



Lieutenant Colonel Christopher J Kelly

Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 214

Lieutenant Colonel Christopher J Kelly is a 2004 graduate of Sacred Heart University. While completing his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice, he enrolled in the Platoon Leaders Course and attended Officer Candidate School in 2001 and 2003. Upon graduation from Sacred Heart, Lt. Col. Kelly was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in May 2004.

Lt. Col. Kelly attended The Basic School in 2004 and in May 2005, he reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, for flight training. After training at NAS Whiting Field, Florida, and NAS Meridian, Mississippi, Lt. Col. Kelly was designated a Naval Aviator in October 2007 and selected to fly the EA-6B Prowler. From November 2007 to August 2009, he trained with the EA-6B Fleet Replacement Squadron, VAQ-129 aboard NAS Whidbey Island, WA.



In September 2009, Lt. Col. Kelly reported to VMAQ-1 located at MCAS Cherry Point. During this time, Lt. Col. Kelly deployed twice to Bagram Airbase, Afghanistan, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and once to Aviano Airbase in support of Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR. Following the second deployment to Bagram, Lt. Col. Kelly was selected to attend the Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) course. During this tour, Lt. Col. Kelly served as a Mission Planning Officer, Aviation Safety Officer, Director of Safety and Standardization, and S-1 Officer in Charge.

In March 2013, Lt. Col. Kelly reported to MCB Quantico, Virginia, to serve in Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Manpower Management Officer Assignments, as the Fixed Wing Company Grade monitor. While serving in this billet, Lt. Col. Kelly was selected to transition to the F-35B.

In June 2015, Lt. Col. Kelly reported to VMFAT-501 at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina, to begin transition training for the F-35B. In June 2016, Lt. Col. Kelly reported to VMFA-211 at MCAS Yuma, Arizona, where he served as the Assistant Operations Officer until January 2018. In January 2018, Lt. Col. Kelly moved down the flight line to stand up the next F-35 squadron in MAG-13, VMFA-122. During his time with VMFA-122 he served as the Aviation Maintenance Officer, and Executive Officer. In June 2020, Lt. Col. Kelly was selected to assume command of VMFA-214 and transition the squadron from operating AV-8B's to F-35B's.

From June 2020 until June 2021, Lt. Col. Kelly deployed as the Aviation Combat Element Executive Officer and F-35B Detachment Officer in Charge for the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. During this deployment onboard the USS MAKIN ISLAND, the 15th MEU supported Operations OCTAVE QUARTZ, INHERENT RESOLVE, and FREEDOM'S SENTINEL.

Lt. Col. Kelly has over 2,000 flight hours in the EA-6B and F-35B. His personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with 10 Strike/Flight Awards, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with gold star, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

LtCol Kelly is happily married to the former Amy Bova from Peekskill, New York. They have three fantastic children, Bradyn (2008), Jacob (2010), and Lucas (2015).

