



General Henry "Hugh" Shelton

United States Army (Ret.)

Henry "Hugh" Shelton, General, US Army (Ret.) serves on the Executive Advisory Council of Mission Readiness: Military Leaders for Kids, a nonprofit organization of retired generals, admirals, and other senior military leaders founded in 2008 to ensure continued American security and prosperity into the 21st century by calling for smart investments in the upcoming generation of American children.

General Shelton was born in Tarboro, N.C., and commissioned as a second lieutenant and awarded a bachelor of science degree from North Carolina State University. His civilian education includes a master of science from Auburn University and completion of the National and International Security Program at Harvard University. His military education includes the Infantry Officer basic and advanced courses, the Air Command and Staff College and the National War College.

General Shelton spent the next 38 years in a variety of command and staff positions in the continental United States, Hawaii, and Vietnam. He served two combat tours in Vietnam, the first with the 5th Special Forces Group and the second with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Also, he commanded the 3d Battalion, 60th Infantry in the 9th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington; served as the 9th Infantry Division's Chief of Staff for operations; commanded the 1st Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and, was the Chief of Staff of the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York.

Selected for promotion to brigadier general in 1988, General Shelton served two years in the Operations Directorate of the Joint Staff. In 1989 he began a two-year assignment as the Assistant Division Commander for Operations of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he participated in the liberation of Kuwait during Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM. After the Gulf War, General Shelton was promoted to major general and assumed command of the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 1993 he was promoted to lieutenant general and assumed command of the XVIII Airborne Corps. In 1994 during his tenure as Corps commander, General Shelton led the United States Joint Task Force that restored democracy in Haiti. In March 1996 he was promoted to general and became Commander in Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

General Shelton became the 14th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 1997, and served two two-year terms, retiring on September 30, 2001.

Shelton's awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal with valor device and three oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart. He also has been awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Air Assault Badge, Military Freefall Badge, and the Special Forces and Ranger tabs.

Shelton and his wife, Carolyn, have three sons: Jon, a Secret Service agent; Jeff, an Army captain; and Mark, a student at Florida State University.

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