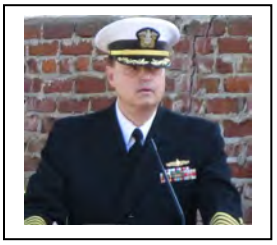
2026 THOUSAND OAKS YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (TOYLC) STAFF DIRECTORS

COLONEL JERRY E. KNOTTS, USAF (RETIRED), TOYLC DIRCTOR

Colonel Knotts served 24 years in the USAF retiring with the rank of Colonel. During that period, he flew reconnaissance missions in Europe amd 112 missions in North Viet Nam/Laos as an F-105F Wild Weasel / Ryan Raider "Surface to Air Missile (SAM) Killer". He then served as program manager/project engineer building special aircraft as a member of the USAF Big Safari Program team. Later he was Commander, Defense Contract Administration Plant Representative Office (DCASPRO) Detroit Diesel Allison, Indianapolis, IN. His last assignment was Commander, Washington Area Contracting Center (WACC), Andrews AFB, MD. Jerry holds a BSEE (Electrical Engineering) from The Pennsylvania State University; and an MBA from Auburn University. A member of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) and Conejo-Valley Chapter Commander, Colonel Knotts is the President of the South Coast Youth Leadership Conference, Incorporated, and has been the Director of TOYLC for over 17 years.

CAPTAIN RALPH P. SCAFFIDI, USN (RETIRED), TOYLC DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AND DIRECTOR FOR LOGISTICS



Captain Scaffidi is a 1978 graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He served on Active Duty from 1978 through 1986, then reaffiliated with the Naval Reserve before retiring in July, 2008. His active and reserve career duty assignments included: Duty aboard the guided missile cruiser USS BIDDLE (CG-34) as a ship's weapons and operations officer; Flag Lieutenant and Aide to the Commander Training Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Fleet operations instructor and course leader at the Fleet Combat Training Center in San Diego; Commanding Officer of three Naval Reserve units; and various duty assignments as a Senior Staff Operations Officer and Battle Watch Captain with U.S. Pacific Fleet. As a civilian, Captain Scaffidi served as a civil service supervisory engineer for the Naval Sea Systems Command at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division, retiring in December, 2012. Captain Scaffidi holds a Master of Science in Systems Management (MSSM) degree from the University of Southern California. A Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) member, Captain Scaffidi has been on the TOYLC staff since 2016.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID J. WORLEY, USAF (RETIRED) DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS AND CURRICULUM

Lieutenant Colonel David J. Worley is currently the 93rd National Commander-in-Chief of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW), as well as Chief Executive Officer of MOWW, Incorporated. His 27 years in the Air Force which began in 1975 included eight years as an enlisted FAA-certified *Air Traffic Controller,* and after attending Officer Training School in 1983 serving as a rated *Air Battle Manager* for 19 years. Upon his military retirement, Lt Col Worley spent over fourteen years instructing the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Crescenta Valley High School in La Crescenta, California before retiring in 2017. Lt Col Worley holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from Troy State University.

Lt Col Worley has been on the TOYLC staff for over 14 years, and developed TOYLC's current curriculum.

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STEPHANIE L. KNOTTS, DIRECTOR FOR ADMINISTRATION

Stephanie L. Knotts is a Companion of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) and is a member of the Board of Directors for the SOUTH COAST YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, Inc. (SCYLC). She was a Vice-President in Enterprise Process Measurement for a Fortune 100 company, and has led many projects throughout her career that implemented major business strategies that have provided substantial benefit to not just the companies but their customers. Stephanie now owns her own company (Steph Inc) providing business analysis consultation. Stephanie holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from California Lutheran University. She is an IEEE Senior Member and holds a CSM (Certified Scrum Master) certification.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CHRISTIAN D. TADDEO, USA (RETIRED)
DIRECTOR FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA OPERATIONS

LTC Taddeo graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1983 as an Army ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate. He served as a Signal Corps Officer on active duty until 2006. His assignments include the 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI; 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO; NATO (LANDSOUTHEAST), Izmir, Turkey; 8th U.S. Army, Seoul, Korea; and as the Professor of Military Science, California State University-Fullerton. Following his retirement, LTC Taddeo was the Senior Army Instructor for JROTC programs at Overbrook High School, Philadelphia, PA, and Mount Diablo High School, Concord, CA. Chris holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in Computer Science and Legal Studies, a California teaching credential and paralegal certificate, and a master's degree in public administration. Today, Chris serves as the Commander of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, Quartermaster for the Danville VFW Post 75, and a Life Member of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). Additionally, he is on the Board of Directors of the Commander Robert E. Lando Patriotic Education Association, which significantly funds the *Thousand Oaks Youth Leadership Conference*.

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ANGELO GASCA, DIRECTOR FOR STUDENT OPERATIONS

Angelo Gasca is currently a senior at California State University Northridge majoring in Political Science - Public Policy and Management. Previously, he was a cadet for four years in Crescenta Valley High School's Air Force Junior ROTC unit CA-882, and was a Police Explorer for the Glendale Police Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Angelo is returning for his fifth Thousand Oaks Youth Leadership Conference, originally attending as a student in 2022, and previously returning as a Counselor, Head Counselor, and Executive Assistant. Angelo currently works as a Surveillance Operator, monitoring sites that house those that have experienced homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction, or were previously incarcerated.

DAMIAN MEZA, DIRECTOR FOR EXECUTIVE PROGRAM SUPPORT

Damian Meza is a 2018 TOYLC graduate and has returned to support the program since 2019, having previously served tenure as a counselor, head counselor, and executive assistant. Damian holds a B.S. degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles, which he received with Magna Cum Laude honors. After graduating from UCLA, Damian was assigned to Los Angeles Air Force Base as a Department of the Air Force (DAF) federal civil servant working as a structural systems responsible engineer, providing mission assurance and day-of-launch support for U.S Government payload deliveries as part of the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) program. During his tenure with the DAF, Damian was responsible for ensuring the successful launch and delivery to orbit of three NSSL missions: USSF-52 (OTV-7), USSF-124, and USSF-62 (WSF-M). Damian is currently a graduate student at Stanford University, from which he is set to receive an M.S. degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics in June 2026