

Admiral James A. “Sandy” Winnefeld, Jr., USN (ret)

Sandy Winnefeld graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in Aerospace Engineering and received his commission through the NROTC program. He began his naval service as a fighter pilot, flying the F-14 Tomcat during several deployments to the Arabian Gulf region, and serving as an instructor at the Navy Fighter Weapons School, also known as Topgun. During this period he also was senior aide to General Colin L. Powell.

After squadron command, he graduated from the Navy’s nuclear power school and subsequently commanded USS CLEVELAND and USS ENTERPRISE. Later he simultaneously commanded NATO Joint Command Lisbon, Striking and Support Forces NATO, and the United States SIXTH Fleet. After serving as the Joint Staff Director of Strategic Plans and Policy, he assumed command of United States NORTHERN Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, also known as NORAD.

Sandy retired in August 2015 after serving four years as the ninth Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As the nation’s number two ranking military officer, his portfolios included investment, personnel, strategy, policy, and operations, as well as participation as a member of the Deputies Committee of the National Security Council.

A frequently published author, he currently serves as Distinguished Professor at the Sam Nunn School International Affairs at Georgia Tech, where he is also a member of the Engineering Hall of Fame. He is also a senior non-resident fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also serves on several boards and in advisory positions in the business community.