

Madison County Judge Sarah Smith selected for US Army War College

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Illinois Judges Association is proud to announce that Madison County Associate Judge Sarah Smith was recently selected as one of three Illinois Army National Guard Officers to attend the US Army War College, graduating class of 2020. She has already begun attending the two-year correspondence course. The US Army War College is the Army's top leadership school; it grants a "master of strategic studies" degree to senior military and civilian leaders who are selected for attendance in

the program. The US Army War College educates and develops leaders for service at the strategic level. Its goal is to produce graduates who are skilled critical thinkers and complex problem solvers in the global application of land power.

"Judge Smith's selection for the National War College is a tremendous honor. Not only is it a source of pride for her and her family, it should make all of Madison County proud. Her selection was based on an evaluation over many years of her outstanding military service. I congratulate her on this impressive achievement and know that she will excel and provide even greater service to our country in the years to come," stated Chief Judge David Hylla of the Third Judicial Circuit which includes Madison County.

The course focuses on key concepts that include national security policy, strategic leadership, and national strategy with an emphasis on the relationships among military, economic, diplomatic and informational elements of power in both a domestic and international context.

Judge Smith is member of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Judges Association and serves as the Vice-President of the Illinois Judges Foundation. She has participated in the organizations' in-school programs with an outreach to helping local youth and is an active member of the Third Circuit Pro Bono Committee.

During her military career, Smith was mobilized in 2005 in support of Hurricane Katrina. Her overseas experience includes service as the Chief of Operational and Administrative Law for the 35th Infantry Division in Kosovo and as Deputy Staff Judge Advocate for the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Because of her vast military legal experience, Smith has spoken at numerous key senior level engagements to include the Warsaw Ministry of Defense Legal Symposium, Warsaw Poland in 2011 and 2016, and at the United Nations Peace Symposium, New York, New York in 2011.

Judge Sarah Smith has earned multiple service awards, most notably the Bronze Star Medal; Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster; the Kosovo Campaign Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two campaign stars; and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award; among others.

Since it was founded in 1901 the Army War College has had some notable graduates including President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who graduated first in his class as a captain, Generals Omar Bradley, George Patton, Colin Powell, Norman Schwarzkopf, and Tommy Franks.

"I am unbelievably honored to be selected for such a prestigious military course," said Judge Smith. "The names of so many revered military leaders are permanently etched in

the hallways of the US Army War College, it is humbling to think that after graduation my name would be listed with some of the greatest military minds in US history.”

Judge Smith currently serves as the Staff Judge Advocate of the Illinois Army National Guard, where she is the highest-ranking JAG officer and advises general officers and other senior level commanders on all military matters. She also serves as an Associate Judge in the Third Judicial Circuit’s Family Division.