

In the beginning...

Special Report by
Robert Ulin, Founding CEO, CGSC Foundation



Ross Perot, 1930-2019

It was 2005 and the Iraq war was settling into its earliest stages. Lt. Gen. Scott Wallace, the 5th Corps Commander in Iraq, had just been reassigned as commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. One of his earliest acts was to get the College to develop a course dealing with interagency cooperation. The lack of cooperation between and among the multiple agencies – State, CIA, DEA, FBI, to mention a few – was hindering progress in combat operations. In December 2005, the CGSC Foundation was established. Following General Wallace in 2006 was Lt. Gen. David Petraeus who famously led the development of *Army Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*. Next came Lt. Gen. William Caldwell.

Early in 2007, Foundation CEO Bob Ulin, and trustee Mark “Ranger” Jones developed a plan to approach Mr. Ross Perot, Sr. Thus began a two and a half year relationship-building exercise to explore how Mr. Perot might be able to help the College through the Foundation. Foundation Chairman retired Lt. Gen. Robert Arter and founding CEO Bob Ulin visited General Caldwell in his office and presented the idea of an interagency research center to promote scholarship, understanding and cooperation among the various federal agencies of the U.S. government.

In October 2009, Mr. Perot came to Fort Leavenworth and visited the Command and General Staff College where we presented him with a proposal to establish a center for the study of interagency cooperation in his name. After considering our proposal for two days, he announced that he would provide \$3.6 million over five years to stand up the center but wanted it named after retired Colonel Arthur D. “Bull” Simons, the man who led the 1979 rescue of Perot’s EDS employees from a jail in Tehran, Iran. At the same time Mr. Perot also established an endowment for \$2.5 million to establish the General Hugh Shelton Chair in Ethics. His total gift was \$6.1 million.

On April 21, 2010, Ross Perot cut the ribbon inaugurating the Col. Arthur D. Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation in its new offices inside the Armed Forces Insurance building on Fort Leavenworth. Since its inauguration the Simons Center has matured into the professional education resource it was initially envisioned to be. As the center nears its 10th anniversary it is fitting to look back at some key accomplishments since its inception:

- 30 *InterAgency Journals* published with a distribution of more than 11,000 in print and online. The *IAJ* is also distributed to all U.S. embassies.



From left, Foundation CEO Bob Ulin, Fort Leavenworth Commander/ CGSC Commandant Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., Foundation Chairman Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Arter, Ross Perot, Foundation President Hyrum Smith, and the Chief Operating Officer of the Simons Center, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Ray Barrett, cut the ribbon for the opening of the Col. Arthur D. Simons Center for the Study of Interagency Cooperation, April 21, 2010.

- 14 *InterAgency Essays*, 18 *InterAgency Papers*; five *InterAgency Studies*; and four *Special Reports* published.
- More than 116 manuscripts in all publications were penned by CGSC students, graduates and faculty.
- Published two reference books— *Interagency Handbook for Transitions* and *A Practitioner's Handbook for Interagency Leadership*.
- Published an online “Interagency Bibliography” that includes more than 2,100 entries specific to interagency/government leadership issues.
- Established “InterAgency Brown-Bag Lecture Series” - Academic Year 2020 will be the series’ fourth year
- The Simons Center executes the Foundation’s “DACOR Distinguished Visiting Professor of Diplomacy” program, which brings retired diplomats to CGSC and the region for educational opportunities with CGSC students and local universities.
- Simons Center leadership established the “Distinguished Speaker Series” (DSS) to bring speakers of note that span the gamut of leadership and ethics, organizational effectiveness, collaboration, as well as current events and issues in business, government and the military. The DSS also includes oversight and execution of the Foundation’s other lecture series: The “General of the Armies John J. Pershing Great War Centennial Series,” a lecture series



Ross Perot takes a group photo after participating in class discussion with CGSC Professor Bud Meador and his students during his visit to the College Oct. 20, 2009. At the end of his visit, true to his form, Perot said, “The Lewis and Clark Center was magnificent, but I really enjoyed my time with the Soldiers in class and at lunch. They’re all heroes everyday for what they do for our country.”

dedicated to educating audiences about WWI during its 100-year commemorations; and the “Vietnam War Commemoration Lecture Series,” a lecture series devoted to educating audiences about the Vietnam War during the nation’s observance of its 50th anniversary. Execution of all the lecture series, including the InterAgency Brown-Bag Lecture Series, includes identification and cultivation of external sponsors to support the programs and assist with promoting them.

- The Center sponsors academic awards for the graduating classes of Command and General Staff Officers Course and the School for Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) with the “Colin L. Powell Interagency Student Award” and the “Simons Center Interagency Writing Award.”
- The Center administers a “Simons Center Fellows/Scholars/Interns” program that brings graduate and Ph.D. candidates into the CGSC arena to further their studies in interagency/ government leadership, operations and related issues. – Fourteen students from both civilian and military backgrounds have completed the program since its launch in 2011.

CGSC Foundation is rightfully proud of all the Simons Center’s accomplishments and contributions to improving interagency cooperation and education of leaders for the nation. But none of this would have been possible without the willingness of a great American like Ross Perot to believe in the mission and support it from the beginning.

On July 9, 2019, the nation suffered a great loss of a true American patriot. Ross Perot was truly a man of vision, integrity and compassion, and more than just a great friend of U.S. service members. We mourn his loss and offer our condolences to his family. We will carry on his legacy with great pride. **IAJ**