

## News + information from:

Greater Kansas City Chapter of People to People International

gkcptp.org



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## Greetings from Our Chapter President

Dear GKCPTP members:



I hope you and your families are doing well. The spring is beautiful with lush green trees, colorful flowers and singing birds in the air. We are lucky to enjoy nature in its full blossom. Everything is changing and we are learning new ways to live.

We had the annual meeting on Zoom, and it was a pleasure to see you all there. I would like to thank the IMSD Director, Jim Fain for his participation and updating us about the new changes at the Fort. It was a unique experience and I hope we

will see each other again through Zoom. (To [read my full message click here.](#))

We have a number of important issues to communicate below, including:

- Sponsor Assignments for Class of 2021 Update
- Links to Badge Day and Graduation ceremonies
- Gift Fund for Mike Brettman (for those who choose to donate)
- Special farewell message from Mike Brettman

Thank you for all that you do. We are proud of your service. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me (or any board member).

Best regards,

Zahid Awan

President

Board of Directors

Greater Kansas City People to People International

816-838-2926

[prez@gkcptp.org](mailto:prez@gkcptp.org)

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## **Sponsor Assignments for Class of 2021 Update**

Not everyone will be assigned a student this class year due to the fact that we have more willing sponsors than available international military students. We've communicated that recently and our committee is doing the hard work of making assignments. As usual, adjustments to the countries and the officers participating or not participating may change right up to the date of arrivals. We plan to announce sponsor assignments by the end of June. Additionally, we plan announce the details for the Sponsor Briefing by the end of June.

Our task reminds me of my husband describing how difficult it is for high school students to learn they didn't make the basketball team. There's only so many spots so the coach has to make some tough decisions. No one feels particularly good about those decisions, even those getting a spot.

The upside, we hope, is some exceptional programming for all to enjoy and participate. Some ideas include:

- Circle of Knowledge via Zoom
- Know Your World via online connectivity (subject to U.S. Army participation)
- Discussion sessions with past officers via Zoom

Someone from our committee will contact you to inform you of your status, whether you will be assigned or not. We know there will be some disappointed members for this year and hope that the next class is larger so we can fulfill everyone's desire to sponsor. Thank you for your understanding.

Regards,

Sharon Valášek

816-213-5847 / [svalasek01@gmail.com](mailto:svalasek01@gmail.com)

## **Links to Badge Day and Graduation Ceremonies**

### **IMS Graduate Badge Ceremony – June 11**

The Commandant, United States Army Command and General Staff College requests the pleasure of your virtual presence at the Two Thousand Twenty International Military Student Badge Ceremony on Thursday, the eleventh of June at six o'clock Central Daylight Time.

This event will play via Army University Facebook Page and will not be available until 1800 (6:00 p.m.) on the day of the ceremony.

**Please view the e-invitation link below:**

<https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=558282&k=07644A0B7355>

**Virtual Ceremony Link:**

<https://www.facebook.com/ArmyUniversity/>

## **Command and General Staff Officers' Course Graduation Ceremony – June 12**

The Commandant, United States Army Command and General Staff College requests the pleasure of your virtual presence at the Two Thousand Twenty Command and General Staff Officers' Course Graduation Ceremony on Friday, the twelfth of June at six o'clock Central Daylight Time.

This event will play via Army University Facebook Page and will not be available until 1800 on the day of the ceremony.

**Please view the e-invitation link below:**

<https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=557742&k=0764450E7F55>

**Virtual Ceremony Link:**

<https://www.facebook.com/ArmyUniversity/>

## **School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) Virtual Graduation 2020 (Replay) - May 21**

[Click here to watch](#)

## **Gift Donation for Retirement of Mike Brettman**

The board discussed honoring Mike Brettman at this time of his retirement. The board decided that a cash gift was appropriate and would be relatively easy for any member to participate if so inclined.

To donate, go to our website (gkcptp.org) – any page. At the bottom right click on donate. When you complete the transaction there is a place to type in the reason; please type “Brettman Gift.”



<p> Add special instructions to the seller: <b>Brettman Gift</b></p>
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## A Special Message from Mike Brettman to Sponsors

*Mike planned to talk to those attending the annual Sponsor Recognition Ceremony, but like other events the pandemic caused a cancellation for this year. We do have his heartfelt message here for you to read.*

**Dear Sponsors,**

Recently we were supposed to have our Sponsor Recognition Ceremony for this year. I had asked Jim to let me speak at the ceremony about sponsorship since I am a few days from retirement but the pandemic has not allowed that to happen.

I want to thank all of the sponsors for the support you have given the program over the years. It is an important part of the International Military Student experience here at Fort Leavenworth, as you all know. It breaks down barriers that have been created by media, politics and stereotypes. Many of you create life-long friendships that endure during many of the world events that divide us by country and ethnicity. Even if you disagree with the political leaders, the memories of good times serve as a bond that cannot be broken by current events.

Many of you have also become friends with my family and me over the years. We appreciate the kindness and friendship you have shown us over the years and hope to sponsor with many of you in the future as we join you in sponsorship.

During the last 17 years I have made a few observations that I would like to share with you. When I took over the sponsorship program, we began to have the officers fill out sponsor surveys three times a year. This gave the officers a voice in sponsorship since they are the main focus of the program. I believe the surveys have improved the quality of sponsorship. Over the years I have categorized sponsors into four distinct groups:

- The *first group* of sponsors comprises those that sign up to become sponsors, but then do very little for the officers assigned to them. The surveys expose them very quickly and they usually drop out after a year or two.

- The *second group* of sponsors takes good care of their officers, but struggle to get along with their co-sponsors. For them the number of times they see their officer versus the other sponsors is a contest. Instead of the IMS and family being the focus for the year the sponsor is keeping score. If there are any changes to the sponsor program these sponsors lament that things are not the way they used to be.
- The *third group* of sponsors contains great sponsors that focus on their IMS and get along with their co-sponsors. They do not complain about changes to the program and are cheerful people to be around. The only stipulation they have is they want to sponsor officers from one region year after year or they threaten their coordinators that they will not sponsor.
- The *fourth group* of sponsors comprises the absolute best sponsors. They are team players with their co-sponsors, never complain about changes to the program and make the officer the focus of the year. Most of the events they hold include the other sponsors. They are also willing to take officers from around the world regardless of ethnicity, region or religion.

Please ask yourselves what type of sponsors you are and what type you want to be. Catherine and I will strive to be in the fourth group. We have had hundreds of officers over to our house in the last 20 years from every region in the world. I hope we can sponsor with many of you.

The last item I would like to cover is the serious civilian-military division in the United States. All of the IMS have a U.S. officer serving as their student ambassador while they are at Fort Leavenworth. Some of our sponsors have military experience but many do not.

I urge you to include the student ambassador in some of your events with your IMS. That will let you get to know your own armed forces. Ask them about military life and where they have served. Most of them are here without any family support also. They are the ones that deploy for us and leave their families behind.

I thank you all again for sponsoring the IMS and we hope to see you often in the future.

Mike and Catherine Brettmann  
Spring 2020

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