



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RANDELL YI

Lieutenant Colonel Randell Yi is the Commander and Professor of Aerospace Studies at Michigan State University's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) Detachment 380 in East Lansing, Michigan. He is responsible for the pre-commissioning training and development of over 120 cadets from Michigan State and three crosstown universities.

A 2007 graduate of Lewis University, Lt Col Yi commissioned through Illinois Institute of Technology's AFROTC Detachment 195. Following Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance AFB, OK, he accumulated over 850 hours of combat support in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM, NEW DAWN, ENDURING FREEDOM, UNIFIED PROTECTOR, and JUNIPER SHIELD as an MQ-1B Aircraft Commander and Instructor Pilot before serving as an MQ-1 Predator Initial Qualification Training Flight Evaluator and MQ-9 Operational Test pilot.



Lt Col Yi holds a doctorate in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame sponsored by Air University's School of Advanced Air and Space Studies Faculty Development Program. Concentrating in international relations and comparative politics, his dissertation research investigates the effects of social capital-related investment on security cooperation outcomes in fragile states.

EDUCATION

- 2007 Bachelor of Science - Aviation/Flight Management, Lewis University, Romeoville, IL
- 2007 Air and Space Basic Course, Maxwell AFB, AL
- 2010 Joint Firepower Course (Distinguished Graduate), Nellis AFB, NV
- 2013 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, AL
- 2014 Master of Arts - Military Studies (With Honors), American Military University, Charles Town, WV
- 2020 Master of Military Operational Art and Science (Distinguished Graduate), Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL
- 2021 Master of Philosophy - Military Strategy, School of Advanced Air & Space Studies, Maxwell AFB, AL
- 2023 Master of Arts - University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN
- 2025 Doctor of Philosophy – Political Science, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN
- 2025 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Aug 2007 – Sep 2008, Executive Officer, 344th Air Refueling Squadron, McConnell AFB, KS
2. Sep 2008 – Jan 2010, Student, Undergraduate Pilot Training, 71st Flying Training Wing, Vance AFB, OK
3. Jan 2010 – Jul 2010, Student, MQ-1B Initial Qualification Training, 432d Wing, Creech AFB, NV
4. Jul 2010 – Aug 2012, MQ-1B Instructor Pilot, 18th Reconnaissance Squadron, Creech AFB, NV
(Jun 2011 – Oct 2011, Safety Officer, 46th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, Tallil AB, Iraq)
5. Aug 2012 – Oct 2013, Assistant Flight Commander, 6th Reconnaissance Squadron, Holloman AFB, NM
6. Oct 2013 – Dec 2014, Wing Self-Assessment Program Manager, 49th Wing, Holloman AFB, NM
7. Dec 2014 – May 2015, Flight Commander, 6th Reconnaissance Squadron, Holloman AFB, NM
8. May 2015 – Jun 2016, Chief of Standardization and Evaluation, 6th Attack Squadron, Holloman AFB, NM
9. Jun 2016 – Jul 2017, Executive Officer, 556th Test and Evaluation Squadron, Creech AFB, NV
(Apr 2017 – Oct 2017, Air Advisor & Assistant Director of Operations for C2ISR, 370th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center, Iraq)

10. Jul 2017 – Jul 2019, Project Manager, Detachment 4, 53d Test Management Group, Creech AFB, NV
11. Jul 2019 – Jun 2020, Student, 21st Student Squadron, Air Command & Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL
12. Jul 2020 – Jun 2021, Student, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell AFB, AL
13. Aug 2021 – Jul 2024, PhD Candidate, University of Notre Dame, IN
14. Jul 2024 – Present, Commander, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Detachment 380, Michigan State University, MI

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Senior Pilot

Flight hours: 1,600+

Aircraft flown: T-6, T-1, MQ-1B, MQ-9A

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Bronze Star

Meritorious Service Medal

Aerial Achievement Medal with 11 oak leaf clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal with 1 oak leaf cluster

Air Force Achievement Medal with 1 oak leaf cluster

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with 3 oak leaf clusters

Combat Readiness Medal

National Defense Service Medal

Iraq Campaign Medal with 1 star

Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal with 1 star

Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

Air & Space Campaign Medal

Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal with 1 oak leaf cluster

Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border

AF Longevity Service Ribbon with 2 oak leaf clusters

Air Force Special Duty Ribbon

Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (Pistol)

AF Training Ribbon

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant May 12, 2007

First Lieutenant May 30, 2009

Captain May 30, 2011

Major May 30, 2017

Lieutenant Colonel Dec 1, 2021

(Current as of October 2025)