



Courtesy photo

APG Defense Acquisition University Senior Service College fellows (back row, from left) Randy Wheeler, Jim Oman, Ayo Omololu, Cory Hall, Oral Walker, and (front row, from left) Gary Lichvar, Joe Garcia, Bill Leonard, Lisa Sanders, Jennifer Worton, Matt Lee and Ben Metcalfe learned about the difficult choices leaders had to make during the Civil War from National Park Service Ranger Keith Snyder during the group's staff ride to Antietam National Battlefield Oct. 16.

APG senior service fellows visit Antietam

By **BEN METCALFE**
and **CORY HALL,**
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APG fellows enrolled in the Defense Acquisition University Class of 2015 Senior Service College Fellowship Program (SSCFP) participated in their first staff ride, visiting Antietam National Battlefield Oct 16.

At the battlefield in western Maryland, the group's staff ride was led by National Park Service (NPS) Ranger Keith Snyder. Snyder shared his perspectives shaped by his years of experience as a NPS ranger, his military service as a Lieutenant Colonel in the

Air National Guard and his education as a 2003 graduate of the U.S. Army War College.

The excursion provided an opportunity to study leadership decisions made by senior Army commanders during the Civil War. The concept of staff rides was introduced at the end of the 19th century to provide a secondhand experience of war that is helpful in developing and improving the professional education of Soldiers and leaders.

According to Snyder, "the best way to understand the decisions, actions, mistakes and victories of leaders past is to stand on the ground where the events took place. The staff ride is the vehicle to

gain this higher understanding."

The visit to the Antietam National Battlefield provided the fellows with the opportunity to "walk the ground" where the bloodiest day in American history, with over 23,000 casualties, had occurred.

The group enjoyed the focus Snyder put on the tactical, operational and strategic decisions made by the key Union and Confederate Army leaders, along with how those decisions determined the immediate and long-lasting outcomes of the war. Through experiences such as this, the fellows gain a deeper appreciation for tough leadership choices as well as for an individual Soldier's sacrifice

during warfare.

In the spring of 2015 the SSCFP will travel to Europe. The fellows will visit several significant World War I and World War II battlefields. They will also visit the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, U. S. European Command, U.S. Africa Command and the U.S. Army in Europe. At each command the fellows will meet with multiple senior leaders and learn about the roles and missions associated with each organization.

For information on the SSCFP please contact Jim Oman at james.oman@dau.mil or 410-272-9470.

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