Governor's Military Council Member Biographies

Chair

Vice Admiral Jody A. Breckenridge, United States Coast Guard (Retired)

Vice Admiral Jody A. Breckenridge served as Commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area until her retirement from the Coast Guard in 2010. Prior to this assignment, she served as the Director, Strategic Transformation Team where she was responsible for aligning and synchronizing the efforts to transform and modernize the Coast Guard. She has also served as the Commander of the 11th Coast Guard District, overseeing Coast Guard operations in the Southwest and the Eastern Pacific. During this time, the District stepped up its interagency collaboration, leading to record drug seizures including the largest maritime interdiction in US history and the arrest of the head of the Arellano Felix Drug Cartel.

Military Leadership

Colonel Deborah Aspling, United States Air Force (Retired)

Colonel Deborah Aspling served as the Deputy Chief, Air Force Physical Disability Division, responsible for executing the Disability Evaluation System interfacing with the Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Air Force. During her career, Colonel Aspling also served as Chief Nurse of David Grant Medical Center, Commander of the 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron and 349th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. She now serves as a management and program analyst, Air Force Physical Disability Review Board, tasked with reassessing the accuracy and fairness of military members combined disability ratings. Colonel Aspling has held a succession of senior positions in the private sector as a senior vice president and area manager for Kaiser Permanente, chief operations officer at Lodi Memorial Hospital and assistant administrator at Sutter General Hospital.

Major General Alice Astafan, United States Air Force (Retired)

Major General Alice Astafan was a member of the 2005 California's Council on Military Base Support and Retention, has been a member and chair of the California Veterans Board, and has been a member of the Southwest Defense Alliance, a group working to preserve and enhance critical defense missions and assets in the southwest United States. Prior to her retirement from the U.S. Air Force, General Astafan was the highest ranking woman military officer in the United States. She has also served as the CEO for the Federal Technology Center, a non-profit dedicated to federal technology transfer and economic development in the Sacramento region and the state. She currently serves on the board of directors for the Oak Ridge Association of Research Universities (ORAU), Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Major General Craig Cooning, United States Air Force (Retired)
Major General Cooning served as president of Network and Space Systems (N&SS) for The Boeing Company from July 2014 until recently where he oversaw 10,000 employees in 38 different states as part of six business areas providing global customers with space exploration, cybersecurity, missile defense, and satellite communications solutions. Previously, Cooning served as vice president and general manager of Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems, and chief executive officer of Boeing Satellite Systems International. Prior to joining Boeing in September 2005, Cooning, a retired Major General from the United States Air Force, was director of Space Acquisition in the Office of the Under Secretary of the Air Force. He provided acquisition support to the under secretary and program management direction to field organizations for the development and procurement of Air Force surveillance, communications, navigation and weather satellites; space launch systems; information warfare capabilities; ground-based strategic radars; communications and command centers; and sustainment for the nation's land-based strategic nuclear missile systems.

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Hackleman, United States Air Force (Retired)
Lieutenant Colonel Hackleman serves as Assistant City Manager for the City of Santa Maria since 2021. He was Chief Operations Officer at Reach Central Coast from 2019 to 2021. Hackleman was Executive Director for the Home Builders Association from 2017 to 2019. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1996 to 2017, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Hackleman earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and a Master of Science degree in Logistics and Supply Chain Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology. Hackleman is a member of the International City and County Management Association.

Lieutenant General Edward Hanlon, Jr., United States Marine Corps (Retired)
During his 39 year career in the Marine Corps, Lt. Gen. Hanlon served in a number of senior positions including Commanding General of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Commanding General of Marine Corps Combat Development Command and Deputy Commandant for Combat Development, and U.S. Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee. Following his retirement from military service, he joined Raytheon in 2007 as President of Raytheon International, Inc. Europe. He now serves as President of TransAtlantic Insights LLC, a consultant entity focusing primarily on defense and security programs and products vital to the US and NATO/EU.

Major General Anthony L. Jackson, United States Marine Corps (Retired)
Major General Jackson served as the Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations West, with which he also served as co-chair of the Western Regional Council, tasked with coordinating renewable energy development within the Department of Defense and with other stakeholders. Previous assignments include Director of Operations and Logistics, U.S. Africa Command and Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Marine Forces Central Command. He has also served as a military advisor on national security and renewable energy to the Rockefeller Family Fund and Pew Charitable Trusts.

Rear Admiral James Johnson, United States Navy, (Retired), M.D.
Rear Admiral Johnson was the 2012 President of the San Diego Military Advisory Council (SDMAC). He retired from the Navy in 2005 as the Director of TRICARE Regional Operations West, where he oversaw five-year, $10 billion health care contracts and integrated health care delivery system for more than 2 million beneficiaries in 21 states in the Western United States. During his career, Dr. Johnson also served as Chief Executive Officer of Naval Medical Center, San Diego, Medical Officer of the Marine Corps, and Principal Deputy for Clinical and Program Policy in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

Major General Dennis Kenneally, United States Army (Retired)
Major General Kenneally currently serves as executive director of the Southwest Defense Alliance, a group working to preserve and enhance critical defense missions and assets in the southwest United States. A decorated combat veteran, he served in numerous assignments including Commanding General of the California Army National Guard, as well as its assistant Adjutant General and Director of the Office of Homeland Security. He has also served as Chairman of the Board of the San Diego Chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association, Associate Administrator of the Veterans Administration, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of the Air Force.

Colonel Fred Meurer, United States Army (Retired)
Colonel Meurer served as the Director of Public Works and Housing, Ft Ord, Ca. During his career he also served as the Operational Test Director for the Apache helicopter and for the Hellfire missile system, the Office of Military Personnel and in various overseas assignments to include in combat with the 1st Infantry Division. After retiring from the Army, he served as Public Works Director for the City of Monterey for 5 years, then served as City manager for 23 Years. During and after his time with the City of Monterey, he served on the Boards of various local and national non-profits dedicated to improving the mission effectiveness and mission capabilities of the national security activities located on the Central Coast of California. He is an independent consultant to Booz Allen Hamilton.

Major General Eldon P. Regua, United States Army (Retired)
Major General Regua last served as deputy commanding general (wartime), Eighth Army in Yongsan, Korea, responsible for non-combatant evacuation, and the reception, staging, and onward movement and integration of Soldiers and equipment into the Korean peninsula in time of hostilities. His 36-year military career includes assignments as Commanding General, 75th Mission Command Division and Commanding General, 104th Training Division. He also served as a Personnel Committee Chairperson for the Secretary of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Board. Following his retirement from military service, Major General Regua has served as the General Manager for Creation Technologies and board member for the Campbell Veteran's Memorial Foundation and RightStep Services, Inc.

Command Sergeant Major Roberta Santiago, United States Army Reserve (Retired)
Command Sergeant Major Santiago served more than 23 years as a "drilling reservist" in the Army Reserve retiring in 1999 as the Command Sergeant Major, 352nd Combat Support Hospital in Oakland, California. In her civilian capacity; Ms. Santiago was employed by the United States Coast Guard as the Chief, Reserve Capabilities and Readiness Branch, Pacific Area Personnel Division, Alameda, California. She was responsible for programmatic oversight of

reserve mobilization, training and readiness, and development and execution of the Coast Guard's reserve training budgets for its Pacific Area units. She retired in August 2019 after 43 years in federal civil service which included assignments as paralegal/legal secretary with the U.S Attorney's Office; Manpower & Force Management Analyst & Program & Budget Analyst, U.S. Army; Fiscal Manager and Business Manager/Resource Manager U.S. Navy.
CSM Santiago served from February 2007 to March 2011 on the Defense Advisory Committee for Women in the Service (DACOWITS) and, for that duty was awarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service. A proud accomplishment for her contribution to the significant findings and recommendations regarding military women's recruitment, utilization in the theater of combat, retention, advancement, and well-being, women's health care in the deployed environment, support to families during deployment and employment of military spouses, school options for military children, and the care of the families of wounded warriors.

Civic Leadership

Mr. Thomas R. Berard
Thomas Berard retired in 2011 as the Executive Director of the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Prior to this assignment, he was the Executive Director and Deputy to the Commanding General of the White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, where he was the first civilian to hold the position of Director. He has over thirty years of civil service experience in Developmental Test and Evaluation, including work on the B-1B and B-2 bombers and the F-15, T-38, F-22, and F-35 aircraft. Mr. Berard holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from California State University, Stanislaus, and a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from California State University, Northridge.

Mr. Joseph A. Czyzyk
Joseph Czyzyk currently serves as Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Los Angeles-based Mercury Air Group. He was the 2011 Chairman of the Board of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and has served as a member of the Board of Governors of the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC). He is a decorated U.S. Veteran, having volunteered for two tours of duty (1966-1969) with the U.S. Navy Mobile Construction Battalion (Seabees) in the U.S. and Republic of Vietnam. Mr. Czyzyk is a Board Member of the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation and is on the Board of Directors of U.S. VETS.

Mr. Jeffrey Klein
Jeffrey Klein has 37 years of experience, 20 as a member of the Senior Executive Service, in the acquisition, operation and life cycle support of U.S. Navy surface ships, submarines, unmanned underwater vehicles, saturation diving systems, combat systems, C4ISR and information warfare systems. Mr. Klein last served as the Executive Director, Commander Naval Surface Forces. Previous assignments include Executive Director, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Installations & Logistics Directorate, Director of Specialty Engineering, Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City and Logistics & Financial Program Manager, Naval Sea Systems Command Deep Submergence Systems Program Office. Mr. Klein holds a Master of Science Degree in Engineering and a Bachelor of Chemical Engineering Degree from the Catholic University of America.

State Leadership

State Senator Bob Archuleta, Staff Sergeant, United States Army (Retired)
Senator Archuleta currently represents the 32st District in the California State Senate. He served with the 82nd Airborne Division and is the Chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. He is the first Latino Army Veteran named to the position. Senator Archuleta served as a Presidential Appointee under the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama as a member on the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy at West Point. The senator was the first Mexican-American to be appointed by any president to the board, and was immediately elected as co-chair. He also served on the Los Angeles County Military Veteran Affairs Commission, the United States Army Advisory Board for Military Recruitment, and the Los Angeles County Library Commission. He also served with the Montebello Police Department after attending Rio Hondo Police Academy.

Major General David S. Baldwin, Adjutant General, California Military Department
Major General Baldwin serves as the 46th Adjutant General of California, leading the largest, most frequently deployed National Guard force in the United States, with an authorized strength of more than 23,000 personnel. He is responsible for the operation of the state Military Department; consisting of the California Army and Air National Guard, State Military Reserve, and California Youth and Community Programs. He has twice deployed to Afghanistan, where his assignments included Executive Officer of the Combined Forces Command, Deputy Commander of the 101st Airborne Division Tactical Command Post, and Senior Mentor to the Commanding General of the 201st Afghan Army Corps.

Secretary Vito D. Imbasciani, PhD MD, Colonel, United States Army (Retired)
Secretary Vito D. Imbasciani PhD MD completed medical school at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, and his surgical and urologic residencies at Yale-New Haven Hospital and the West Haven VA Hospital (Connecticut). He earned MA and PhD degrees from Cornell University, and was a Fulbright Scholar to Rome, Italy in 1973. He held academic teaching positions at the University of Florida, Cornell University and Middlebury College (VT). Governor Edmund J. Brown appointed Dr. Imbasciani as the 16th Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs in September 2015 followed by a State Senate confirmation several months later. As member of the Governor's Cabinet, he also serves on the Board of the California Housing Finance Agency, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Committee, and the Governor's Military Council.

Mr. Samuel Assefa, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Appointed by Governor Newsom on September 15, 2021, Director Assefa most recently served as the Director of the Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development since 2016. He was Senior Urban Designer for the Department of Community Planning and Sustainability for the City of Boulder from 2010 to 2016, Director of Land Use and Planning Policy for the Department of Planning and Development and Deputy Chief of Staff for Economic and Physical Development for the Chicago Mayor's Office from 2004 to 2010 and Senior Urban Designer for SmithGroup JJR from 2002 to 2004. Assefa was Director of Special Projects for the San Francisco Department of Planning and Development from 1999 to 2002 and Senior Urban Designer for SMWM Architecture and Planning from 1993 to 1999. Assefa earned a Master of City Planning degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

State Senator Shannon Grove
Senator Grove currently represents the 16th District in the California Senate, where she serves as the Vice-Chair for the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs and as a member for the Senate Committee on Health. After graduating from high school, Senator Grove served overseas in the United States Army and is the first woman veteran to serve in the California Legislature, where she was elected to serve as State Assemblymember for the 34th District from 2010-2016. In addition to her state service, Senator Grove also serves as CEO of Continental Labor and Staffing Resources, which serves Bakersfield and Ridgecrest.

Ms. Dee Dee Myers, Director, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development
Appointed in 2019 as Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), Director Myers also serves as a Senior Advisor to Governor Newsom. An author and former co-host of a political talk show, Ms. Myers also served as White House Press Secretary for the Clinton Administration and has extensive experience in strategic communications, public affairs and corporate governance.

State Senator Richard Roth, Major General, United States Air Force (Retired)
Senator Roth currently represents the 31st District in the California State Senate, which includes March Air Reserve Base. He retired in 2007 from 32 years of military service in the United States Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps, where he served as Mobilization Assistant to The Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Air Force, overseeing more than 900 Reserve judge advocates and paralegals assigned to more than 200 offices at every level of command. He also has over 30 years of experience in the practice of labor and employment law, having worked as an attorney with the National Labor Relations Board and various Riverside-based firms.