

Major General Josue (Joe) Robles, Jr. (Class 4-67)

Josue (Joe) Robles, Jr. was the eldest of nine children. He was born in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, on January 24, 1946. When he was three years old, his father, Joe Sr., brought the family to Lorain, Ohio, where the father worked in a steel mill. Joe Jr. later worked in that same mill as a teenager.

In the fall of 1964 Joe entered Lorain Community College. He met and married Linda Board. The expenses of married life led him to drop courses in his sophomore year to work part-time and lose his student draft deferment. In 1966 Joe reported to Ft. Jackson for Army basic training. Previously he had planned to finish college and apply to medical school, but his initial experiences in the Army convinced him that he was a natural military leader and could better serve his country as an Army officer. Upon completion of basic training, he attended Artillery Officer Candidate School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where he earned commission as a Second Lieutenant in 1967.

After tours in the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Vietnam, for which he was decorated for service and bravery in combat, the Army sent Joe to Kent State University in Ohio to earn a degree in accounting, and later to Indiana State University for a Master of Business Administration. From there Joe graduated from the Army General Staff College, the Spanish General Staff College, and finally, the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

By this time Joe and Linda had two children, Joseph and Melissa. At Newport, a tragedy struck Joe and his children. While recovering from surgery at the military hospital, Linda suffered from complications leading to her demise. With the help of a sister to watch the children, Joe finished his studies at the Naval War College. He subsequently met and married Patty Gavin of East Greenwich, Rhode Island. With Patty, Joe had two more children, Andrew and Christopher.

Joe and the family then moved to Springfield, Virginia, where Joe worked at the Pentagon as a Colonel in the Army Budget Office. In 1986 at the age of 42 he was promoted Brigadier General and assigned as Assistant Division Commander with the 1st Cavalry Division where he distinguished himself in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Iraq (1990-1991). Returning to the Pentagon as Director of the Army Budget Office, Joe was promoted in 1993 to Major General in command of the 1st Infantry Division, at Ft. Riley, Kansas.

On the verge of being reassigned to the Pentagon and probably promoted to a third star, Joe decided for family reasons to retire and accept a job offer with USAA headquarters in San Antonio, Texas. Joe and Patty agreed that their autistic youngest son, Christopher, needed a more stable long-term home where he could enjoy the continuity of special education teachers, caregivers, and doctors.

Joe became the USAA Chief Financial Officer in 1994 and Chief Executive and President in 2007. During his tenure at USAA, Joe and his team raised the membership and profits to unprecedented levels. Joe was popular with his staff and the rank-and-file members of USAA. He also served in many civic projects and charitable works. Finally, in 2015 after suffering from Parkinson's for several years Joe retired until he passed on July 4, 2024.

His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster.