

Class of 1950

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Admiral Ronald J. Hays's devotion to our nation and to the naval service is evident in his numerous military decorations as a naval aviator. Hays is the most decorated member of the Class of 1950, with more than 50 U.S. and foreign military and civilian awards and decorations for leadership in command, personal bravery and selfless dedicated service. These decorations include three Silver Stars, seven distinguished flying crosses, the Bronze Star with combat "V" and 18 air medals.

After graduating from the Naval Academy in 1950, Hays served aboard destroyer *Hugh Purvis* and then went on to flight training in Pensacola, where he was winged in 1952. His initial assignment in Pacific fleet attack squadrons included deployments to East Asia during the end of the Korean War, flying the A-1 Skyraider. He then received test pilot training and served for three years as a test pilot at NAS Patuxent River, MD.

With his knowledge and skilled flying background, Hays became executive officer of a squadron, flying the new A-6 all weather aircraft that had the capability of attacking heavily defended areas in any weather, day or night. He went on to become the commanding officer of the squadron and introduced the A-6 to Vietnam combat, leading 162 missions into high-threat target areas in North Vietnam. In total, Hays spent four continuous years in the Vietnam theatre.

Having served for almost 20 years in cockpits, he then began paying his dues as a staff officer in the Pentagon. He later went on to hold posts as the commanding officer, NAS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, commander, Carrier Group Four and commander-in-chief, U. S. Naval Forces Europe. In 1983, he began service as the vice chief of Naval Operations and was subsequently named commander-in-chief, Pacific Forces, commanding all military forces in the Pacific and Indian Ocean theatre.

Hays retired from active duty in 1988 after 38 years in uniform and accepted the position of president and chief executive officer for the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research, which focused on renewable energy. After four years with the Center, he joined Parsons Corporation, a global engineering firm, for whom he still works today.

Hays represented his class as a presenter of gold bars to the Class of 2000, forging another link in the chain of Naval Academy graduates. He is an active member of the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce and led a difficult and complex effort to move and establish *Missouri* near *Arizona* as a major Pearl Harbor memorial. He is also chairman of the board of the Military Aviation Museum of the Pacific and active in numerous charitable causes. His selfless activities are well known throughout the community and the Navy.

Hays and his wife, Jane, reside in Honolulu and enjoy a wonderful family life with three children and four grandchildren.