

Civilian Awards (1)

Category: Civilian Awards

Published: Wednesday, 21 December 2011 22:58

Written by david

Hits: 6208

Distinguished West Point Graduate Award

Below at the URL is the full text of the Distinguished West Point Graduate Award Nomination letter - with extensive documentation originally submitted to the West Point Association of Graduates by the Annapolis Association of West Point Graduates in 2000. It sums up all I have done as a West Point Graduate, even after I 'retired' from active service in 1973.

The Award was made in 2004 during Graduation Week at West Point. I was only the 6th retired Colonel to have received this prestigious award since it was initiated. All the rest have been very high ranking (Lt Generals to Full Generals) officers and very selected civilians who have risen to positions of high responsibility after leaving military service after graduating from West Point.

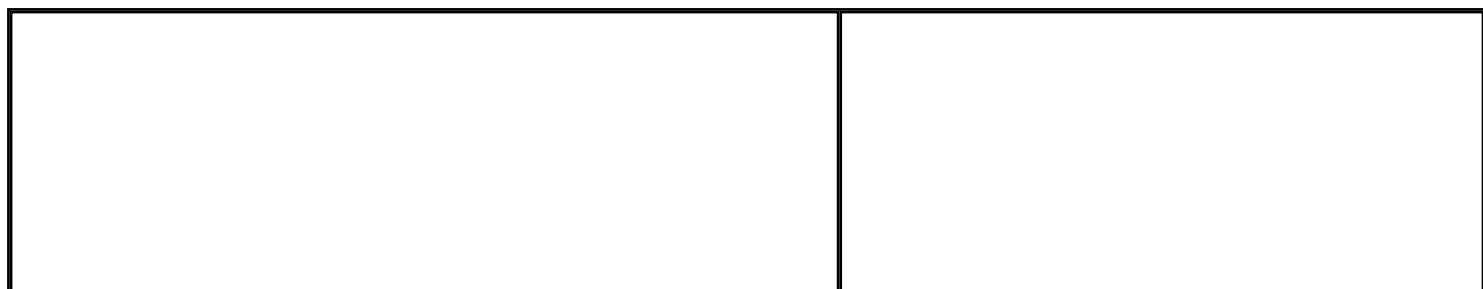
<http://www.west-point.org/academy/dgrad/Nomination.html>

Below are photographs of that 2004 Ceremony. and accompanying activities including the gathering of Hughes immediate family - all of whom attended . As well as a number of Enlisted Veterans of the Korean War who served in 'Lieutenant Hughes' Company K 7th Cavalry in 1951. They flew in from California just to attend. In tribute to that unusual loyalty to me, I wore a 7th Cavalry Hat - the only recipient of the award with a hat, all the others were bare headed.

The Background of that Award is that any of the local - US or foreign land - West Point Associations, and any Graduating Class may nominate a graduate, and other associations or classes may endorse a nomination.

In the case of Dave Hughes Class of 1950, the winning nomination was made by the Annapolis, Maryland West Point Association of Graduates - Lt Gen (Ret) Jack Cushman '44, President, and Col (Ret) Bill Taylor '70 . Fourteen other regional Associations co-nominated Hughes.

The Award Medal



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Front Side



Obverse Side



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5 Retired General Officers, 1 Civilian graduate, 2 Retired Colonels, including me in the 7th Cavalry hat

I became only the 6th Colonel who was awarded the Distinguished Graduate Award by 2004

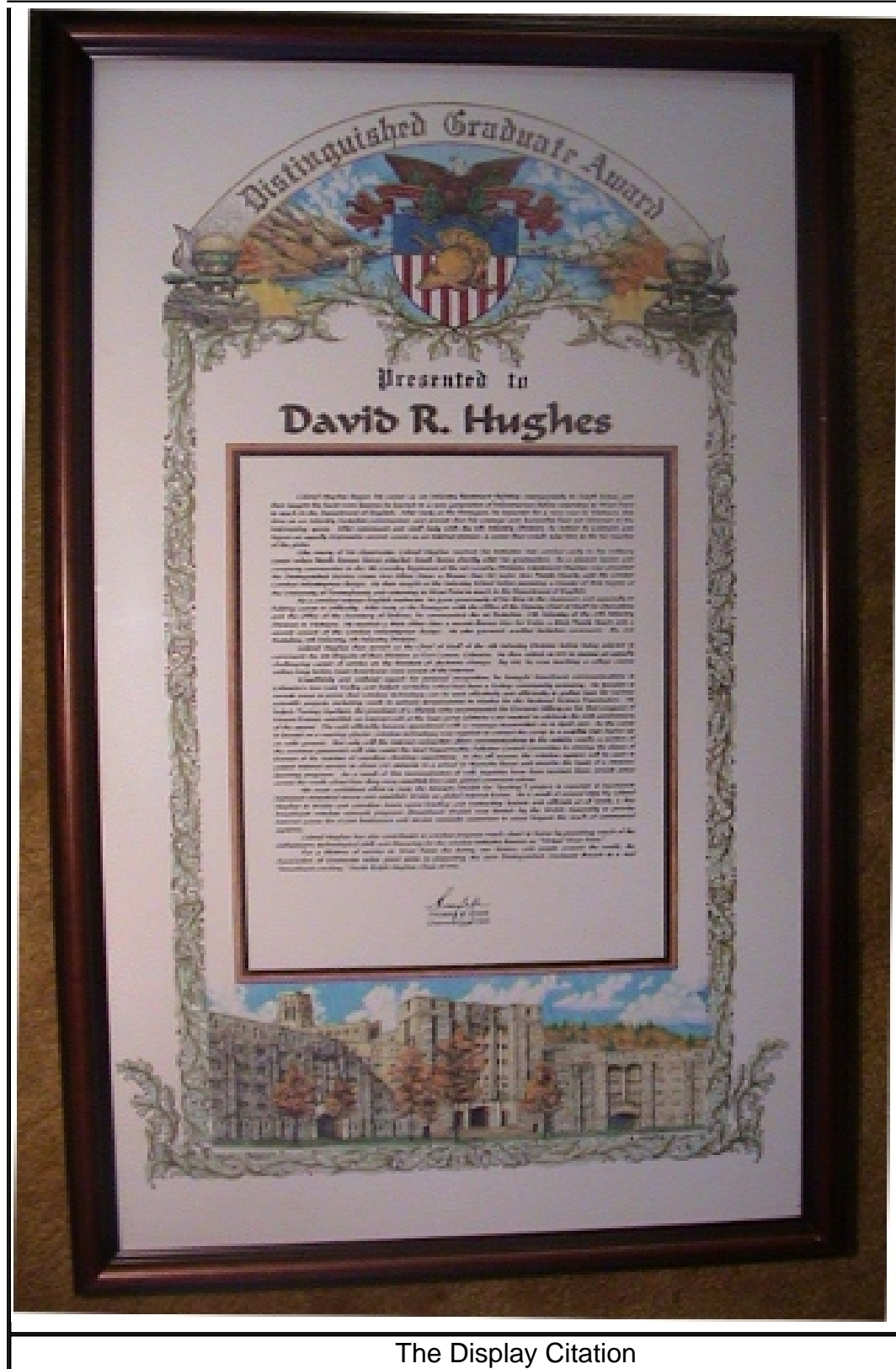
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The Display Citation

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Colonel Hughes began his career as an Infantry lieutenant fighting courageously in South Korea and then taught the hard-won lessons he learned to a new generation of Infantrymen before returning to West Point to teach in the Department of English. After duty at the Pentagon, he departed for a new war in Vietnam, this time as an Infantry battalion commander, and proved that his courage and leadership had not dimmed in the intervening years. After command and staff duty with the 4th Infantry Division, he retired in Colorado and began an equally impressive second career as an Internet pioneer, a career that would take him to the far reaches of the globe.

Like many of his classmates, Colonel Hughes received his initiation into combat early in his military career when North Korean forces attacked South Korea shortly after his graduation. As a platoon leader and company commander in the 7th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division, Lieutenant Hughes was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, two Silver Stars, a Bronze Star for valor, two Purple Hearts, and the coveted Combat Infantryman Badge. He then taught at the Infantry School before pursuing a Master of Arts degree at the University of Pennsylvania and returning to West Point to teach in the Department of English.

As a combat veteran English instructor, he gave generously of his time in the classroom and especially in helping cadets in difficulty. After duty at the Pentagon with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, he commanded the 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry of the 11th Infantry Division in Vietnam. He received a third Silver Star, a second Bronze Star for Valor, a third Purple Heart, and a second award of the Combat Infantryman Badge. He also garnered another battalion command: the 2nd Battalion, 11th Infantry, 5th Infantry Division.

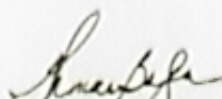
Colonel Hughes then served as the Chief of Staff of the 4th Infantry Division before being selected to command the 3rd Brigade of that Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. He then retired in 1971 to pursue an equally challenging career of service on the frontiers of electronic change. By 1982 he was teaching a college course online—long before most Americans were aware of the Internet.

Unselfishly and without regard for personal recognition, he brought broadband communications to Colorado's San Luis Valley and helped revitalize what had been a fading community economy. He traveled to remote areas to prove that wireless technology can be used effectively and efficiently to gather data for various scientific projects, including work in subzero temperatures in Alaska for the National Science Foundation. He helped Tsering Gyaltzen, the grandson of a Sherpa who accompanied Sir Edmund Hillary on his first conquest of Mount Everest, establish an Internet café at the base camp (altitude 5,800 meters) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ascent. The café officially became operational with a message transmitted on 14 April 2001. As the camp is located on a moving glacier, wireless technology was required to connect the camp to a satellite dish higher up on solid ground. Not only will the Internet connection allow communications to the outside world, a portion of the revenues generated will also assist the local Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee in ridding the slopes of Everest of the detritus of countless climbing expeditions. In the off season, the wireless system will be used to extend Internet service to about 250 students in a school in Namche Bazar and provide the basis of a distance learning program. As a result of this demonstration of will, inquiries have been received from remote areas across the world about how they may establish low-cost, global communications.

His most ambitious effort to date, the Arwyn (Welsh for "Leading") project, is expected to regenerate depressed industrial towns and establish Wales as global Internet leader. As a result of several trips by Colonel Hughes to Wales and countless hours spent briefing and instructing leaders and officials at all levels, a free broadband wireless network program (Broadband Wales) was funded by the Welsh Assembly to provide Internet access for 67,000 businesses and 110,000 domestic customers in areas beyond the reach of commercial systems.

Colonel Hughes has also contributed to wireless progress much closer to home by providing much of the enthusiasm, technological skill, and financing for the wireless initiative known as "Virtual West Point."

For a lifetime of service to West Point, the Army, our Nation, and people around the world, the Association of Graduates takes great pride in presenting the 2004 Distinguished Graduate Award to a real "broadband cowboy." David Ralph Hughes, Class of 1950.


THOMAS B. DYER
Chairman and CEO

The Citation

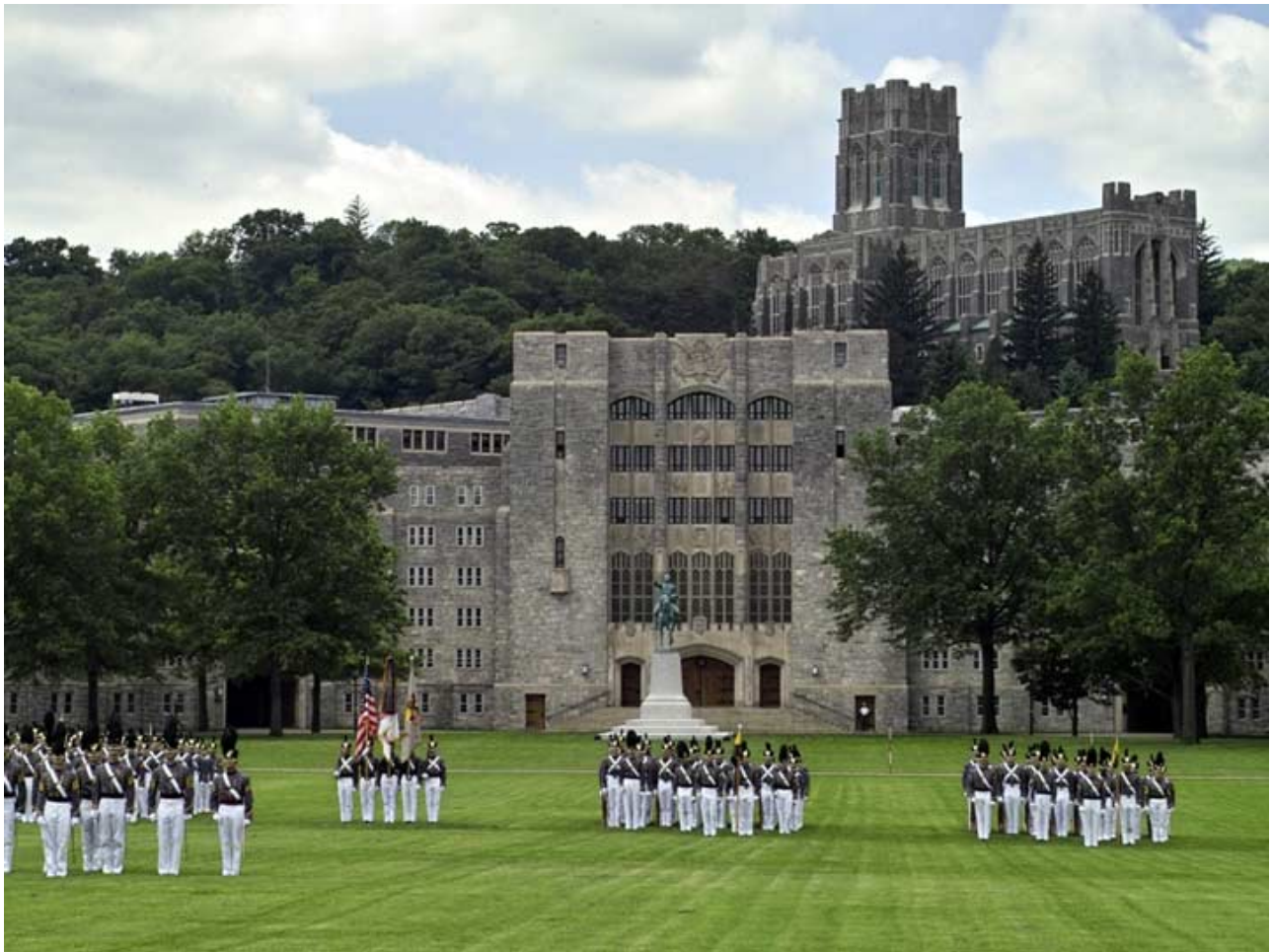
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All but Diana, who was in a wheel chair on Trophy Point and Lindsey, not present at West Point then.

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President of the USMA Association of Graduates putting the medal on me

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Indoor, Washington Hall, remarks by many. General Cushman who nominated me for the DG Award is behind the Speaker. Announcement of Donations given to West Point by various Classes every year. Cadets, Alumni, and families all present.

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Son Ed at the Great Chain on Trophy Point. It was stretched, on logs, across the Hudson River at West Point in 1778 to stop British War Ships from reaching Albany and splitting the Colonies. July 1st, 1946 I stood on Trophy Point with all new cadets from my Class on 1940, and swore the Oath of Office. The view is north from West Point.

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Mike Verlarde who was with me as a PFC in the battle for Hill 347 in Korea while we were in the 7th Cav - we stand in front of Custer's grave in the Cemetery at West Point. We called the Battle we won Custer's Revenge

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Patsy and I in front of our Quarters (top Floor) when I taught at West Point, 48 years earlier

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Patsy and her oldest, longest, friend - Cindy Adams - at West Point. Charlie Adams and I served together with our families three times - at Univ of Penna getting Masters Degrees, at West Point in the English Department, and on the beach near Schofield Barracks on Oahu in Hawaii.

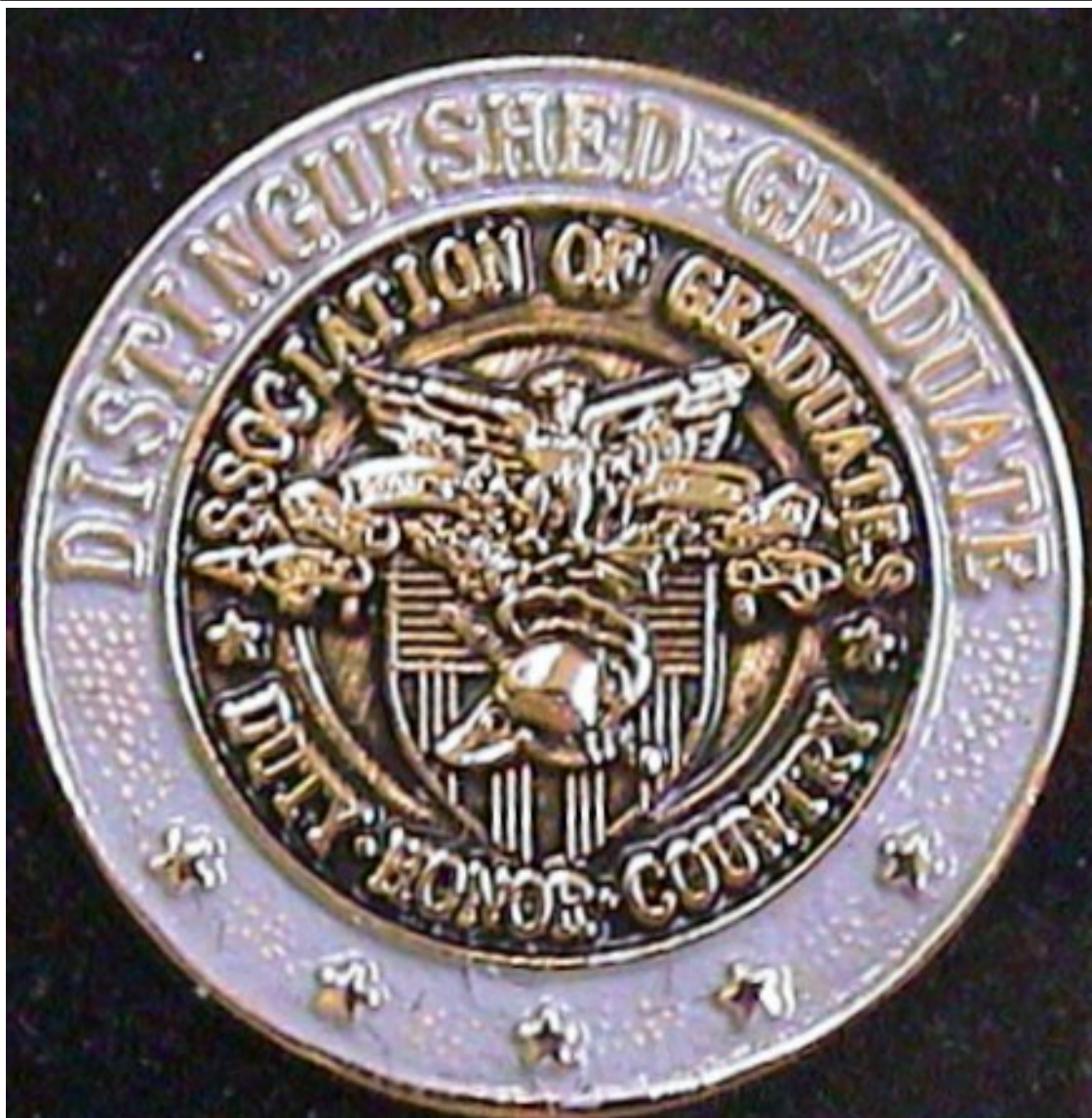
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Distinguished Graduate Pin which I wear on Civilian Clothes.

I appear to be the only Grad who lives in Colorado who is a DG, even though there are several thousand retired graduates and many retired General officers, none of whom are DG's, who live in Colorado.



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Me, Mounted during the Colorado Springs Rodeo Parade as Grand Marshal after winning the Distinguished Graduate Award.

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