



# Advisory Committee on Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans and Families

Committee Members Biographies

**Lieutenant General David W. Barno, U.S. Army (Retired)**

Director, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA Center)

Lieutenant General David W. Barno has served as the Director of the NESA Center at National Defense University since April 2006. During a thirty-year Army career, he commanded units at all levels from Lieutenant to Lieutenant General. General Barno commanded over 20,000 U.S. and Coalition Forces in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom for nineteen months from 2003-2005. He previously served in combat as an infantry officer with Army Ranger battalions in the Panama and Grenada invasions.

General Barno holds a M.A. degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University and a B.S degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He also is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. As Director of the NESA Center, General Barno has traveled widely in the Middle East region and has lectured at a variety of civilian and military institutions, including Harvard, Yale, Tufts, and West Point. He is a frequent consultant to government agencies on counter-insurgency, the war on terror and the changing nature of conflict.

## **Michael N. Ayoub**

Mr. Michael N. Ayoub is currently a senior Foreign Affairs Officer with the Department of State and works in the Bureau of Political Military Affairs. He has served a combined total of 28 years active and reserve duty as an Army Military Intelligence Officer and as a Weapons Inspector in Iraq in 1994.

In 2003, he was among the first civilians into Baghdad and served as the Senior Advisor to the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission. Following his return from Iraq, he was mobilized in support of OIF/OEF and assigned to Special Operations Central Command. Injured in the line of duty while deployed, he spent eight months in medical hold at Walter Reed Army Medical Center prior to retiring in 2006.

Born in Philadelphia, Mr. Ayoub is married and the father of two.

## **Elizabeth (Liza) Biggers**

My name is Elizabeth (Liza) Biggers. I am 26 years old, happily married, and currently reside in New York City. I am originally from Dayton, Ohio where I graduated with honors from Wright State University. I majored in World Religions and minored in Classics, but am currently trying my luck as a freelance artist. I have two younger twin brothers who served in the US Army. Matthew Biggers served in Bravo Co 1-26 INF of the 1<sup>st</sup> ID and Ethan Biggers in Bravo Co 1-502 of the 101<sup>st</sup>. Both joined right after high school and both became the rank of specialist. On March 5, 2006 my brother Ethan was shot in the head by a sniper while on a mission south of Baghdad. Surgeons in Balad removed both sides of his skull and Ethan miraculously survived to be flown back to the states.

My brother Ethan remained in a comatose state for nearly a year. We went with him from Bethesda, to Walter Reed, down to the Tampa VA, back to Walter Reed, and finally out to the Indianapolis VA. My family and I spent a long year at Ethan's bedside trying to help him recover from his Traumatic Brain Injury. We fought long and hard to get the best therapy and care for him -and Ethan did show small improvements throughout the year. In the end, however, we felt Ethan would not be able to recover to an acceptable level of quality of life. On February 13, we halted his feedings and 11 days later he died with Matt and I by his side. I loved my brother and would do anything for him, even if it meant watching him die. We buried Ethan on March 5, 2007 exactly a year after his injury. Although Ethan did not recover, I believe he deserved every opportunity to try. Many TBI's do recover and it is imperative that soldiers with these injuries be offered the best possible therapy and care available. The legacy of love and care for Ethan from our family in the past year, I hope can live on by making better the lives of others to be affected by war in the future.

## **Pam Estes**

I currently reside in Dayton, MD located just outside of Columbia between Baltimore and Washington, DC. I have lived in the Columbia area since 1969. I am married with two children: Jason who is 21 years old and Kari who is 15 years old. I attended the University of MD University College in College Park, MD and am employed full time as Director of Payroll and HRIS at WR Grace & Co. in Columbia.

Jason was critically injured on December 11, 2005 in Baghdad when an IED exploded under his humvee while on a mission to transport a bomb sniffing dog to one of the polling stations during the elections. Jason spent 3 months in ICU at Brook Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX and 7 months in the Polytrauma unit at McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, VA. He is currently living at home and receives daily out-patient care and therapy.

## **Frances K. Hackett**

Fran is Vice President, Administration and OSGLI in Prudential Financial's Group Insurance Department. Fran is the Accountable Executive for the SGLI program and is also responsible for the support of the sales and client management organization, including the development, monitoring and oversight of policies and procedures. Fran began her career with Prudential in 1974 and has held a wide range of positions in Operations, Account Management, Compliance, Human Resources and Project Management.

She has had the honor of serving on two committees at the request of New Jersey's Chief Justice, which reviewed and made recommendations regarding the New Jersey Judicial system; Committee on Efficiency II, and The Policy Advisory Committee. She has also served on the Advisory Group on the School of Healthcare Related Professionals for the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) and was a member of the New Jersey State Health Insurance Advisory Association representing Prudential.

Fran is very active in supporting Ramapo College of New Jersey where she earned her BS in Business Administration and American Studies. She serves as a member of the Board of Governors; she chairs the Anisfield School of Business Alumni Advisory Board and is also a member of the Business Advisory Board for the school and has served on a number of committees supporting the college.

## **Kimberly D. Hazelgrove**

Kimberly Hazelgrove is a resident of Lorton, VA and is the widow of Chief Warrant Officer Brian D Hazelgrove, U.S. Army, who served in Iraq. He died on active duty overseas in 2004. Kimberly has two children and two step-children. In 1994, Kimberly entered the US Army as an Intelligence Analyst and served nine years of active duty and attained the rank of Sergeant First Class. She served in the 311<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion of the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, Fort Campbell, KY from 1995-2002 and in the 110<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY from 2002-2004. Her overseas tours include one tour to Korea in the 532<sup>nd</sup> Military Intelligence BN and to Cuba in support of JTF 170 for Operation Enduring Freedom. Unable to fulfill the requirements of active duty after Brian's death, she left the service to pursue a career in the Intelligence field. Kimberly is a dedicated mother to her children and advocate of widows or widowers and veteran's issues.

Kimberly is currently employed by Lockheed Martin Mission Services on the Intelligence Analysis Training Team.

## **Dawn Halfaker**

Chief Executive Officer F. Dawn Halfaker founded Halfaker and Associates in January 2006 in response to the radically changing business environment brought on by the growing need for dynamic consultants with specialized experience to provide national security services to the Federal Government. Captain (Ret) Dawn Halfaker has extensive management experience as a Military Police Officer in the United States Army, where she was deployed with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division as a platoon leader and deputy provost marshal in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She was subsequently wounded during a combat patrol near Baghdad in 2004, earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

In addition, Dawn served as a military liaison to the House Armed Services Committee where she advised the committee Chair on central Department of Defense issues. Since 2005, she has worked with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), specializing in technical consulting for the Defense Sciences Office. Her mission is to help initiate research that will provide advanced capabilities to the military. Dawn also remains very active with veteran's affairs and is a member of many of the veteran's service organizations and serves on various advisory committees.

Dawn holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently pursuing her Master of Arts in Security Studies from Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

## Paul Livengood

Graduated W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, and then attended William Carey College, transferred to University of Southern Mississippi, BA. United States Air Force, one tour Vietnam. After military service, worked for a Restaurant Equipment Wholesaler, was involved in the design of the Joe Theisman's restaurants in Northern Virginia, and the Sandwich Chef restaurants in Arlington. Became the Human Resources Director and Personnel Director of a major moving company in Northern Virginia that specialized in Federal Office moves. Joined the Virginia Employment Commission in 1991. Currently the Manager of the Virginia Employment Commission, Fairfax Office. Part of my duties as the Manager is to direct and advise staff concerning the veterans who come to the Virginia Employment Commission seeking assistance in finding gainful employment and assistance. We are also able to assist the spouses and families of veterans in finding employment, or filing for unemployment.

### Currently:

- Assistant Chair of the Prince William County Schools Technical Education Advisory Committee.
- Member of the Northern Community College Curriculum Advisory Committee
- Virginia Employment Commission Representative for the Workforce Investment Area, Youth Council Committee for Northern Virginia.
- Member of the Employer Advisory Committee for Northern Virginia.
- Member of the Virginia Department of Transportation/Woodrow Wilson Bridge Career and Development Committee.

For the past 12 months have been working with private industry and employers throughout the Northern Virginia area for the Employ Vets First program. We are working with employers to educate them in the employment of veterans.

## **Caroline Maney**

Caroline Maney recently spent 20-months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center as a caregiver to her husband, Brigadier General (Retired) "Patt" Maney, who was injured in at IED attack in Afghanistan in 2005. During her husband's 36-year Army Reserve career, she supported him in command positions including numerous contingency deployments.

After her husband was wounded, she became his advocate and caregiver. Mrs. Maney educated herself about her husband's injuries, symptoms and possible treatments and assumed the responsibility to help him navigate various government bureaucracies. She informally assisted numerous other patients and their families. Her military awards include the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal (2001) and the Commander's Award for Public Service (2003).

Caroline Maney has broad community and military leadership training and experience. In 1989, as President of the Junior League of the Emerald Coast, she directed a 238-strong women's volunteer force. Her involvement in Girl Scouting spans 12-years as a troop leader, Council Board Member, and a National Delegate. She served on the Okaloosa County (Florida) School Board Advisory Committee, Catholic Social Services Board for the Pensacola-Tallahassee Diocese, and the Gulf Coast Diocese's Episcopal Women's Commission. Mrs. Maney served the Army Reserve in both volunteer leadership and advisory positions, most recently serving on the Family Program Advisory Council for the 10,000 soldier Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina with military units in 26 states. Mrs. Maney helped prepare soldiers and families for numerous deployments and represented the Army throughout the United States at formal functions, funerals, ceremonies, and Family Readiness Program activities.

Mrs. Maney is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a Bachelors of Arts. She is the mother of two, with a son-in-law currently serving a second tour in Iraq.

## **Tim S. McClain, J.D.**

Tim S. McClain has over 35 years of experience in law and executive leadership and management positions. He served as General Counsel for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) from 2001-2006, a Senate-confirmed Presidential appointment position, serving two Cabinet secretaries and managing an office comprised of nearly 400 lawyers with offices across the United States. In 2005, Tim also served concurrently as the Chief Management Officer for VA with overall responsibility for the department's budget formulation and execution, procurement policy and acquisitions management, real property acquisition and management, and business process oversight. As General Counsel, Tim was directly involved in advising VA's Secretary and senior leadership on issues related to the nation's largest integrated health care delivery system, federal health care policy, appropriations, major construction, issues related to BRAC, legislative and regulatory issues, and Congressional relations.

Tim S. McClain is now in private practice at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice PLLC in their Washington, DC office. He specializes in federal healthcare, federal procurement, privacy and information security issues. He can be reached at:

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**Warren R. McPherson**  
Colonel, US Marine Corps (Ret.)

Colonel Rocky McPherson is currently serving as the Director, Military and Defense programs, Enterprise Florida, Inc., a public/private agency responsible for economic development initiatives in Florida. He has recently served five years as the Executive Director, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

Rocky is a Vietnam veteran who served in combat, both as an Infantry Officer and as a carrier based Naval Aviator flying the A6E. During his Marine career he held key leadership roles as Deputy Director, Marine Personnel Management Division; Chief of Staff, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and as a Group Commander, Marine Aviation Training Group. He is a graduate of the US Naval Academy, class of 1966, and holds a Master of Political Science degree from Auburn University. He is a graduate of the National War College in Washington, DC. Rocky resides with his wife and family in Tallahassee, Florida.

## **Lonnie Moore**

Lonnie Moore was born in Wichita, Kansas, on July 28, 1975. Upon graduation from high school, Lonnie attended Wichita State University for 1 ½ years. He enlisted into the United State Army in 1995 as an armored crewman.

Lonnie served until 1998 when he reenlisted into the Kansas Army National Guard and attended Kansas State University on an Army ROTC scholarship. He received his commission as a Second Lieutenant into the Infantry in May 2001. Lonnie was assigned to Fort Benning, GA, for just over 1 year where he received his infantry training. Lonnie was then assigned to Fort Riley, KS, where he deployed his platoon to combat operations in Iraq. On April 6, 2004, Lonnie was severely wounded when his Bradley was struck by a Rocket Propelled Grenade resulting in amputation of his right leg above the knee. After his rehabilitation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Lonnie was medically retired as a Captain. Amongst his awards are the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Lonnie now resides in San Diego, CA, with his wife Jacqueline, a Major in the United States Army. Lonnie serves as the Western Area Director for the Wounded Warrior Project, a non-profit organization serving the seriously wounded from Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Lonnie has a 7 year old son, Caleb Blasi, who resides in Andover, KS.

## **Manuel Rodriguez**

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Manuel A. Rodriguez received his commission as a Second Lieutenant, Armor, from the University of Southern Mississippi in August 1983. Following completion of the Armor Officer's Basic Course at Ft Knox, Kentucky he was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, Ft Hood, Texas in March 1984. While in 2-8 Cavalry, Manuel served as Tank Platoon Leader, and Company Executive Officer. He was assigned as the Force Protection Officer for Joint Task Force – Bravo, Palmerola, Honduras. Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was re-branched from Armor to Military Intelligence, and attended the Military Intelligence Officer's Advanced Course, Ft Huachuca, Arizona with a subsequent assignment to the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment Fulda, Germany as the Squadron Intelligence Officer. In September 1990 he assumed command of Headquarters Troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry and deployed as part of Operation Desert Storm. Following command, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez remained in Germany assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division as the Brigade Intelligence Officer. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade deactivated as part of the drawdown of forces, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division G2 section as the G2 Operations Officer. Returning to the United States in June of 1995, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez attended the Command and General Staff Officer School at Ft Leavenworth, KS, and remained for a second year to attend the Advanced Military Studies Program under the School of Advanced Military Studies. Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was next assigned back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division as the Division Intelligence Plans Officer in 1997, and deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1998 as the Executive Officer for the 312<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. Following redeployment, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was assigned to the 504<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Brigade as the Deputy Commander. In 2000, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was assigned as the Professor of Military Science at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, SD. Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez returned to Ft Hood in 2002 and served as the III Corps Intelligence Plans Officer. In July 2003, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez deployed to Afghanistan where he served as the Deputy of the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, and the head of the Commander's Advisory Group, Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan. Returning to III Corps in July 2004, Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez was assigned as the Chief of Plans, III Corps (REAR) retiring in July 2005. He currently works for Alion Science and Technology as a Program Manager for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Reconstitution Operations Section, Ft Hood, TX.

Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez is a graduate of the U.S. Army Armor Officers Basic Course, the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Officers Advanced course, the U.S. Army Military Intelligence School's Imagery Interpretation Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in History from the University of Southern Mississippi, a Master of Military Arts and Sciences Degree from the School of

Advanced Military Studies, Ft Leavenworth, KS and a Master of Public Administration from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD.

Lieutenant Colonel Rodriguez's awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Army Achievement Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal with Star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, NATO Medal, and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. Manuel has been married to Teresa L. Rodriguez, since August 1987. They have two daughters, and one son.

**John F. Sommer, Jr.**  
Executive Director  
The American Legion

John F. Sommer, Jr. is the Executive Director of The American Legion National Headquarters Washington Office. He is responsible for overseeing the activities of the nation's largest veteran's organization in its dealings with The White House, Congress, and federal agencies such as the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and State. Prior to his appointment as Executive Director in January 1991, Mr. Sommer was a staff member of the Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division where he served his fellow veterans in positions ranging from Claims Representative in 1974 to Division Director from 1988 through 1990. Prior to joining Legion's national staff, Sommer was The Ohio American Legion State Director of Rehabilitation and Service.

Born August 19, 1947, in Columbus Ohio Sommer was educated in Grove City public schools. He graduated from Franklin University in Columbus with a BS in Business Administration in 1972. He has attended Bowling Green State University and the University of Michigan's Business School. Sommer's service as a U.S. Army combat medic included a tour of duty in Vietnam with the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division where he was a Senior Company Medic and the NCO-in-charge of a battalion aid station. His service awards include the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, Army Commendation Medal, Combat Medical Badge, and Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm. Since 1991 Mr. Sommer has traveled to Vietnam numerous times and met with officials in other Southeast Asia countries regarding missing American servicemen. He has represented The American Legion on presidential delegations to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Sommer served as chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on POW/MIAs, which consisted of representatives from over 20 nationwide veterans groups and family organizations.

Mr. Sommer has co-edited a handbook on post-traumatic therapy, plus a book, Simple and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Strategies for Comprehensive Treatment in Clinical Practice. Sommer, in collaboration with Drs. Jeanne and Steven Stellman developed "The American Legion and Columbia University Vietnam Veterans Study", a broad-based series of epidemiological studies of Vietnam veterans, which was published in 1988.

John Sommer serves and holds offices on various committees both national and local, with scopes ranging from Cabinet level advisory committees to mental health care to high school boosters and PTSA to coaching youth softball in his community. Most recently he was appointed to the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on OIF / OEF Veterans and Families. The Sommer family resides in Annandale, Virginia.

## **Ron Thomas**

Ron Thomas, a Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP special counsel in the Washington, D.C. office, assists clients with federal and state government contracting and other government relations matters.

Previously associated with Nelson Mullins in the Columbia office, Mr. Thomas most recently served in Washington as President George W. Bush's appointee as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Thomas was responsible for the development and implementation of vision, strategy, problem-solving and leadership within the department and was responsible for management and budget of the Office of the Actuary, the Policy Analysis Service, and the Data Management Service. Mr. Thomas also participated in developing the department's strategic plan and legislative program. He also served as the Designated Federal Official for the Secretary's Advisory Committee of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans and Families.

In April 2008, U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake appointed Mr. Thomas to the department's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) Veterans and Families. He will review veterans' benefits and services and recommend how to tailor them more precisely to the needs of OIF/OEF veterans and their families.

In prior state government service he was State Grand Jury law clerk in the Office of S.C. Attorney General Henry McMaster from May 2003 to January 2004, and served as Governor Mark Sanford's appointee on the S.C. Human Affairs Commission.

Mr. Thomas was elected second vice chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party in 2004. He was a delegate to the 2004 Republican National Convention and was vice chairman of the South Carolina delegation. He has served as a member of the following: Governor's Commission on Management, Accountability and Performance (MAP) Subcommittee on In-state Procurement; the Bush-Cheney '04 Leadership South Carolina Team; and the Minority Advisory Committee and the Service Academy Selection Committee to Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC, 2nd District).

He is a frequently sought-after Republican strategist and provides commentary and insights on political activity and elections for national television programs like MSNBC.

In 2004, Mr. Thomas was the vice president of the South Carolina Republican Party Convention. He was the only African-American political director

of a state Republican party when he worked for the South Carolina GOP in 2002 and 2003.

In 2005, Mr. Thomas was elected to the Board of Directors of the Columbia Urban League. He was also a member of the S.C. Department of Revenue Alcohol, Beverage and Licensing Advisory Board. He is a member of the American Health Lawyers Association.

Mr. Thomas earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2004, where he was awarded a J. Edgar Hoover Foundation Scholarship. He served in the United States Army from May 1997 until May 2002, attaining the rank of captain. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1997.

## **Jack L. Tilley - Former Sergeant Major of the Army**

Jack Tilley was sworn in as the 12th Sergeant Major of the Army on June 23, 2000 and served until January 15, 2004. In this position, he was the senior enlisted person in the Army and served as the Army Chief of Staff's personal advisor on all enlisted matters, particularly in areas affecting soldier training and quality of life. Traveling extensively throughout the world, he also sat on a wide variety of councils and boards that made decisions affecting enlisted soldiers and their families, and he was routinely invited to testify before Congress.

SMA Tilley previously served as the Command Sergeant Major of 1st Battalion, 10th Cavalry, 194<sup>th</sup> Separate Armor Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, United States Army Space and Missile Defense Command, and United States Central Command.

Throughout his 35+ year career, SMA Tilley held every key leadership position including tank commander, section leader, drill sergeant, platoon sergeant, senior instructor, operations sergeant and first sergeant. His military education includes the First Sergeants Course and the Sergeants Major Academy. He also was a graduate of the basic airborne course, drill sergeant school and master gunner's course.

His awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Bronze Star with V Device, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Vietnam Service Medal and Campaign Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Overseas Service Ribbon (2), NCO Professional Development Ribbon (4), Drill Sergeant's Badge, Parachutist's Badge and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

In retirement, SMA Tilley continues his advocacy of the men and women in uniform. He is VP for Military Programs, **Oak Gove Technology**., while also providing consulting services for **Raytheon**, General Dynamics, Flanagan Consulting and IBM.

A sought-after speaker, his talks are designed to both educate the general public and stimulate support for our military. He also co-chairs **American Freedom Foundation, Inc.** a non-profit organization dedicated to raise the national awareness of the sacrifices our Troops and their families endure. Proceeds from the foundation are used to enhance educational opportunities and the general welfare of families and service **IBM**. A sought-after speaker, his talks are designed to both educate the general public and stimulate support for our military. He also co-chairs **American Freedom Foundation, Inc.** a non-profit organization dedicated to raise the national awareness of the sacrifices our Troops and their families endure. Proceeds from the foundation are used to enhance educational opportunities and the general welfare of families and service members who have served during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He joined the Board of Advisors for Atlantis Cyberspace, Inc. in May, 2005.

VA Advisory Committee on OIF/OEF Veterans and Families

## **Delrick C. Whitehorn**

Major Delrick C. Whitehorn enlisted in the Army in 1987. His assignments include the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colorado, the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, Fort Riley Kansas, the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, in which he deployed in support of Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the 13<sup>th</sup> Corps Support, Fort Benning, Georgia, in which he deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, the 87<sup>th</sup> Training and Support Division, in which he deployed in support of Joint Task Force – Katrina.

Major Whitehorn was accepted into Officer Candidate School (OCS) at Fort Benning, Georgia and received his commission in 1997. He holds a Masters of Science Degree in Human Resource Management from Troy State University.

Major Whitehorn is a graduate of the Transportation Officer Basic Course, Combined Logistics Officer Advanced Course, and the Combined Arms Service Staff School. His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (2), Army Commendation Medal (5), the Army Achievement Medal (6), The Joint Service achievement Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal (3), the National Defense Medal Service Medal (2), Southwest Asia Service Medal (3), the Non-Commissioned Officers Professional Development Ribbon (2), the Saudi/Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, and the Air Assault Badge.

Major Whitehorn, will retire on November 1, 2007, with 20 years Active Federal Service.

## **Gary I. Wilson**

"G.I." Wilson is a retired a Marine Corps Colonel with over 30 years of military service including combat tours in Iraq. He teaches part time in the Administration of Justice Department of Palomar College, San Marcos, CA. and consults for ABC-7 Los Angeles, Knowledge and Intelligence Program Professionals (KIPP), Emergency Response Research Institute (ERRI). He is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), Marine Corps Intelligence Association (MCIA), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Naval Intelligence Professionals (NIP), and serves on the Board of Directors for Bossov Ballet Theatre. His wife Sandra is a retired Marine officer and the Comptroller for Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, CA

## **Charles “Chris” Yoder**

After three years of service in the U.S. Army, 18 months in Vietnam, Charles "Chris" Yoder used his GI Bill education benefits to graduate from the University of Idaho.

After 13 years of working in a VA regional office as a Veterans Benefits Counselor, Claims Adjudicator and Education Benefits Specialist he left VA to serve as a professional staff member on the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. He served the Committee a total of 12 years and was responsible, at different times, for both benefits and healthcare issues. His highest position was Minority Deputy Staff Director. His Senate service was punctuated by service as a staff assistant to VA's Deputy Secretary (1991 -1992) and team leader on the staff of the Congressional Commission on Veterans' and Service-members' Transition Assistance ("Transition Commission") (1997-1998). He retired in 2005 after serving four years as Counselor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (2001 - 2004).