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The creation of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) is rooted in the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, signed by President Bill Clinton on October 30, 2000. Section 2166 of the Act establishes the authority for the Secretary of Defense to operate a facility that will provide professional education and training to eligible personnel of Western Hemisphere nations within the context of the democratic principles set forth in the Charter of the Organization of the American States (OAS). Two broad principles of the OAS, essential to the mission of the WHINSEC, are to ensure peace of the Western Hemisphere and promote human welfare through inter-American cooperation that is fully grounded in International law.

Preserving Regional Peace The military component of the OAS and *raison d'être* to the WHINSEC is founded in the inherent right of Western Hemisphere nations to preserve regional peace and prosperity through exercising collective self defense. Self defense through the use of military force is established by international law and codified in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, Article 3 of the Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty), and reaffirmed in Articles 2, 3, and 15 of the Charter of the OAS (Charter of Bogota). The mission of the WHINSEC, as enumerated by U.S. federal law, is to add to the principles of the Charter of the OAS by fostering mutual knowledge, transparency, confidence, and cooperation by promoting democratic values, respect for human rights, and knowledge, and an understanding of US customs and traditions. The congressionally mandated curriculum includes instruction in leadership development, counterdrug and peace support operations, and disaster preparedness and relief planning. The Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, directs additional training and education programs that directly support US policies throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Institute Opens its Doors The WHINSEC was inaugurated on January 17, 2001, to signal renewed emphasis in the Americas for the coming century and address future challenges of strengthening democracy in the Western Hemisphere. The institute occupies historic Building 35, located on main post at Fort Benning, Georgia. Building 35 was completed in the mid-1930s and originally was designed to house the U.S. Army Infantry School. As such, it continues to be known as the "Old Infantry School." The building was re-dedicated in 1994 in honor of U.S. Army

General Matthew B. Ridgway for his outstanding service to the United States in both peace and war. Today, the headquarters building of the WHINSEC is known as Ridgway Hall. **Classrooms Named to Honor U.S. Soldiers** General Order 42 signed on April 27, 1948, by Brigadier General Shepard authorized four classrooms in the "Old Infantry School," now Ridgway Hall, to be designated in honor of four U.S. Army Infantry officers who died serving their country in World War II. **Pratt Hall**, Classroom 319, is named in honor of Brigadier General Don F. Pratt the assistant division commander of 101st Airborne Division who was killed in a glider accident in France on September 14, 1944. **Wharton Hall**, Classroom 322, is named in honor of Brigadier General James E. Wharton, the assistant division commander of the 80th Infantry Division who was killed in action in France on August 12, 1944. **Patrick Hall**, Classroom 224, is named in honor of Major General Edwin D. Patrick, the commanding general of the 6th Infantry Division and former chief of staff of the 6th Army, who died of wounds received on Luzon, Philippine Islands on March 15, 1945. **Walker Hall**, Classroom 225, is named in honor of Brigadier General Nelson M. Walker, the assistant division commander, 8th Infantry Division, who died of wounds received in France on July 10, 1944. **Latin American Liberators Remembered** The WHINSEC continues this fine tradition by linking its hemisphere-wide mission with notable figures from the entire hemisphere's common past. Six classrooms are named in honor of the liberators of Latin America from their colonial status under the Spanish Crown. Classroom 223 is named in honor of Chilean General Bernardo O'Higgins who was a leader of Chile's war for independence and later was the Supreme Director of Chile. He died in Peru during 1842. Classroom 219 is named in honor of Venezuelan General Simón Bolívar, who is considered the liberator and unifier of the Americas. Many of the other notable persons in the movement to liberalize Latin America fought under his leadership. General Bolívar died in Colombia in 1830. Classroom 114 is named in honor of Mexican Priest Miguel Hildago who allied himself with the Indian and mestizo populations and unified them with the movement to liberate Mexico from Spain. He was captured and executed by Spanish forces July 30, 1811. Classroom 115 is named in honor of General José de San Martín. As an Argentine national, he campaigned for the liberation of South America and was later proclaimed the Liberator and Protector of Peru. He died in France August 1850. Classroom 160 is named in honor of Honduran General Francisco Morazan who was the leader and president of the Central American Federation in 1830 and again in 1835. As the federation disintegrated, he fled Guatemala and was later executed by political opponents in Costa Rica September 15, 1842. Finally, Classroom 158 is named in honor of the Cuban poet, essayist, and journalist, Jose Martí, who became a symbol of Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain He died in a skirmish at Dos Rios May 19, 1895. **Library Bears Name of Local Civic, Business Leader** To pay tribute to the role Columbus, Georgia, and the neighboring communities have played as friends and mentors to the Latin American and Caribbean students attending the WHINSEC, the library, the focal point of any academic institution, was named in honor of the late John B. Amos. Amos was a central figure in Columbus' business and civic communities. His wife, the late Elena Diaz-Verson Amos, was active in Latin American affairs and in the promotion of human rights throughout the region. Future accomplishments of the WHINSEC will no doubt ensure the continuation of this tradition creating strong community ties with neighbors nearby and within the Western Hemisphere.