

Merle J. Snyder
Colonel, US Army (Retired)
Ashburn, Virginia

Colonel Merle Snyder began his military career as an enlisted soldier, was later appointed as a Warrant Officer and then received Direct Appointment to the Medical Service Corps. He served in Vietnam as a medical evacuation pilot with the 45th Medical Company, 44th Medical Brigade. While stationed in Vietnam, he evacuated more than 3000 patients and flew 1387 combat missions -- all during a single tour of duty --- 1 year. For gallantry in action during an evacuation on May 11, 1969, in Vietnam, Colonel Snyder received the Silver Star --- the 3rd highest medal of valor within the military services.

Merle has held a variety of command and staff assignments to include Operations officer, 32nd Medical Detachment, Fort Ord, California; Commander, 507th Med Company, Ft. Hood, Texas; instructor, Military Science Division, Academy of Health Sciences, Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and Medical Advisor to Force Commander, Multi-National Force and Observers, Sinai, Egypt. He also served as Commander of the 421st Medical Battalion, Federal Republic of Germany; Director of Health Care Operations, Office of The Surgeon General, Washington, D.C.; and Commander, US Army Garrison, Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland.

Merle holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska and a Master of Arts from Webster University. He is a graduate of the United States Army Command and General Staff College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

His awards and decorations include the Silver Star, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with five Oak Leaf Clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Air Medal with 26 Oak Leaf Clusters.

Merle is a Master Aviator with 3000+ hours of flight time and has served as an instructor pilot and instrument flight examiner. He is also a Distinguished Member of the United States Army Medical Department Regiment and has just completed a term as President of the DUSTOFF Association.

His last military position was as Executive Officer for the Army Surgeon General. In this capacity, he provided strategic planning, health care policy and resource programming for the Army Medical Department, a multi-mission organization that included 37 military hospitals, 41 dental activities, 50,000+ personnel and a budget in excess of \$5 billion. This operation represents the nation's second largest health care organization. After a long and distinguished career with the Army Medical Department, Colonel Snyder retired in August 1997 after 30 years of service.

After his retirement from the military, Merle served for five years as Vice President of the Health Information Systems Division for TROY Systems, Inc., a rapidly expanding technology company headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia. After his retirement at TROY Systems in 2001, former MAPGA Executive Director Dick Johns encouraged Merle to get involved within the Section. For the past 11 years, he has conducted one-day Rules refresher courses for the MAPGA Junior Golf interns and has officiated countless golf tournaments for the Section. Merle has also been a board member of the Washington Metropolitan Golf Association and was recently a Section Chairman with the Virginia State Golf Association.

Merle and his wife, Diane, have two daughters, Emily and Sara, who are both nurses.