

SAMS Director Speaks at World-wide Servant Leadership Conference

By Joseph Smallwood, CGSC Public Affairs

“The essence of Army Leadership is to serve those you lead.” COL Stefan J. Banach opened his workshop with this remark to an audience gathered during the 19th Annual Greenleaf World-wide Servant Leadership Conference in Milwaukee, WI. Exploring the theme of “The Institution as Servant,” 50 diverse panelists of economists, journalists, CEOs, and other assorted professionals, traveled to Milwaukee to present 35 workshops addressing the ways that institutions work closely with customers, colleagues, partnering organizations, and communities to remain relevant and effective during trying times.

Banach, who currently serves as the 11th Director of the School of Advanced Military Studies in Ft. Leavenworth, KS, was chosen as a special presenter to share real-world experiences leading others during hard times, namely his multiple combat deployments which span his 26 year career.

A graduate of the University of Iowa and the Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship at SAMS, Banach commanded a Mechanized Infantry company in Desert Storm, deployed to Haiti, and commanded a mechanized infantry battalion in Bosnia. He also commanded the 3d Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment and led combat parachute assaults into both Afghanistan and Iraq at the start of Operations Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, respectively. Most recently, he commanded the 2d Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division before assuming his current position. The commitment to servant leadership is a responsibility for both the Army and Greenleaf, which was founded by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1964. Greenleaf, who worked for AT&T for 38 years before founding his non-profit namesake, is credited for coining the phrase “servant-leader” in his essay, “The Servant as Leader,” originally published in 1970. Greenleaf’s mission is to increase organizational relevance by promoting an understanding and practice of servant leadership juxtaposed with the conventional power leadership model.

“Promotions and advancement through the ranks,” he continued, “are not intended to be self-serving. Increased rank and authority attained by officers and NCOs simply expands their ability to serve more people, more effectively.” Last week, COL Banach was heard driving home a similar message when he oversaw the graduation of 106 future leaders from the SAMS program. There, senior leaders reminded participants of Ft. Leavenworth’s rich tradition of excellence in leader development, but also of the need to adapt that tradition to remain agile and relevant to the needs our nation and our allies.

For more information on current activities happening at SAMS please visit:

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