



COLONEL WAYNE R. SEARS

US Army, Retired

NDR Hall of Fame Induction: 13 April 2024

Colonel Sears graduated from NSU in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Resources Management and commissioned as an active duty Infantry officer. He was a Platoon Leader for 1/29 Infantry Regiment, Fort Benning, GA. After completion of the Initial Entry Rotary-Wing Course, he served as a Section Leader for the 4th Squadron, 7th Cavalry, Camp Garry Owen, South Korea.

He transitioned to the AH-1S Cobra and served as a Platoon Leader, Company Operations Officer, and HHC Company Commander for the 82nd Combat Aviation Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, before returning to Fort Rucker as an instructor. Later, he transitioned to the OH-58C Kiowa and the AH-64 Apache. In 1986, he was selected to command TF-112, a testbed unit for the Kiowa and Apache.

Colonel Sears next served as a Battalion Operations Officer, Battalion Executive Officer, and Brigade Operations Officer for the 82nd Airborne Division where he was instrumental in the deployment of several AH-64s into Panama during the lead-up to Operation Just Cause. He then deployed with the advance elements to Saudi Arabia for the participation of the 82nd Airborne Division in Operation Desert Storm.

He served as the Deputy Director for Aviation Special Operations with US Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, NC, and then commanded the 6th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Illesheim, Germany. Later, he served as the Mobility Assessment Officer for the US Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base, FL.

Colonel Sears commanded the 229th Aviation Group (Airborne) and returned to Fort Rucker as the Chief of Evaluations and Standards for Army Aviation. He then served as Chief of Staff of the Aviation School until his retirement in 2001.

Colonel Sears obtained a Master of Science in Public Administration from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. He completed the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses; Airborne, Ranger, Jumpmaster, Pathfinder, and Air Assault Courses; Initial Entry Rotary-Wing Course and numerous aviation qualification courses; the Command and General Staff College; and the US Army War College. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit (with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster); Bronze Star Medal; Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal (w/3 OLC); Air Medal; Army Commendation Medal (w/2 OLC); the Army Achievement Medal; and the Airborne, Ranger, Jumpmaster, Pathfinder, and Air Assault Badges.

For many years since his retirement, Colonel Sears has been a mentor and teacher to kids 10-14 years old as an Earth Camp Volunteer. He also instructs archery, canoeing, and firearms safety for the Cross Creeks National Wildlife Refuge.