

Major General David C. Garza, USMC, (Retired) Biography

Major General Garza was born in Los Fresnos, Texas and began his career in the United States Air Force in 1969 as a Heavy Equipment Engineer. In 1970 after his military occupational skill training he deployed to the Republic of South Vietnam for a 19 month tour of duty. In September 1971 he returned to the United States and in 1973 he closed out his Air Force career with an Honorable Discharge at the rank of Sergeant. Following his discharge from the Air Force he attended Texas A&M University and in 1977 graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree. In 1978 he returned to military service in the United States Marine Corps as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry. In 1999 he earned a Masters Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College



in Newport Rhode Island. In an exciting and rewarding 34-year journey including combat tours in Desert Shield/Desert Storm and twice in Afghanistan plus a tour in Latin America, Major General Garza served in world-wide assignments as a Commander, Director, and Staff Officer. His most important personal awards are his Combat Action Ribbons and The Order of Saint Maurice in the rank of Primicerius presented to him by the National Infantry Association for his selfless service, integrity, and professional competence to the infantryman and the nation. He retired from active service after 38 years and is now President and CEO of Lead Your Ship LLC, a Leadership Consulting LLC providing leadership fundamentals to high school and college students and enabling wounded warrior events and transitioning veterans. He lives in New Braunfels, Texas with his wife Carrie and their Golden Retriever Alex.

1978: Commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry in the United States Marine Corps.

1978-1979: Infantry Platoon Commander, A Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Camp Pendleton, California.

1980: Executive Officer and Company Commander, A Company, School of Infantry, Camp Pendleton, California.

1981: Deployed to Okinawa, Japan as the Battalion Assistant Operations Officer for Headquarters and Service Battalion, 3rd Force Service Support Group and subsequently deployed to the Republic of Korea as the Assistant Operations Officer, Combat Service Support Detachment 32 for Exercise Team Spirit 82.

1983-1986: Operations Officer and Executive Officer for Recruiting Station San Diego, California.

1986: Student, Armor Officer Advance Course, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

1986: Company Commander, A Company, 1st Light Armored Vehicle Battalion, Camp Pendleton, California.

1987-1990: Inspector-Instructor, A Company and Assistant Battalion Inspector Instructor for the activation of 4th Light Armored Vehicle Battalion, Camp Pendleton, California.

1990: Brigade Assistant Operations Officer, 7th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, 29 Palms, California.

1990-1991: Deployed with the 7th MEB Advance Party in support of Operation Desert Shield

and Desert Storm. While in Saudi Arabia, he served as the XVIII Airborne Corps Liaison Officer, I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Action Officer in the MEF Combat Operations Center and as Officer in Charge for the MEF Commanding General's Light Armored Vehicle Forward Command Post.

1991-1992: Deployed to Quarry Heights, Panama as the Aide de Camp (ADC) to the Commander, United States Southern Command.

1993: Student, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Quantico, Virginia.

1994-1997: Joint Counter Drug Planner and Officer in Charge, Joint Operations Center and Crisis Action Center, Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6) Fort Bliss, Texas.

1997-1999: Battalion Commander, 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (Wolfpack), Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, 29 Palms, California.

1999: Student, Top Level School, Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island and graduated with a Masters Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies.

2000-2002: Plans Chief for the Plans, Policies, and Operations (PP&O) Directorate, Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, DC.

2002-2004: Regimental Commander, 6th Marine Regiment, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

2004 (Feb to July): Commander, Regional Command East, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) serving under CJTF-180 and CJTF-76 with responsibility over 15 Provinces, 6 Infantry Battalions (2 USMC and 4 USA), 8 Provincial Reconstructions Teams (PRTs), and 2 Afghan National Army Battalions.

2004-2007: Director, Marine Air Ground Staff Training Program, (MSTP), Quantico, Virginia.

2007: Director responsible for organizing the Marine Corps 2025 Strategic Vision Group.

2007-2008: Deputy Commanding General, United States Marine Central Command, (US MARCENT), Tampa, Florida.

2008-2010: Chief of Staff, United States Southern Command, (SOUTHCOM), Miami, Florida.

2010-2011: Director for Joint Operations, International Joint Command, Kabul, Afghanistan.

2011-2012: Inspector General of the Marine Corps.

1 Oct 2012: Retired from active service after 38 years and is now President/CEO of Lead Your Ship, a Leadership Consulting LLC. He lives in New Braunfels, Texas with his wife Carrie and their Golden Retriever Alex.

Major General Garza's personal Awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit (3d award), and Bronze Star (2d award), Combat Action Ribbon, and The Order of Saint Maurice in the rank of Primicerius.

