

COL (RET)

Ramon A. (Tony) Nadal



Tony Nadal was born at Fort Benning, Ga., Dec. 27, 1935. His parents were both from Puerto Rico; his father was one of the first Puerto Ricans to graduate from West Point's Class of 1928.

Tony knew early in life he wanted to be a gung-ho Airborne, Ranger, Infantry officer. At West Point, class standing didn't matter much to Tony; he did well in subjects he liked and coasted in others.

Tony courted an Army brat named Billie Tutin during his four years at West Point and they were married shortly after graduation at Fort Leavenworth where Billie's dad was assigned. She was a great Army wife, and they had two children: Michael and Victoria.

Tony had an exciting military career where he volunteered for everything related to combat or hazardous duty. Skydiving, motorcycling, and skiing were some of his hobbies.

Throughout his career Tony followed Napoleon's advice to one of his marshals: "A Soldier's duty is to move to the sound of the guns." He volunteered to go to Vietnam four times, twice having to fight Army bureaucracy to get there.

Tony joined the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment prior to their deployment to Vietnam. This assignment, during which he commanded A Company, 1/7 Cav during the battle of Landing Zone X-Ray in Vietnam's Ia Drang Valley, serving under then-LTC Hal Moore was, in Tony's view, the most significant of his career. The relationships formed with his Soldiers there endured throughout their lives.

Upon returning from Vietnam, Tony went to graduate school at Oklahoma State University, graduating with honors as a Presidential scholar. He then taught Leadership and Psychology at West Point. During this time, he conducted a study in Vietnam examining the role of allied forces in country and chaired a study group which overhauled and modernized the Plebe system.

He was then assigned to the Marine Corps Staff College where he wrote a paper on leadership instruction and practices in the Army. The Army Chief of staff invited Tony to discuss his paper, leading to his developing a full set of recommendations to improve Army leadership. This resulted in two major initiatives: the CONARC leadership board and the Army's Organizational Effectiveness Program, both which made changes to Army leadership and Education.

Tony commanded a USAREUR battalion, served as Director of Human Resources for FORSCOM (working primarily in the Organizational Effectiveness Program), attended the Army War College, and served on the faculty at the war college for a year before retiring from active duty in 1981.

In his civilian life, he served as the vice president of human resources for a company in Carlisle, Pa., which became his occupation for the next 18 years in two different companies. Tony retired in Williamsburg, Va., in 1999, where he still resides. In 2003 his wife, Billie, succumbed to breast cancer. In 2006, Tony married Gabrielle Brown, the widow of a classmate. Tony continues to consult and speak on leadership and organizational issues.