

Fernandez “Frank” Ponds RDML, USN, Ret



Married to the former Carol Hayes of San Diego, CA, they have two adult children and a grandchild. He is the Principal and Owner of FPONDS, LLC Independent Consulting, and Senior Advisor for Defense and Critical Infrastructure for Stevenson Group International Consultants.

A native of Alabama, Admiral Ponds was commissioned from Officer Candidate School in 1983. He holds a B.A. from the University of Alabama and an M.S. in Information Systems Technology, George Washington University; an M.S. in Military Studies, Marine Corps Command and Staff College; and an M.S. in National Security Strategy, National Defense University. A graduate of Darden, Corporate Business School, and National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD), he holds numerous senior executive certificates in leadership, corporate management, and incident preparedness and emergency response.

Admiral Ponds served over 33 years in operational, senior executive, and managerial positions within DoD and the Interagency. Additionally, he held five Commands afloat and ashore.

- Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group THREE. Led the Navy's largest Amphibious Expeditionary Strike Group of 3-Amphibious Squadrons, 8-Naval Support Elements, and 15-Amphibious Warships comprised of over 15,000 Sailors, Marines, and civilians.
- Commander, Navy Region Hawaii. Directed \$8.6B in Base Operating Support of equipment, supplies, real property, facilities, and infrastructure for the Navy's largest strategic island base in the Pacific and the Pacific Missile Range Facility, the world's most extensive multi-dimensional test and training range.
- Commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific. Ensured the combat readiness and operational availability of 11 Hawaii-based surface combatants, including six Ballistic Missile Defense ships, and oversight of the Navy's Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense FTM Program.
- Commander, Amphibious Squadron EIGHT. Led a staff of seventy Navy and Marine Corps personnel in ensuring the operational readiness of six amphibious ships of more than 1,800 Sailors and Marines. Led an amphibious squadron of three amphibious ships, three cruiser-destroyers, a fast attack submarine, and dedicated air squadrons during OIF, OEF, and Counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. Additionally, he served as Mission Commander during Operation Continuing Promise 2008, Afloat Mission Commander during HADR operations in Bangladesh in 2007, and Mission Commander during HADR operations in Haiti in 2008.
- Commanding Officer, USS FIFE (DD-991). Conducted counter-drug operations and Theater Security Cooperation missions during two deployments within the SOUTHCOM AOR.

Additional sea assignments include Executive Officer, USS Paul F. Foster (DD 964), Damage Control Assistant and Assistant First Lieutenant in USS Mauna Kea (AE 22), Boilers Officer in USS Midway (CV 41), Chief Engineer in USS Berkeley (DDG 15), and FlagSec for Commander, Task Force Seven Six.

Ashore, he served as the Senior Naval Advisor to the Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, and International Security Operations and served on the staffs of OPNAV (N81/00X) Analysis, Assessment, and Warfare Integration, OPNAV (N3/N5) Operations, Plans, and Strategy, as Gas Turbine, Diesel and Steam Inspector on the Pacific Fleet Propulsion Examination Board, as a member of the Office of the Navy Inspector General, as Special Assistant to COMNAVSURFOR, and as Senior Fellow on the Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group.

An Honorary Chief Petty Officer, his decorations include DSSM, LOM (4), MSM (5), NMCM (3), NAM, DoS Superior Honor Award (2), and various service and campaign awards. Additionally, he received The 2013 GW Black Alumni Association IMPACT Award, the highest award for distinguished Black Alumni.

He is a member of the San Diego County Independent Redistricting Commission, Mission Readiness, Council For A Stronger America, National Naval Officer Association, and Surface Navy Association.