

#4 | MAJ BRANDON WILKINS | USMC

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Major Brandon Wilkins is a native of Beaufort, South Carolina. The son of a career Marine Officer and Naval Aviator, Brandon grew up mostly on the east coast to include South Carolina, Virginia and Washington D.C. and lived for two years aboard Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Iwakuni, Japan. He attended high school at Randolph Macon Academy in Front Royal, Virginia and graduated in 2003. He attended The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration in 2007. Brandon earned his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps through the Platoon Leaders Course and reported to The Basic School at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico, Virginia in October 2007.

Brandon reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola Florida for aviation preflight indoctrination in May of 2008. He completed Primary flight training in the T-34C Turbo Mentor at NAS Whiting Field, Florida, and Intermediate and Advanced flight training in the T-45C Goshawk at NAS Kingsville, Texas. He earned his Wings of Gold in September of 2010.

Brandon then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, the "Gladiators" at NAS Oceana, Virginia for initial training in the F/A-18 Hornet. He then reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 251 the "Thunderbolts," at MCAS Beaufort, SC in August of 2011 where he served as the Logistics Officer, Schedules and Flight Officer, Airframes Division Officer, and Wing Qualified Landing Signal Officer. Brandon deployed twice with Carrier Air Wing ONE (CVW-1) aboard USS ENTERPRISE and USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE.

In April of 2016, Brandon reported to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 101, the "Sharpshooters" at MCAS Miramar, CA, where he served as an Instructor Pilot, Schedules Officer, Class Advisor, and Landing Signal Officer. After 9 months, Brandon was asked to leave shore duty early to fill a critical gap and transferred to VMFA-323, the "Death Rattlers," and shortly thereafter deployed with Carrier Air Wing ELEVEN (CVW-11) aboard USS NIMITZ in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE. He served as the Logistics Officer, Aviation Safety Officer, and Landing Signal Officer.

In April of 2018, Brandon reported to VMFA-112, the "Cowboys" at Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base (NAS/JRB) Ft. Worth, Texas. He was selected to attend the Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI) and graduated in October of 2019. Brandon then served as the Pilot Training Officer and deployed with the Cowboys in September 2021 to USINDOPACOM and MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

In April of 2022 Brandon reported to Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 31 at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina where he served as the Group Weapons and Tactics Instructor. Between 2021 and 2024 he augmented the MAWTS-1 F/A-18 Division as an Instructor Pilot. In June of 2023 Brandon Returned to MAG-41 at NAS/JRB Ft. Worth, Texas where he served as the Assistant Operations Officer and Group Weapons and Tactics Instructor.

Brandon joined the Blue Angels in September of 2024 and has accumulated more than 2800 flight hours and has 331 carrier arrested landings. His decorations include three Strike Flight Air Medals, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, and various personal and unit awards. Brandon is also a two time "Top Five Nugget" and seven time "Top Ten" ball flier for carrier landing performance.