

Colonel Lee A. Merchen (Class 14-70)

Colonel Merchen took basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and attended AIT at Fort Lewis, Washington. He graduated from the Artillery Officer Candidate school, Fort Sill, Oklahoma on June 29, 1970.

He attended flight training at Fort Walters, Texas and continued with Phase Two at Fort Rucker, Alabama. He was sent to Vietnam and flew with the 227th Aviation, 1st Cavalry Division. The unit was later redesignated as the 3rd Assault Helicopter Company. After eight months of flying, he was assigned as a Forward Observer for Battery C, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery.

Colonel Merchen served in a variety of assignments prior to being assigned Brigade Executive Officer of the newly formed 128th Aviation Brigade in Panama during 1990. He continued service until June 30, 1990, when he retired at the rank of Colonel after 30 years active duty.

His awards and decorations include: the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, eleven Air Medals, the Army Commendation Medal, the Master Army Aviator Badge and the Air Assault Badge.