



Professor Robert E. Knotts

Professor of National Security Studies

College of International and Security Studies

George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies

Robert Knotts was assigned as a Professor of National Security Studies to the College of International and Security Studies at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in December 2019.

Knotts is a career officer in the U.S. Army having retired in 2002 with more than 24 years active duty. As a Field Artillery officer he served in light, airmobile and airborne units in the continental United States, Alaska and Korea.

Upon his retirement in 2002, he became the Deputy Division Chief for U.S. Southern Command Counternarcotics Division in Miami, Florida. In 2006, he was selected to be the first civilian Division Chief of U.S. Southern Command's Counternarcotics and Counter Illicit Trafficking Division. In this capacity, he was responsible for all Department of Defense efforts supporting U.S. and Partner Nations counternarcotics and countering illicit trafficking efforts in Central America, South America and the Caribbean.



He served an instrumental role in the formation and execution of Plan Colombia, at the time the largest U.S. security assistance effort in the western hemisphere. This included the formation of three Colombian Army Counternarcotics Battalions and a Brigade Headquarters (BRACNA), the resumption of a U.S. supported Air Bridge Denial Program and the creation of a Regional Helicopter Training Center in Colombia. He has been decorated by the Colombian Army and the Colombian Air Force as a result of these efforts. In 2008, he directly supported the successful release of three U.S. hostages that had been held by Colombian guerillas for over five years.

He was the lead Department of Defense coordinator for Operation ANVIL, a combined U.S. and Government of Honduras effort to curtail the flow of contraband into Honduras via noncommercial aircraft. Additionally he helped establish the initial Inter Agency Task Force (IATF Tecun Uman) in Guatemala which became the model for the formation of additional IATF's not only in Guatemala but within other Central American countries.

In 2017, Knotts became the senior command representative and liaison for Joint Inter Agency Task Force – South (JIATF-S) located in Key West, Florida. This unique Task Force is directly responsible for supporting the interdiction/disruption over 270 metric of drug contraband on an annual basis. In March, 2019, he coordinated the single largest controlled shipment of seized cocaine, in excess of 43 metric tons, from Costa Rica to the U.S. in support of the Drug Enforcement Administration case efforts and ultimate destruction.

Previously, he was an Assistant Professor in the Department of History Sciences at the U.S. Military Academy, where he taught *History of the Military Art*. In this capacity, he received the inaugural "Excellence in Teaching Award" from the Department. He has also been a Professor of Military History at Florida International University where the program he led received "The Most Improved Program" within his region after his first year.

Knotts specializes in countering illicit trafficking and organized crime with an emphasis on whole of government and interagency efforts. He has travelled to more than 45 countries throughout the world and speaks Spanish.

He received his Bachelors of Science from the United States Military Academy at West Point and a Master of Arts in History from Duke University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and Staff College as well as the Joint Command and Staff College.