Overview of the Workshop:

The purpose of the Student Workshop on Civil-Military Operations (SWCMO) is to create a focused venue for student development and learning within the realm of Civil Military Operations (CMO). This is an opportunity to bring together leading scholars and practitioners on topics of Civil Military Operations to debate and discuss recent developments that contribute to Cadet learning and professional development.

The Workshop, sponsored by the USMA Class of 1978 and organized by the Center for the Study of Civil Military Operations (CSCMO), is for Cadets enrolled in EV482: Military Geography, which is the capstone, integrative experience for Geography and GIS majors, and includes many Defense and Strategic Studies (DSS) majors as well as other Cadets who take it as an elective. There are 95 Cadets enrolled in the course, and there are likely to be Cadets and faculty from other courses who attend all or part of the event. We have also invited students from US Naval Academy, Tufts, Princeton, and several other local colleges.

One of the primary reasons for establishing the CSCMO was the vision of its benefactor, Mr. John DeBlasio, working with USMA faculty, to ensure that lessons learned in the realm of civil military operations are not lost and that we are preparing graduates to work alongside the diverse and wide array of partners they will encounter in today’s operating environment.

This Year’s Topic:

The subject of this year’s Workshop is the Geopolitics of Disinformation in the Middle East and will be keynoted by Ambassador Jonathan Cohen. The Army’s current doctrine codifies that US military forces will increasingly work with and alongside a wide range of other actors including US and host nation government officials, international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and of course local leaders and populations.

The focus of the Workshop therefore allows us to further educate Cadets about three areas in which they will most likely find themselves leading Soldiers in the near future: Contending with malign activity by Iran on a global/regional basis, responding to urban based humanitarian disasters and having to plan, prepare, and deal with civilian populations in these operations. As the experiences in contested cities like Beirut, Baghdad and within areas of Israel have demonstrated, even limited combat in urban areas can produce devastating outcomes.

In contemporary regional conflict, perhaps no state has been as active, and even effective, as Iran. The list of Iran’s activity in regional targets is extensive. Iran and their surrogates have conducted offensive cyber attacks, enabled naval attacks in the Red Sea, and conducted missile and drone attacks on hard targets and the populous in Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ (IRGC’s) Quds Force operations have provoked hundreds of Israeli airstrikes against Iranian and Iranian sponsored units sites in Syria. Iran has also maintained small ground forces in Yemen, Syria, and on occasions in Iraq.
In the course of their malign activity, Iran has positioned itself as the paramount menace in the Middle East. They continue to pursue their activities against the interest of the West as well as their regional neighbors. From supplying Russia with suicide drones and other military equipment for Ukraine to harassing civilian cargo ships in the Gulf, the Mullah led regime is behaving like the pariah most of the Gulf region proclaims it to be.

In November US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVECENT) in Bahrain, confirmed that an attack on a Liberian-flagged vessel off the coast of Oman was the result of an Iranian drone. “The Iranian attack on a commercial tanker transiting international waters was deliberate, flagrant, and dangerous, endangering the lives of the ship’s crew and destabilizing maritime security in the Middle East,” stated Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of NAVCENT.

Since its large-scale departure from the region, US foreign policy pursuit has been open to criticisms for lack of focus. In response to this, an aggressive Iran will likely continue its bellicose pursuits, posing a significant danger to Israel, the Gulf States and the greater region. The US is among very few countries able to flex some deterrence with economic sanctions and military response capability but the foreign policy team has a decision to make: Which is more important – influencing a secure Middle East or cooperating with the regional menace for an elusive nuclear agreement?

The question remains how does the US, International partners and regional allies respond to these challenges? Any option will require the promotion of deeply planned and coordinated Civil-Military Operations to mobilize the strengths and unity of effort among our counterparts. How can our national leaders harmonize these efforts to promote a more capable and effective posture for the challenges ahead? These are just some of the hard subjects we will tackle in this year’s workshop.

**Schedule of Events:** 19 March event will be in the Eisenhower Room at the Thayer Hotel. The 20 March event will be in the Ike Hall Riverside Café.

**Sunday, 19 March 2023. 1800-2100. Eisenhower Room at the Thayer Hotel.**

There will be a scheduled dinner lecture by Ambassador Cohen to the Class of 1978 and select cadets to discuss Iran’s role in Global Geopolitics. We are seeking to create a link for that engagement to be distributed among participants from the class online.

**Monday, 20 March 2023. Ike Hall Riverside Café.**

**0800-0810:** LTC Chris Fuhriman and Mr. John Melkon. Welcome and Introduction.

**0810-0845:** Joel Rayburn: Online Introductory remarks by former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Levant Affairs and Special Envoy for Syria. Joel Rayburn began serving as on July 23, 2018. He previously served in the Administration as Senior Director for Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon at the National Security
Council from January 2017 to July 2018. He will set the scene for today’s workshop, outlining what is at stake for US interests in the Middle East and how does that intersect with Iran.

0845-0915: Opening Keynote. MG Matt McFarlane, Commander of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve. There have been numerous occurrences of Iran-backed forces attacking Coalition forces in Syria. Iran-backed forces probably retain the ability to conduct rocket and IED attacks against U.S. interests in Syria with little warning and also have demonstrated the ability to conduct more complex attacks using advanced weapons including the employment of UAVs. How does the US balance its vital mission to counter ISIS while engaging in a struggle for influence with Iran in the region.

0915-0930: Break

0930-1015: Session 1. Hamed Behravan. Development Transformations Institute. What can be done to Counter Iranian Disinformation? Mr. Behravan designs and implements innovative and impact driven solutions to empower civil society in closed societies. Hamed has pioneered the use of technology to help civil society organizations push for reform and accountability in Iran and has played a key role in design and development of multiple mobile applications and platforms that have been and continue to be used by tens of thousands of users.


1100-1115: Table discussions and break: Faculty enablers or Distinguished Guests at each Cadet table will foster a discussion about the topic just presented.

1115-1200: Session 3. Iran’s Use of Cultural Heritage in Influence Operations
Scott DeJesse (DoD and DoS), Hayden Bassett (Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab) and COL Dominique Fernandez (Combined Strategic Analysis Group). Iran, like many countries, makes wide use of cultural heritage as a method by which to influence populations. Analysis of data on Iranian influence operations is enhancing our understanding of how cultural heritage is being utilized as a medium for influence by Iran, for what audiences, and to what ends.

1200-1255: Working Lunch / Discussion between Cadets and Speakers, Class of ’78, Distinguished Guests, and faculty. This is a working lunch where Cadets at each table are with a speaker, guest, Class of ’78 member, to further discuss the topics and questions presented in the morning sessions.

1255-1340: Session 4. Jodi Rosenstein. USAID. An overview of how development theory, practice, literature, and experience from implementation can support USAID’s mission to promote and demonstrate democratic values for the people of the Middle East, counter Iranian misinformation and advance conditions for more prosperous relations. This session also includes an overview of how USAID pursues collaboration with its development partners to adapt strategies to recent changes in Iran’s needs and pursue new priorities to achieve results.
1340-1440: Closing Keynote. Ambassador Jonathan Cohen. Address by the former Ambassador to Egypt. Ambassador Cohen will share his observations on the current situation in the Middle East. He will also share his own perceptions on the importance of Civil-Military Operations as a response to Iranian influence in the region.

PARTICIPANTS

Shabnam Aslam

Shabnam Aslam is with the Development Transformation Institute (DTI) where she supports DT Institute’s Media, Civic Tech, and Human Rights division programs encompassing countering disinformation, rule of law, information access, internet freedom, and empowering civil society actors and organizations.

With over ten years of experience living and working in fragile, violent and conflict zones much of Shabnam’s career focused on human rights monitoring, humanitarian action, emergency response, conflict resolution, as well as landscape and security analysis. Her work under multilateral organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross in several countries including Syria, Afghanistan, Kenya, South Sudan, Mexico, and the Northern Triangle region honed her skills in strategy, program development, diplomacy, and rule of law. Over the years, she has developed specialization in areas such as gender rights, child protection, and migration.

While pursuing a Master of Public Administration with Columbia University, Shabnam was selected to join the Business and Human Rights Clinic to evaluate impacts of the Bonsucro production standard and certification system in the sugar industry with a focus on setting human rights benchmarks. Her research covered mills, farms, and labor groups in Maharashtra, India. Since 2016, Shabnam has served as a vulnerable groups and security expert vetting asylum claims for clients of immigration lawyers. Shabnam served on the board of a successful nonprofit, ProjectExplorer, launching its educational multimedia arm bringing cross-cultural learning to classrooms. In her free time, she dabbles in startups, design consulting, food histories, and onstage storytelling.
Hayden Bassett

Hayden Bassett is an Army Reserve officer with the Monuments Officers program and a research associate at the Smithsonian Institution, the archaeology curator at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, and the director of the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab (CHML). The CHML is a collaborative lab operated by the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative and the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Through this lab, Hayden conducts global satellite monitoring and analysis to identify and safeguard cultural heritage threatened by armed conflict and natural disaster.

Hayden is closely involved with the SCRI-supported U.S. Army Monuments Officer Training (AMOT) program, and through the CHML, provides support to U.S. Government agencies and international cultural heritage NGOs. Previously, he served as an archaeologist for the U.S. Department of Defense, where he directed archaeological fieldwork and cultural property protection in East Africa, the Middle East, southern Europe, and throughout the United States. Dr. Bassett received his doctoral degree from the College of William & Mary.

Hamad Behravan

Hamad is with the Developmental Transformations Institute. He is a senior executive digital nomad with more than a decade of experience in NGO capacity building, independent media, information access, D&G, rule of law, civic tech, and human rights. Focused mostly on the MENA, he designs and employs innovative solutions to empower CSAs and CSOs push for tangible reforms and encourage their governments to become more inclusive, transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of their citizens.

At DT Institute he currently oversees a diverse portfolio of innovative projects in independent media, civic tech, and human rights. Prior to joining forces with DT Institute, he significantly expanded and diversified his portfolio at Democracy Council, which included more than $22M in successful grants in the fields of human rights, rule of law, civil society, internet freedom, independent media, and LGBTQI rights. In addition to managing a culturally diverse and globally distributed staff, he has a proven track record in grant writing and large scale/multi year project design, execution, and management. The products, solutions, and trainings that are developed under his
portfolio have benefitted hundreds of highly specialized users, such as human right attorneys, to more than 100,000 active daily users who want to openly access information.

Previously at Voice of America, he helped with the launch/expansion of multiple shows, including a popular technology show that he personally hosted. He has worked in the A-Z of media production and have shot, written, and edited stories and reports in more than 20 countries, and produced more than 300 original stories from international tech conferences to social and political conflicts in hostile environments. He continues to leverage media to empower CSA/CSOs achieve their goals.

**Ambassador Jonathan R. Cohen**

Ambassador Jonathan R. Cohen is a strategic advisor and international consultant who served as a US diplomat for over thirty-five years, including as Ambassador to Egypt and the United Nations, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia covering Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Baghdad and Nicosia and as Acting Deputy Chief of Mission in Paris.

His other assignments include Political Minister Counsellor in Paris, Political Military Counsellor in Rome, Political Advisor to Operation Northern Watch/Iraq Watcher in Ankara, Political Advisor to the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance-North in Irbil, member of the Coalition Provisional Authority Governance Team in Baghdad, Political Officer in Stockholm, Liaison to the Hungarian Chairmanship of the OSCE and Executive Assistant to the Head of the OSCE Bosnia Mission in Vienna, OSCE and NATO/Bosnia Officer at the State Department, and Secretariat Staff/Advance Team member for Secretaries of State Baker, Eagleburger and Christopher. Earlier in his career he was USAID Coordinator and Economic Officer for the West Bank at the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem and Refugee Protection Officer in Bangkok.

Ambassador Cohen is the recipient of a Presidential Rank Award for sustained superior accomplishment in foreign policy, the State Department’s Charles Cobb Award for success in trade development and promotion and the James Clement Dunn Award for Excellence, a Distinguished Honor Award, and multiple Superior Honor Awards.

Scott DeJesse

Scott DeJesse is the senior Department of Defense (DoD) 38G/6V Heritage & Preservation Officer (aka Monuments Officer). He is currently assigned to the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command’s (USACAPOC(A)) Strategic Initiatives Group. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant into the US Army Reserve through ROTC. He holds the military occupational specialties of an Armor Officer, Civil Affairs Officer and the area of concertation of 38G Military Governance Specialist. He also serves as a representative to the State Department’s Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee. He deployed to Mosul, Iraq – ‘07/’08; Nuristan, Afghanistan – ‘10/’11, Kabul, Afghanistan ‘14/’15, and to the US Southern Command Area of Responsibility. In his military career, Scott has served as a Civil Affairs Team Chief, Company Commander, Battalion Executive Officer, Civil Affairs Battalion Commander, Civil Affairs Brigade Deputy Commander, and as the US Central Command’s Combined Strategic Analysis Group Division Chief.

Scott has also been working with the Smithsonian Institution in designing and conducting the Army’s Monuments Officer Training Course. This program delivers cultural property protection capabilities to DoD, and work closely with US government agencies and international military partners on implementing military measurers of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. As part of this work, Scott has also been collaborating with research efforts being supported by the Center for the Study of Civil-Military Operations (CSCMO) at West Point related to cultural preservation in conflict areas and the role of culture in influence operations.

Beyond the Smithsonian collaborative for 38G/6V, other USACAPOC 38G skill identifier partnerships established under Scott’s tenure include: University of Notre Dame, University of Wisconsin, Rice University, Texas A&M, Fresno State University, and the Water Council.

His military awards include: two Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart Medal, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, the Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

As a civilian, Scott worked in pharmaceutical advertising as an illustrator and art director. Currently, he works for the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Cultural Programs Division. Scott also teaches provenance research at Texas Tech University’s Heritage Management and Museum Sciences Graduate Program and is realist artist. Scott received a Master of Arts in Heritage Management and Museum Sciences from Texas Tech University, a Master of Strategic Studies from the Army War College, two graduate certificates from the Naval Postgraduate School, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. Scott, his wife Elizabeth, and sons: Phillip, William, and Henry call Amarillo, TX their home.
COL Dominique Fernandez

COL Dominique Fernandez is a French Army embedded officer, Deputy Director of the Combined Strategic Analysis Group (CSAG) / CJ5, and the Deter Iran Branch Head. He is currently assigned to the U.S. Central Command. He graduated as First Lieutenant into the French Army through the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr. COL Fernandez holds the military occupational specialties of a Field Artillery Officer including a deployment in Bosnia ‘98, and in Tchad ’02. He deployed to Herat (Afghanistan) ’07 as ISAF Regional Command West- Tactical Operations Center Shift Director. COL Fernandez was graduated from the Command and Staff College in Paris. Since he has served as an operational/strategic planner in the French Joint Force Command for Operations ‘11/’14 and 17/’20, respectively as J5 Deputy Director, and J3 Director. He deployed to Bamako (Mali) ’13 as the Serval Operation Joint Force Headquarters J5 Director, and to several GCC countries and worldwide to plan Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations, bilateral Defense Plans, and Multilateral Joint Operational exercises. COL Fernandez deployed to Canberra (Australia) ‘14/’17 as the French Army Liaison Officer to the Australian Army HQ.

As the lead for the CSAG Deter Iran branch, COL Fernandez with his team including senior officers from KSA, ARE, QAT, KWT, EGY, TUR, and European countries provides to CENTCOM Commander an unvarnished perspective and assessment on Levant and ME challenges in regard with USCENTCOM strategic priorities. To deter Iran is still CENTCOM’s top priority. His military awards include Knight of the French Legion of Honor, Knight of the French national order of Merit, Knight of the Malian national order of Merit, two NATO commemorative Medals, Paratrooper Badge, Jungle Commando Badge, Mountain Combat Badge, Amphibious Operations Level 3 Badge. COL Fernandez received a Master of Strategic Studies from the French Command and Staff College, an engineering degree of material sciences from ESM Saint-Cyr. COL Fernandez, his wife Camilla, and daughters: Vilma, and Alva call Tampa, FL their temporary home.

LTG (Ret) Kenneth W. Hunzeker

Lieutenant General (Ret) Kenneth W. Hunzeker is the former Chief Executive Officer and President of Vectrus, Inc. He was appointed CEO in September 2014 when Vectrus was established as a publicly traded spin-off from parent Exelis Inc. He has led the organization since April 2011. Vectrus is a leading, global government services company with a history in the services market that dates back more than 50 years.
He initially joined ITT in August 2010 after 35 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Army. His Army career was highlighted by troop assignments in Infantry and Armored divisions and high-level military and joint staff positions. He has more than 20 years of defense community experience in program management, strategy development and finance, working with key decision makers within the Army, Department of Defense, Office of Management and Budget, and Congress. His most recent Army assignment was Deputy Commander, United States Forces–Iraq. During a previous tour, he commanded the Civilian Police Transition Team responsible for training and equipping over 400,000 Iraqi security forces.

He also served as the Vice Director for Force Structure, Resources and Assessment, J-8, The Joint Staff, Washington, DC, and he commanded the 1st Infantry Division as well as 5th U.S. Corps, both in U.S. Army Europe. Mr. Hunzeker holds a bachelor’s degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and two masters’ degrees, including one in Systems Technology (Command, Control and Communications) from the Naval Post Graduate School, and one in Strategic Security Studies from the National Defense University.

MG Matt McFarlane

Major General Matt McFarlane is the previous Deputy Commanding General for the U.S. Army – Pacific (USARPAC), located at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. He previously served as the Commanding General of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, Colorado. He hails from Burke, VA, and was a distinguished military graduate at James Madison University, where he commissioned as an Infantry officer in 1992. Major General McFarlane served in Ranger, Airborne, and Mechanized Infantry formations, with extensive experience in both conventional and special operations. He has commanded at the Company through Division level while serving at a variety of duty stations in the continental United States, Italy, and Alaska.

His operational and combat experience includes leading Soldiers in Operation Allied Force and Joint Guardian (Kosovo), Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), and Operation Iraqi Freedom (Iraq). As a General Officer, Major General McFarlane served as the Deputy Commanding General (Operations) in the 82d Airborne Division and the Senior Military Assistant for the Deputy Secretary of Defense before
assuming duties as Commanding General of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, CO. Major General McFarlane holds a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree from James Madison University and master’s degrees in Policy Management from Georgetown University, Management from Webster University, and National Security and Strategic Studies from the National War College.

Major General McFarlane awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal, three Bronze Star Medals, the Combat Infantryman Badge with star, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, and the Ranger Tab. Major General McFarlane is also a Distinguished Member of the 75th Ranger Regiment, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and the 503d Infantry Regiment (Airborne).

Major General McFarlane is married and he and his wife of 28 years have two sons.

**Joel Rayburn**

Joel Rayburn is Special Envoy for Syria Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs with the U.S. Department of State. He began serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Levant Affairs and Special Envoy for Syria on July 23, 2018. He previously served in the Administration as Senior Director for Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon at the National Security Council from January 2017 to July 2018.

Mr. Rayburn is a retired U.S. Army officer who served in a variety of assignments in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States from 1992 to 2018. He also taught history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and is the author of several books and articles on the Iraq War. He was commissioned into the Army after graduating from West Point in 1992 and holds a master’s degree in History from Texas A&M University and in National Security Studies from the National War College.

Mr. Rayburn is originally from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
Jodi Rosenstein

Jodi Rosenstein is a Senior Policy Advisor in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS) Program Office and the Deputy Coordinator for the interagency Global Fragility Act Secretariat. She has over 15 years of experience in post-conflict stabilization and transition policy and strategy development and implementation, including designing conflict recovery and prevention programming. She most recently served as USAID/CPS Acting Division Chief for Plans and Policy Development in the Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation after five years serving as the Deputy Director for Stabilization for USAID in Baghdad, Iraq where she led an over $750 million portfolio. Previously, she spent five years embedded with the military in eastern Afghanistan as a stabilization and transition officer for the USAID and was a research associate and public information officer at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana.

Jodi is a Doctoral Fellow at the University of Texas Clements Center for National Security and a former Senior Brumley Next Generation Fellow at the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law. Jodi holds a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and an MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics. She is recipient of the Department of the Army’s Outstanding Civilian Service Award, the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award with Three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Civilian Service Commendation Award, the USAID Administrator’s Civil-Military Cooperation Award, and numerous Department of State and USAID Superior and Meritorious Honor awards.