



Alumni Spotlight - September 2019

Colonel Gregory Raths, USMC (RET)

September's Alumni Spotlight features Colonel Gregory Raths, USMC (RET) Class of 1971. Greg is currently running for the U.S. House of Representatives, CA 45th Congressional District for 2020 (South Orange County). However, Greg's road to politics started in 1967 as a freshman at Bourgade Catholic High School.

Greg attended St. Gregory's Catholic School before attending Bourgade. While at Bourgade, Greg was an active student-athlete playing baseball and football all 4 years. In football, he earned All-State and All-Conference honors in 1970. In addition to athletics, Greg also participated in the Letterman's Club, Spanish Club and National Honor Society, but it was Greg's involvement in student government that would help pave the way for his future. While at Bourgade, Greg was elected as the Freshmen Class President in 1967 and then again as the Senior Class President in 1970.

Following High School, Greg joined the United States Marine Corps Officer Program in 1972 while he was attending Arizona State University. In 1975, he graduated from ASU with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant leading him to flight school in Pensacola, Florida. Greg's journey would take him back west to Irvine, California in 1977, where he was a pilot of the RF-4 Phantom II at the Marine Corps Air Station El Toro. After serving two tours on the aircraft carrier USS Midway, Greg transitioned to the F/A-18 Hornet in 1989 and flew 55 combat missions in Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

In 1993, Greg Raths was selected to command an F/A-18 Fighter Attack Squadron aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln and flew an additional 20 combat missions in the Persian Gulf as part of Operation Southern Watch over Iraq and Operation Restore Hope over Somalia. Three years later in 1996, he was assigned to Washington D.C. and received a Master's Degree in Military Strategy at the National Defense University. Shortly after, Greg found himself serving as the Chief of Staff for the White House Military Office. After a promotion to Colonel, Greg was assigned to serve as the Commanding Officer of a Marine Corps Aircraft Group at the Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar in San Diego, California. In 2002, Col. Raths was selected to serve as Chief of Staff, and later Wing Commander of the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in New Orleans, Louisiana. In November 2004, Col. Raths was honorably retired from active duty after 30 years of service. During his illustrious career he was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal and Air Medal.

Following his active duty in the military, Greg flew as a commercial airline pilot for Jet Blue Airways out of Long Beach, CA from 2004 to 2008; his aircraft being the A-320 Airbus. After a 4-year stint with Jet Blue, he became the president of an auto parts distribution firm in Anaheim, California until 2011.

Before Greg found himself pursuing a professional career in politics, he went back to school at California State University, Fullerton where he earned a Bachelors' Degrees in Political Science and History in 2012. In 2014 he was elected onto the Mission Viejo City Council, and again re-elected in 2018. As part of the Mission Viejo City Council's mayoral rotation among its 5 members, Greg is currently serving as the Mayor of Mission Viejo for 2019.

To this day, Greg still attributes much of his success to his experience at Bourgade Catholic, specifically his time in Fr. Rodenspiel's math class, citing the late priest as a great educator and mentor. Upon Fr. Rodenspiel's passing, Greg had the honor of serving as a pallbearer. In 2009, Greg was inducted into the BCHS Hall of Fame and remains a faithful supporter of Bourgade Catholic.

As part of Greg's current campaign, he is welcoming supporters to join him at a reception hosted on Saturday, September 21st at 5:30 PM, at Ray's Lounge inside the Renaissance Hotel located near Westgate in Glendale, AZ. To learn more about Greg, his campaign website can be found at -- <https://gregraths.com>.