Top European NCOs inducted into U.S. Army
Sergeants Major Academy International
Student Hall of Fame

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June 10, 2010

FORT BLISS, Texas -- Sergeants major from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia were recently inducted into the International Student Hall of Fame at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Sergeant Major of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mario Bagaric; Sergeant Major of the Armed Forces of Croatia, Command Sgt. Major Goran Turk; and Sergeant Major of the Armed Forces of Serbia Goran Radic were inducted in a ceremony here in May.

The Hall of Fame recognizes those noncommissioned officers who have achieved prominent leadership positions in their countries’ military and made lasting contributions to leadership development and the education of their country’s NCO Corps.

“The significant contributions of qualifying sergeants major around the world deserve recognition,” explained Michael Huffman, the director of the USASMA International Military Student Office. “International students who train at the academy visit the hall of fame and realize the potential of our graduates and emulate their standards of conduct and academic achievements. Since USASMA is the proponent for the U.S. Army NCO Education System, the academy provides a proper and fitting setting in which to recognize international military students who have reached the pinnacle of their professions, Huffman said.

Bagaric joined the Bosnia and Herzegovina resistance movement in October 1991 and in April 1992 he joined the Croatian Counsel of Defense. Bagaric has served as a military police officer, a squad leader, a signal NCO and a personnel NCO. He was selected for the position of Sergeant Major of the Armed Forces in 2005. He is a 2009 graduate of the USASMA's Class 59.
Turk served as a platoon commander in the former Yugoslav Army. He also served as a logistics battalion NCO, first sergeant, brigade command sergeant major and command sergeant major in the Support Command of the Croatian army. He is a 2002 graduate of the USASMA's Class 52.

“It is an honor to me to be recognized and placed in the hall of fame at the most prestigious NCO academy in the world,” Turk wrote in a letter to USASMA. “What has fascinated me most in my career since coming to the academy in 2001, and makes me proud, is that together, NCOs from around the world openly share ideas, information and lessons learned ... to improve the overall development of professional NCO corps inside their respective armed services.”

The third inductee, Radic, graduated from the Army Military High School in 1995. Since then he has served in several leadership positions in reconnaissance and counterterrorism commands. He was appointed Sergeant Major of the Serbian Armed Forces in June 2009. Radic is also a graduate of the academy's Class 59.

Nomination to the hall of fame is highly selective, and is open only to graduates of the academy’s resident or nonresident courses, USASMA officials said. Nominees must be appointed to the highest enlisted position in their nations’ armed forces or be the appointed senior enlisted member of an operational combined command while holding a rank equal or senior to the highest rank held in their service components.

The International Military Student Program at the academy continues to grow, USASAM officials said, affording servicemembers from allied nations the opportunity to develop expertise and systems needed for effective management and operations of their armed forces. “Our academy strives to provide international students with a better understanding of the United States, its people, political system, military, institutions, and way of life through the Department of the Army’s Field Studies,” Huffman said. In its 36-year history, the academy has trained more than 500 noncommissioned officers from 66 countries.

This marks the second year in which servicemembers have been inducted into the hall of fame. This year seven new members were inducted, bringing the total to 10.