



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

LIEUTENANT COLONEL THOMAS F. LESSNER

Lt. Col. Thomas F. Lessner is the Commander, 39th Flying Training Squadron, 340th Flying Training Group, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. He is responsible for the success of the Air Education and Training Command/Air Force Reserve Command Reserve Instructor Pilot Program for the 39th FTS, which trains and provides experienced pilots to augment Air Education and Training Command's instructor pilot force. The 39th Flying Training Squadron is comprised of 93 instructor pilots flying over 6,039 training sorties in the T-38, T-6, and T-1 aircraft. The 39th FTS reports to 340th Flying Training Group (Air Force Reserve Command) during peacetime and to the 12th Flying Training Wing (Air Education and Training Command) in the event of mobilization. Colonel Lessner is also responsible for more than 90 military and civilian personnel supporting JBSA-Randolph's undergraduate pilot training mission.

Prior to accepting command of the 39th FTS, Colonel Lessner served as the squadron director of operations.



Colonel Lessner earned his commission in 1999 upon graduation from the United States Air Force Academy with a Bachelor of Science in Humanities. He has completed several professional military education courses, including the Aerospace Basic Course, Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College, all at Maxwell AFB, Ala. In addition, he earned a master's degree in joint military operations at Maxwell in 2014.

Colonel Lessner has been assigned to multiple combat and training squadrons throughout his career, flying the T-37, T-1, UH-1, MH-53, KC-10, C-5 and T-6. His deployment locations included Ali Al Salem, Kuwait; Djibouti, Djibouti ; Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan; Baghdad International Airport, Iraq; and Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates. He transitioned to the Reserves November 15, 2004.

EDUCATION

- 1999 Bachelor of Science in Humanities, United States Air Force Academy, Colo.
- 1999 Aerospace Basic Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2005 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2013 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2014 Master of Military Arts, Joint Military Operations, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 1999 - February 2000, 42nd Airborne Command and Control Squadron, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.
2. March 2000 - August 2000, Student Undergraduate Pilot Training, T-37, Laughlin AFB, Texas
3. September 2000 - February 2001, Student Undergraduate Pilot Training, UH-1, Fort Rucker, Ala.
4. March 2001 - February 2002, MH-53 Pave Low helicopter Weapons School, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
5. March 2002 - November 2004, MH-53M Pilot, 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
6. December 2004 - November 2009, KC-10 Pilot, 79th Air Refueling Squadron, Travis AFB, Calif.
7. January 2005 - May 2005, MH-53 Pave Low helicopter Pilot, 551 Special Operations Squadron, Weapons School, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
8. July 2005 - December 2005, T-1 Pilot, Vance AFB, Okla.
9. December 2009 - October 2011, C-5 Pilot, 68 Airlift Squadron, 433 Airlift Wing JBSA-Lackland, Texas
10. October 2011 - March 2015, T-6 Instructor Pilot, 96th Flying Training Squadron, Laughlin AFB, Texas
11. April 2015 - September 2018, T-6 Pilot Instructor Trainer, 39th FTS, JBSA-Randolph, Texas
12. September 2018 - August 2020, Director of Operations, T-6 Pilot Instructor Trainer, 39th FTS, JBSA-Randolph, Texas
13. August 2020 - Present, Commander, T-6 Pilot Instructor Trainer, 39th FTS, JBSA-Randolph, Texas

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command Pilot

Flight Hours: More than 5,000 hours

Aircraft Flown: T-37, T-1, UH-1, MH-53, KC-10, C-5, T-6

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor

Purple Heart

Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster

Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters

Aerial Achievement Medal

Air Force Combat Action Medal

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

Squadron Officer School Top Third Graduate

Squadron Officer School Outstanding Contributor Award

KC-10 Pilot Distinguished Graduate

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant June 2, 1999

First Lieutenant June 2, 2001

Captain June 2, 2003

Major June 2, 2010

Lieutenant Colonel June 2, 2017

(Current as of July 2020)