

# 2016 Hall of Fame Honoree

## *Lt. Colonel Drew Watson* Class of 1975



Lt. Colonel Drew Watson, USMC - Retired, was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U. S. Marine Corps after college. Initially an Infantry Officer, early in his career he pursued a path focused on reconnaissance and special operations. Capt. Watson served the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, commanding B Company, a specially trained unit that conducted high-risk missions behind enemy lines. Next was a special-duty assignment as the USMC Exchange Officer with the British Royal Marine Commandos. While serving in Britain, Capt. Watson commanded K Company, 42 Commando, a very rare honor bestowed on a U.S. officer. Returning home, newly promoted Major Watson served as Deputy Chief Instructor and then A Company Commander of The Basic School, an entry-level school for newly commissioned officers.

A graduate of the Amphibious Warfare School and the USMC Command & Staff College, he participated in combat operations in Iraq, Bosnia and Kosovo during his career, earning many awards and decorations. His most cherished assignment was as Commanding Officer of 1st Force Reconnaissance Company, an elite unit of Marines which conducts special operations similar to Navy SEAL teams. As his last assignment, he served as Director of Operations for the USMC's Coalition & Special Warfare Division, and he was working inside the Pentagon on 9/11. Immediately following the attack, he deployed to join U.S. and British special operations' forces as the Marine Corps' Liaison Chief for the initial invasion into Afghanistan in October 2001.

Retired Lt. Col. Watson is currently a defense consultant and senior mentor with Total Courage!, a nonprofit which provides character development coaching. His wife is the former Rebecca Leverknight, a Maine-Endwell graduate, who is also a member of the M-E Hall of Fame! They are the proud parents of Amy, a prima ballerina with the Royal Danish Ballet; David, a Broadway-trained actor, singer and dancer; Erin, a clinical psychologist working at the San Francisco V.A.; and Kimberly, wife of USMC Capt. Kevin Nicholson and mother of Watson's grandson, Logan Drew Nicholson.