



# BIOGRAPHY

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

### COLONEL AKSHAI M. GANDHI

Colonel Akshai M. Gandhi is commander of the 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, South Carolina Air National Guard, McEntire Joint National Guard Base (JNGB), South Carolina. He is in charge of organizing, training and equipping the largest operational F-16 wing in the Air National Guard while maintaining a 2,400 acre Federal military installation. He is responsible for the care, morale, and welfare of 1,500 Airmen and civilian personnel, including almost 100 active-duty Airmen assigned in an "Active Association" construct.

McEntire JNGB is the host to five South Carolina Army National Guard tenant units and more than 2,500 soldiers, including South Carolina's largest Army National Guard flying operation.

Prior to his current duties Colonel Gandhi served in various command and supervisory capacities at the squadron, group and wing levels within the 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing. He has served on the Air Staff in the Air National Guard Plans and Programs Directorate and as adjunct faculty for the Reserve Component National Security Course, College of International Security Affairs, National Defense University.

Colonel Gandhi received his commission as a distinguished graduate of the United States Air Force Academy in 1990. He is a command pilot and highly experienced F-16 Instructor Pilot, Flight Examiner, Forward Air Controller, and Mission Commander with over 4200 flying hours in the F-16. He has flown 600 hours in combat and has flown combat missions in Operations DELIBERATE FORGE, ALLIED FORCE, NORTHERN WATCH, SOUTHERN WATCH, IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.



#### EDUCATION

- 1990 Bachelor of Science degree in Astronautical Engineering, United States Air Force Academy, Colo.
- 1997 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 1998 Joint Firepower Control Course, Nellis AFB, Nev.
- 2003 Air Command and Staff College, by correspondence
- 2007 Air War College, by correspondence
- 2012 Reserve Component National Security Course, National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.
- 2018 Master of Military Operational Art and Science degree with Highest Academic Distinction, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

#### ASSIGNMENTS

1. September 1990–October 1991, Student, Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training, Sheppard AFB, Texas
2. October 1991–June 1994, Flight Test Engineer & Executive Officer, 2872<sup>nd</sup>, 514<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> Test Squadrons, Hill AFB, Utah
3. February–April 1994, T-38 requalification, Laughlin AFB, Texas
4. June–July 1994, AT-38 Student, Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals, Sheppard AFB, Texas
5. August 1994–May 1995, F-16C Student, 61<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadron, Luke AFB, Ariz.
6. May 1995–October 1997, Standardization/Evaluation & Scheduling Officer, Chief of Training, 36<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, Osan AB, Republic of Korea
7. November 1997–November 1999, Plans Officer, Assistant Wing Weapons Officer, Flight Commander, 510<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, Aviano AB, Italy

## **ASSIGNMENTS CON'T**

8. November 1999–September 2001, Group Standardization/Evaluation Officer, Flight Commander, 524<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, Cannon AFB, N.M.
9. September 2001–June 2002, Scheduling Officer, 157<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
10. June 2002–September 2002, Executive Officer to the Wing Commander, 376<sup>th</sup> Air Expeditionary Wing, Manas AB, Kyrgyzstan
11. September 2002–June 2007, Assistant Weapons Officer, Chief of Scheduling, 157<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
12. July 2007–February 2010, Chief of Standardization/Evaluation, Executive Officer to the Wing Commander, 169<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
13. February 2010–June 2011, Program Manager, 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
14. June 2011–June 2012, Force Planner, National Guard Bureau, Directorate of Plans and Programs (A8), Air National Guard Readiness Center, Andrews AFB, Md.
15. June 2012–June 2013, Chief of Advanced Programs, 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
16. June 2013–May 2016, Commander, 157<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
17. May 2016–June 2018, Vice Commander, 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, McEntire JNGB, S.C.
18. June 2018–Present, Commander, 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, McEntire JNGB, S.C.

## **FLIGHT INFORMATION**

Rating: command pilot

Flight Hours: more than 4,500

Aircraft Flown: F-16B/C/D (Blocks 15-52), RF-4C, F-4E/G, AT-38, T-38, T-37

## **MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**

Legion of Merit

Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor

Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters

Air Medal with eight oak leaf clusters

Aerial Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster

Air Force Commendation Medal five oak leaf clusters

Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster

Air Force Combat Action Medal

Kosovo Campaign Medal with two service stars

Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two service stars

Iraq Campaign Medal with two service stars

## **EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION**

Second Lieutenant May 30, 1990

First Lieutenant May 30, 1992

Captain May 30, 1994

Major June 1, 2001

Lieutenant Colonel June 1, 2008

Colonel May 13, 2016

(Current as of January 2019)