

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

April 2024



LTC (R) Darrell M. Gray

United States Army

Sponsored by:
O'Fallon Chapter, NSDAR

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Darrell M. Gray was born in Bad Kreuznach, Germany to military parents and raised in Lawton/Ft. Sill, Oklahoma when his father separated from the US Army.



As high school seniors and Army JROTC Cadets, LTC (R) Gray and his twin brother, Daniel, enlisted in the US Army Reserve. After graduating high school, they attended and graduated from US Army Basic Training and 13B Field Artillery Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.

While attending Cameron University, LTC (R) Gray enlisted in the US Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class and Oklahoma Army National Guard before accepting an Army ROTC Scholarship earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and Commission as an 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army Air Defense Artillery branch in 1994. While serving on active duty, he earned his Master of Arts degree in Criminal Justice.

Throughout his career, Gray served in numerous leadership and staff positions both within and outside the continental U.S. His assignments included: Platoon Leader, Battery Executive Officer and Battalion Assistant Operations Officer at Ft. Hood and Ft. Bliss, TX; PATRIOT Battery Commander, Brigade Assistant Operations & Plans Officer and in support for the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, he served as the Battalion Rear Detachment Commander while assigned in Germany; Assistant Professor of Military Science and Department Chairman at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia; Deployment as part of 3rd Infantry Division's "Surge Forces" mission in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2007; Division and Brigade Air Defense and Airspace Management Cell Officer at Ft. Stewart, Georgia; US Army Fires Center of Excellence Deputy, Doctrine Chief and Deputy, Training and Doctrine Command Capability Manager- Army Air and Missile Defense Command (TCM-AAMDC) Division at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. LTC (R) Gray's final assignment was with Department of the Army Headquarters' G-3/5/7 Director of Training as a Mission Command Virtual Training Support Staff Officer for the Army's virtual simulator and simulation programs at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

LTC (R) Gray's awards and decorations include: The Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with campaign star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for Saudi Arabia, Iraqi Campaign Medal with campaign star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Non-commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon with numerical 3 device and the US Army Parachutist's Badge.

LTC (R) Gray's most memorable moment during his military career was during his deployment to Iraq with 3rd Infantry Division, he had the opportunity to work with the current Secretary of Defense, General Lloyd Austin and former CIA Director, General David Petraeus. His Best advice: "Your team is only as strong as the weakest link". and "If you want it, you have to earn it."

After 24 years of combined service in the military, Gray retired in 2014. Over the last ten years, LTC (R) Gray continues to serve and wear the uniform as McCluer High School's Army JROTC Senior Army Instructor and Department Chairman. To help grow McCluer's Army JROTC program, he takes Freshmen Cadets back to their old middle school to showcase them and encourage the incoming Freshmen to enroll in Army JROTC when they too can support the mission of Army JROTC of, "Motivating young people to be better citizens." During each Summer, LTC (R) Gray takes 12 McCluer JROTC Cadets to a week-long Army JROTC Summer Camp that is attended by 200 Army JROTC Cadets from Missouri, Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. This school year, LTC Gray was selected as the McCluer High School Teacher of the Year and is currently a finalist for the Ferguson-Florissant School District Teacher of the Year.

LTC (R) Gray is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), social & community service fraternity of Phi Beta Sigma, East St. Louis Chapter and works and supports Autism Awareness with two of his children. Additionally, he and his wife, Karen, are veteran business owners of a salon and spa in Fairview Heights, IL and are the founding members of the Gray and White Foundation, named in honor of both of their late mothers, that provides free hair care services for the homeless-including veterans returning to school or work force, the disabled, victims of domestic violence, foster kids and teen parents. They are parents to four children.

LTC (R) Gray is the 2nd cousin to the posthumously awarded Medal of Honor Recipient, US Marine Corps PFC Oscar. P. Austin, a Marine who gave his life to save the lives of his fellow Marines in Vietnam and is the namesake for the USS Oscar Austin, the first US Navy guided missile destroyer named in honor of a US Marine.

LTC Gray has devoted his life to serving our country, and has done a fine job.

The O'Fallon Chapter is proud to present LTC Retired Darrell Gray as Chapter Patriot of the Month.