

Major Mark Hamilton, United States Marine Corps

Major Mark Hamilton is a native of Becker, Minnesota, and graduated from Becker High School in 1996. He attended Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2000. Mark was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps in 2000 and reported to The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, to complete training.

Mark reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Florida, for aviation indoctrination in January 2001. He completed primary flight training in the T-34C Turbo Mentor at NAS Whiting Field, Florida, and completed advanced flight training in the T-44 Pegasus while assigned to Training Squadron (VT) 31 at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. He received his wings of gold in May 2002.

Mark then reported to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Training Squadron (VMGRT) 253, the "Titans," at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point, North Carolina, for initial training in the KC-130 Hercules. He reported to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 252, "Otis," at MCAS Cherry Point, in May 2003, where he served as Ground Safety Officer and Flight Duty Officer. While assigned to VMGR-252, Mark deployed twice to Al Asad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mark reported to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 152, the "Sumos," at MCAS Futenma, Japan, in 2007, where he served as Quality Assurance

Officer and Assistant Maintenance Officer. He also attended Weapons and Tactics Instructor School and became the squadron's Aircrew Training Officer.

Mark then attended Terminal Attack Control Party School and reported to 8th Marines in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he served as Assistant Air Officer and deployed to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Mark returned to VMGR-252 in February 2012 to serve as the Director of Safety and Survival. He also served as Officer in Charge for VMGR-252 Detachment Bravo, which supported the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit and the newly-formed Special Marine Air Ground Task Force – Crisis Response, and became Operations Officer for VMGR-252.

Mark has flown more than 800 combat hours and also supported numerous operations and exercises in Alaska, Djibouti, Greece, Guam, Hawaii, Italy, Iwo Jima, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Wake Island.

Mark joined the Blue Angels in September 2014. He has accumulated more than 4,000 flight hours. His decorations include twelve Air Medals, three Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and various personal and unit awards.

Handout Bio

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