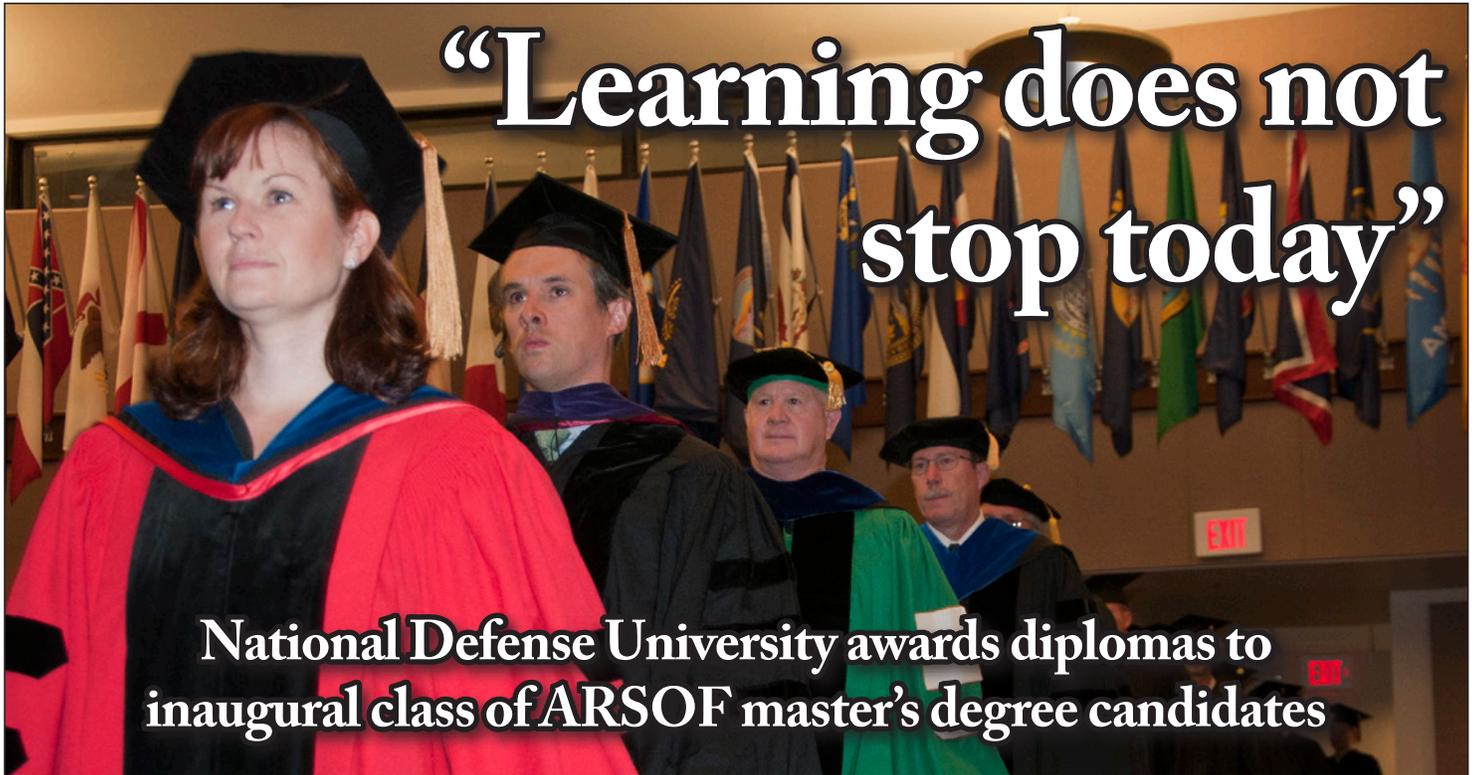




# Inside SWCS

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## “Learning does not stop today”

### National Defense University awards diplomas to inaugural class of ARSOF master’s degree candidates

Members of the National Defense University faculty lead the first 20 graduates of the College of International Security Affairs strategic-security studies master’s degree program on its Fort Bragg campus at SWCS. Made up of 13 commissioned and seven noncommissioned officers from four Army branches, the class has spent 10 months participating in seminars and conducting independent thesis research and study.

By **Dave Chace**  
SWCS Public Affairs Office

**T**wenty special-operations Soldiers clad in academic regalia and jump boots crossed the John F. Kennedy Auditorium stage June 3 to receive diplomas from the National Defense University’s College of International Security Affairs.

These individuals made up the first class to be awarded fully accredited Master of Arts degrees in strategic-security studies through CISA’s Fort Bragg campus at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

“We’re gathered to recognize the academic accomplishments of 20 special operators who have answered the call for service time and again,” said Garry Reid, the ceremony’s guest speaker and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism. “What we have here are people with a thirst for challenge and a thirst for adventure.”

In their next assignment, these Special Forces, Infantry, Military Information Support Operations and Civil Affairs Soldiers will report to one of the Army’s operational units armed with the ability to think critically, reason academically and challenge assumptions, Reid said.

For 10 months, these students—13 commissioned and seven noncommissioned officers—have participated in a demanding schedule of seminars and graduate-level courses. Core courses focused on geostrategy, strategic thought, and power, ideology and legitimacy.

Students also selected an area of concentration: irregular warfare or international security studies.

“We educate operators, war-fighters and combat service support professionals in the life of the mind, and then turn them back to their environment,” said Vice. Adm. Ann E. Rondeau, NDU President.

One of the program’s students will deploy with an operational unit within a week of the graduation ceremony, Rondeau said.

These Soldiers will return to the operational force, but their advanced education will play a role throughout their careers.

The military needs people who can combine the arts of counterinsurgency and irregular warfare with a well-developed sense of tactical insight, said Reid, who is a retired Special Forces command sergeant major.

This degree will propel the graduates along a path into increasingly greater positions of influence and discussions, and they are now armed to speak the language of strategy, policy and academic reasoning, he said.

“You have to do the true Special Forces thing, which is to blend in and adopt the culture of an indigenous force,” Reid said. “In this case, your new indigenous force is the large world of policy and academia. If you want to be relevant and you want to influence your

leaders’ decisions, then you have to speak the language.”

Maj. Gen. Bennet S. Sacolick, the SWCS Commanding General, challenged all special-operations Soldiers to pursue advanced degrees.

“If you are sitting in this auditorium and you do not have a plan to get advanced civilian education, then shame on you,” Sacolick said. “If you don’t have an associate’s degree, you need to get one, and then you need to get a bachelor’s and then a master’s degree, if you’re going to function, as I need you to, as a member of our regiments.”

SWCS conducts initial qualification and advanced skills training, as well as regional culture and language education, for special-operations Soldiers. The command’s Department of Education led the effort to coordinate the master’s degree program with NDU.

“We respect and acknowledge the notion of lifelong learning,” Rondeau said. “Learning does not stop today, and it will never stop.”

The program mirrors the Master of Arts in Strategic Security Studies degree program offered at NDU’s main campus at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, D.C., which is available to personnel from U.S. departments and agencies, congressional staffs, and military and civilian representatives of the international community.

**“Your new indigenous force is the large world of policy and academia. If you want to be relevant and you want to influence your leader’s decisions, then you have to speak the language.”**

**Garry Reid**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism*

# ARSOF master's students present thesis research

Special-operations Soldiers graduating the master's degree program from the National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs presented highlights from their thesis research June 2 in the John F. Kennedy Auditorium on Fort Bragg.



Over the last academic year, NDU has helped build an academic environment at SWCS by organizing a monthly Distinguished Lecture Series for SWCS students, instructors and staff members.

Following a long year of seminar participation and independent study, several special-operations commissioned and noncommissioned officers led their own academic lectures for SWCS personnel.

Below is a list of those Soldiers who were selected to present their theses for the command, and the subjects of their research.

**Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn Beckman (SF):** "Existential Threat of an Improvised Nuclear Device Attack in the United States"

**Capt. Ian Daniel Edgerly (MISO):** "The Post-Cold War United States' Decision for Military Intervention in Weak or Failing States: An Argument for Non-Intervention in Somalia"

**Capt. Alexander Ghaleb (MISO):** "Natural Gas as an Element of Russian State Power"

**Sgt. 1st Class Jason John Montesanto (MISO):** "Powell Revisited: Is the Powell Doctrine Still Relevant in the Contemporary Security Environment?"

**Capt. Robert E. Snow (MISO):** "A Small-time Actor's Big-time Role: Internally-instigated Strategic Threats, U.S. Public Diplomacy and the Middle Eastern Muslim Community"

**Capt. Joshua Robert Wilhelm (MISO):** "Propaganda and Identity: How Propaganda Exploited Identity During the Yugoslav Wars of Dissolution"

**Maj. Michael James Yeager (MISO):** "New Strategies for Counter-Insurgency Operations: Leveraging Social Movements to Build Social Cohesion, Strengthen the State and Civil Society, and Defeat an Insurgency"



Master Sgt. Larry DeBusk (left) accepts the Chancellor's Award for Excellence from Col. Michael Bell, the CISA Chancellor, following the presentations. According to the CISA faculty, DeBusk defined the standard for commitment to excellence in the program.

# Col. B. Ashton Naylor, Jr. takes command of 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne)



Col. B. Ashton Naylor, Jr. hands the 1st SWTG(A) colors to Command Sgt. Maj. Brian D. Edwards, the group's command sergeant major, during the group's change of command ceremony June 2 on Fort Bragg. Naylor is the group's new commander, following the tenure of Col. Jack Jensen.

**By Dave Chace**  
SWCS Public Affairs Office

The Soldiers of the 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne) held a change of command ceremony June 2 on Fort Bragg's John F. Kennedy Plaza to welcome their new commanding officer, Col. B. Ashton Naylor, Jr. to the unit.

Naylor, who most recently served as the deputy commander of the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne), now commands the unit responsible for conducted entry-level and advanced training for the Army's Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations Soldiers.

"It's not every day you wake up and find yourself with the opportunity to lead a values-based organization like this one, charged with making the nation's inventory of [special-operations Soldiers] and train them in all the advanced skills necessary," Naylor said during the ceremony.

Naylor stressed the strategic value of the Army's special-operations force, in that its Soldiers are capable of achieving significant effects with relatively small numbers.

"It all begins right here," Naylor said of 1st SWTG(A).

"I'm parting with great pride and confidence knowing that the fate of our operations forces will be determined through the outstanding generation of leaders that we here at the group have produced, and are producing," Jensen said.

In his next assignment, Jensen will deploy to command the Special Operations Command (Forward) in Lebanon.

"I'm heartened by the fact that I've been replaced by an incredibly experienced and well-respected Special Forces leader," Jensen said.

Maj. Gen. Bennet S. Sacolick, the commanding general of 1st SWTG(A)'s higher headquarters, the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, praised Jensen's leadership as the group's commander over the last two years.

"I watched Jack create an environment where our best, brightest and most creative Soldiers and civilians were empowered to make great decisions on behalf of our regiments," Sacolick said. "They improved just about every activity, process and course they conducted."

Sacolick said he saw the same passion and enthusiasm in Naylor, and felt confident that 1st SWTG(A) remained in good hands.

Naylor previously spent two years as the SWCS G-3, from 2006 to 2008. His other assignments include Special Operations Command Central in 2003 during the planning, preparation and invasion of Iraq; two years as the commanding officer of 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) including another deployment to Iraq; and deputy commander of 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne).

Naylor holds a bachelor of arts degree from Louisiana State University—Shreveport and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

## SWCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	1st SWTG(A) Change of Responsibility Ceremony 10 a.m. JFK Auditorium	7	8	9	10	Robin Sage begins
12	D Company, 3rd Battalion Activation Ceremony 8:30 a.m. JFK Plaza	14	15	Military Information Support Operations Qualification Course graduation 9:30 a.m. JFK Auditorium	17	18
19	SWCS NCO and Soldier of the Year Competition (all week)	21	Robin Sage ends	23	24	25