Greta C. Holtz is currently Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to U.S. Special Operations Command. Prior to this, she was the Vice Chancellor at National Defense University, Washington, D.C. (2015-17) and the Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman (2012 to 2015). She is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. From 2009 to 2010, Ms. Holtz was Director for Provincial Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. Previous assignments in Washington include Director of the Middle East Partnership Initiative in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (2006-2007) and Coordinator for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe within the Bureau of European Regional Political-Military Affairs (2004-2006). Ms. Holtz entered the Foreign Service in 1985 and has served at U.S. Missions in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Tunisia, Syria, and as Principal Officer in Adana, Turkey. Prior to joining the State Department, Holtz worked as an intern in the NATO policy office, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and as an analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency.

While serving as consul in Tunisia in 1991, Holtz became suspicious about the passport of an American who appeared at the U.S. embassy to apply for a birth certificate and passport for his infant daughter. Sure enough, William Patrick Alston turned out to be a murderer who had escaped from a prison in Pennsylvania 11 years earlier. Holtz alerted various authorities and Alston was rearrested.

She received a B.S. from Vanderbilt University, an M.A. from the University of Kentucky, and an M.S. from the National War College. Ms. Holtz speaks Arabic and Turkish.

Ambassador Holtz receives the
Phi Alpha Theta Distinguished Alumnus Award
Presented at the Alumni Reception in the Department of History on
October 6, 2017

On behalf of Phi Alpha Theta and the Vanderbilt University History
Department I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected as the
recipient of the Phi Alpha Theta Distinguished Alumnus Award. Phi Alpha
Theta is the undergraduate history honors society with chapters all around the
country, including Vanderbilt. Our mission is both to promote the study of
history and connect students and professors in intellectual and social dialogue.

This year we formed a small committee of undergraduates within the
organization to select an outstanding alumnus from one of the returning
classes to honor at the Homecoming reunion.

As we searched through the many qualified candidates, the committee was
extremely impressed by your long career in the Foreign Service, especially
your service in Iraq and your appointment as Ambassador to Oman. At a time
when the State Department is facing so many challenges, the committee
believes that your distinguished public service represents the best of what a
Vanderbilt education can produce.

We are proud to have you as an alumnus of both Vanderbilt and the History
Department.

Sincerely,

Laura L. Grove
President,
Phi Alpha Theta—Alpha Beta Iota Chapter