The United States Army
Aviation Center of Excellence
Veterans Day Ceremony



9 November 2026

Veterans Park

Fort Rucker, AL



Brigadier General Kenneth C. Cole
Deputy Commanding General
United States Army Aviation
Center of Excellence

Brigadier General (BG) Ken Cole assumed duties as the Deputy Commanding General, US Army Aviation Center of Excellence (AVCOE), in August 2024. Prior to assuming duties as the Deputy Commanding General, AVCOE, he was the Deputy Commanding General – Support of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and he also served as Chief of Staff for XVIII Airborne Corps. Brigadier General Cole's previous combat assignments and operational deployments include Germany as the Corps Chief of Staff, Iraq and Afghanistan as a Joint Special Operations Detachment Commander, Joint Special Operations Officer, MH-47 Company Commander and Platoon Leader.

BG Cole has deployed to combat and other operational missions in CENTCOM, AFRICOM, and EUCOM on 21 total occasions. OCONUS assignments include Commander, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade in Katterbach, Germany, and Commander, 3-2 General Support Aviation Battalion, Camp Humphreys, Korea. His CONUS assignments include Chief of Staff, Joint Special Operations Command, Deputy Commander, US Army Aviation Center of Excellence, and various other leadership and staff assignments.

BG Cole earned a Bachelor of Science degree in International & Strategic History from the United States Military Academy's Class of 1994, and a Master of Military Arts and Sciences from the Command and General Staff College. He was also a Senior Service College Fellow at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies.

BG Cole's military awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legions of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medals with two oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with Numeral five, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the Joint Service Achievement Medal. He also served as a member of task forces that earned two Presidential Unit Citations and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award.

Brigadier General Cole's decorations include the Master Aviator Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Parachutist Badge and the Order of Saint Michael Bronze.
BG Cole is the proud husband of Dailah Cole. They have four children.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

WELCOME

RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

INVOCATION
CH (COL) DANIEL P. KERSEY
COMMAND CHAPLAIN
UNITED STATES ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

ARRIVAL OF NATIONAL COLORS

HONORS TO THE NATION

REMARKS
BG KENNETH C. COLE
DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL
UNITED STATES ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

LAYING OF THE WREATH

TAPS

ARMED FORCES MEDLEY

DEPARTURE OF NATIONAL COLORS

CONCLUSION



HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, was originally set as a U.S. legal holiday to honor the end of World War I, which officially took place on 11 November 1918. One year later, in November 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day. On November 11, 1921, an unidentified American soldier killed in the war was buried at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. In legislation that was passed in 1938, 11 November was "dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day.'" As such, this new legal holiday honored World War I veterans.

In 1954, after having been through both World War II and the Korean War, the 83rd U.S. Congress at the urging of veterans' service organizations -- amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on 1 June 1954, 11 November became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

In 1968, the Uniform Holiday Monday Act ensured three-day weekends for federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Columbus Day. Under this bill, Veterans Day was moved to the fourth Monday of October. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holiday on its original date.

Finally, on 20 September 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a law that returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of 11 November beginning in 1978. Since then, the Veterans Day holiday has been observed on 11 November each year. A wreath-laying ceremony is held each Veterans Day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arlington National Cemetery and, parades, ceremonies and other celebrations are held to honor our veterans across the United States.

Thank you for joining us for today's ceremony! Our sincere appreciation is extended to the Maneuver Center of Excellence Band, Fort Benning, Georgia, for their outstanding performance today!