

COL Aaron M. Kia

Colonel Aaron M. Kia is a U.S. Army Master Aviator and Acquisition Officer. Originally from Hawaii, Colonel Kia commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Aviation Branch through the Army ROTC Program in 2004 with a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Southern California. In 2016, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School with a M.S. in Engineering Systems.



Colonel Kia's first operational assignment was in 2005 with 1st Battalion, 2nd Aviation Regiment (Attack) in the Republic of Korea where he served as an AH-64D Platoon Leader and Assistant Operations Officer. After attending the Aviation Captain's Career Course in 2008, he deployed as the Executive Officer, and later, Chief, of a Military Transition Team in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom where he trained Iraqi security forces to patrol the Iraq-Iran border. In 2010, Colonel Kia assumed command of an AH-64D Attack Helicopter Company with 3-159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion in Germany and later deployed to Afghanistan in 2011 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2013, Colonel Kia transitioned to the Army Acquisition Corps and attended the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, Class 145. His first acquisition assignment was Attack/UAS Flight Test Division Chief and Experimental Test Pilot at Redstone Test Center executing developmental flight test activities in support of the AH-64 Apache, MQ-1 Gray Eagle, and RQ-7 Shadow. In 2016, Colonel Kia was assigned to PM Apache as an Assistant Product Manager and later served as the Executive Officer at the Future Vertical Lift Cross-Functional Team enabling synchronization of Army, DoD, Congressional, and Industry partners to accelerate Aviation modernization. His next assignment took him to Ft. Eustis in 2019 where he served as Assistant Program Manager at PM Advanced Aviation Assessment developing precision strike systems for U.S. Special Operations Command. In 2023, Colonel Kia assumed command of the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School at Naval Air Station Patuxent River responsible for training developmental test pilots, flight officers, and engineers in full spectrum test and evaluation of aircraft and aircraft systems. Most recently, Colonel Kia served as a Product Lead at PM Utility Helicopters developing a long-term vision for UH-60M Black Hawk modernization and sustainment.

Colonel Kia is a graduate of the Army Airborne School, Combat Advisor School, Joint Firepower Course, and Command and General Staff College. His military awards include the Bronze Star Medal (1 OLC), Meritorious Service Medal (3 OLC), Army Commendation Medal (1 OLC), Combat Action Badge, Master Aviator Badge, and Parachutist Badge. He is a rated aviator in the AH-64D/E, UH-60A/L, UH-72A, OH-58A/C, and C-12D and is DAWIA certified in Program Management and Test & Evaluation.

Colonel Kia is married to the former Gari-Ann Sagun of Haleiwa, Hawaii and they have two children, Ellison (13) and James (10).