



Lieutenant Colonel Mariela Pena
Strategic Analyst,
Commandant's Office of Net Assessment

Lieutenant Colonel Mariela Pena, originally from Managua, Nicaragua, enlisted into the Selected Marine Corps Reserves in May, 1995 from her adopted home in Antioch, CA.

In May 2003, Lieutenant Colonel Pena graduated from the University of Phoenix with a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration while serving in the SMCR as a landing support specialist and deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2005. Upon her return to her civilian job as a City Planner in California. Lieutenant Colonel Pena commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Selected Marine Corps Reserves after completion of Officer's Candidate School in May 2008.

Lieutenant Colonel Pena graduated from The Basic Officer Course in May 2009 and reported to Logistics Operations School in North Carolina. She remained on active duty and served as a Platoon Commander for Beach and Terminal Operations Company A, 4th Transportation Support Battalion in San Jose, CA through September 2011. In September 2011, Lieutenant Colonel Pena deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom 11-2. In July 2012, Major Pena transferred to the Active Reserve Component and was assigned as Logistics Officer for 1st Civil Affairs Group, Force Headquarters Group, where she deployed to Belize in 2013 as Detachment Officer-In-Charge.

In July 2014, Lieutenant Colonel Pena reported to the Expeditionary Warfare School. Upon graduation, she was assigned to III MEF Headquarters where she served as the III MEF G-1 Reserve Liaison Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Pena was augmented to the active component in January 2017 and was transferred to the III MEF G-4 where she served as the Korea Exercises logistics planner.

Lieutenant Colonel Pena was then assigned to 3d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment as the Battalion Logistics Officer where she deployed to Okinawa, Japan as part of the Unit Deployment Program. In June 2018, Lieutenant Colonel Pena was transferred to Marine Aircraft Group 24 where she served as the Group Logistics Officer. In June 2020, she reported to the School of Advanced Warfighting. Upon graduation in July 2021, Lieutenant Colonel Pena reported to 1st Marine Logistics Group to serve as the Plans Officer-in-Charge for the Group. She is assigned to the Commandant's Office of Net Assessment in Washington, DC as a Strategic Analyst.

Lieutenant Colonel Pena is a graduate of the resident Expeditionary Warfare School and the School of Advanced Warfighting. She holds a Master's Degree in Operational Art from the Marine Corps University and a Master's Degree in Administration from Central Michigan University. She is pursuing a Doctorate in Statecraft and National Security from the Institute of World Policy.

Her personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal with three Gold Stars Lieu of Fourth Award, Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Gold Star Lieu of Second Award, the Korean Service Medal and a Combat Action Ribbon.