2013-05-09

Army Chief of Staff Odierno Briefed on
NPS Defense Analysis Education Research

Naval Postgraduate School Public Affairs Office

Naval Postgraduate School

http://hdl.handle.net/10945/33899
Army Chief of Staff Odierno Briefed on NPS’ Defense Analysis Education, Research

Article By: Amanda D. Stein

On Nov. 4, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno visited the Naval Postgraduate School to learn firsthand about the education and research programs underway at the university. Specifically, Odierno was briefed by several faculty and students in the school’s Defense Analysis department, which enrolls approximately half of the Army students studying at NPS. Odierno assumed the position of 38th Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) on Sept. 7, and has over 35 years in the service.

Odierno began his visit to NPS with a Command Brief offered by Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Operations and Information Sciences, Army Col. Robert Burks, providing an overview of the university’s mission, programs and research. Odierno then attended a Defense Analysis brief presented by department Chair Dr. John Arquilla.

“I was very impressed with the depth and utility of the program of instruction at the Naval Postgraduate School,” Odierno said. “Guided by a dedicated and expert faculty, the students are receiving a first-rate education that will serve them well as our nation’s future senior leaders.”

“A little over one in 10 NPS students are Army officers,” explained Arquilla. “But in the Defense Analysis department, they make up about half, in fact over half of our students. And roughly half of all Army students at NPS are in Defense Analysis.

“Beyond special operations and information operations, I think the Army has been interested in the larger questions of Defense Analysis, which is what I think our department is all about. When you think about which of the curricula at our school are specifically, operationally oriented, this is one that seems to fit very neatly into the needs of the Army,” he continued. “That’s one of the reasons that we see such a concentration of Army officers in our department.”

“The general wanted to spend a little time figuring out what his officers were studying,” Arquilla added. “So we gave him an overview of the Defense Analysis department, [with] the key point being that for many, many years we have taken a cross-disciplinary operational approach to graduate education for our military officers.”

Arquilla also encouraged the Chief of Staff to take advantage of NPS’ resources and exceptional faculty for Intermediate Level Education for all Army officers, noting the university has a broad community of expertise that the service could capitalize on.

With an opportunity to see specific research projects in action, Odierno was briefed by Defense Analysis students Lt. Deak Childress and Lt. John Taylor on project Lighthouse. For the students, it was a unique opportunity to directly brief a service chief on their thesis research, which utilizes social network analysis to identify and illuminate potential Improvised explosive device (IED) networks. Childress noted that he and Taylor both felt fortunate for the opportunity to brief the CSA, and to bring some attention to their research. They hope that their project will have lasting real-world military applications.

“We were … both extremely impressed with how quickly Gen. Odierno was able to pull the value out of a very brief discussion, and the understanding he showed of the analysis we are doing, as evidence by a couple of very pertinent questions he asked,” explained Childress.

“It is absolutely vital to keep DoD senior leadership abreast of the different types of research ongoing here at NPS. I think it shows them that the investments they are making by sending folks here is paying off, and the time spent here at Monterey is definitely not wasted. We are both Navy guys, so we didn’t approach this project with any one service in mind, but our research is definitely geared more to ground operators.”

At the completion of the briefing, Odierno complemented the students on their project, and encouraged them to continue the research.

“The wide variety of research and analysis that the NPS students are conducting is extremely relevant to today’s complex and uncertain strategic environment,” Odierno said. “I am also impressed with their enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity, attributes that will serve them well in the future as agile and adaptable leaders.”