

Rear Admiral Kent Whalen



Rear Admiral (Ret.) Kent Whalen is a resident of Grand Blanc, Michigan. He's a 1984 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy with a bachelor's degree in Computer Science.

His first fleet tour was served with A-7E *Corsair* "Bulls" of Attack Squadron (VA) 37 flying from the deck of USS [*Forrestal*](#) (CV 59).

Whalen's ashore assignments include Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106 "Gladiators" to transition to the F/A-18C *Hornet* and remained as an instructor pilot at Naval Air Station (NAS) Cecil Field, Florida. He then served as the flag lieutenant to Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Norfolk. He returned to sea as a department head with VFA-86 "Sidewinders," flying from USS [*America*](#) (CV 66).

Whalen attended the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, where he received a master's degree in National Security Affairs. He served a joint tour at Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, as an intelligence watch team commander and chief of the watch.

Selected for squadron command, Whalen reported to VFA-34 "Blue Blasters," at NAS Oceana, Virginia. He made two deployments aboard USS [*George Washington*](#) (CVN 73). He was selected for major command, and reported to Charleston, South Carolina, for Nuclear Power School with Prototype training in Ballston Spa, New York. He was executive officer of *George Washington* for 23 months in Norfolk, Virginia.

Whalen was the commanding officer of USS [Juneau](#) (LPD 10) and USS [Denver](#) (LPD 9) homeported in Sasebo, Japan. His next tour was on the staff of Commander, Naval Air Forces in San Diego, as assistant chief of staff for Force Readiness. In December 2010 he received a Master's degree in Engineering Management from Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia. From December 2011 to September 2014, he was commanding officer of USS [Carl Vinson](#) (CVN 70) homeported in San Diego. His first flag assignment was assistant chief of staff for Operations (J3), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Joint Force Command, Naples, Italy, from September 2014 to August 2016. He assumed command of Carrier Strike Group 12 in September 2016.

During his 34 years of service, Whalen has accumulated over 3,500 flight hours, 775 arrested landings, made seven extended deployments, spent nine and a half years at sea, and flew combat sorties over Iraq, Bosnia and Afghanistan.

His personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal and Meritorious Service Medal.

Last updated: 30 March 2022