



Cmdr. Danilo Garcia-Duenas

Deputy Assistant Director, Operations (J-3), Defense Health Agency

Commander Garcia-Duenas was born in Bogota, Colombia. He immigrated to the United States at age eight, graduated from El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera, California, and enlisted in the United States Navy as a Dental Technician at 18 in August 1996.

After Basic Recruit Training in Great Lakes, IL, he attended the US Naval Dental Technician A-School in San Diego, California, with follow on orders to his first duty station, the National Naval Dental Center, Newport, Rhode Island, where he selected for a commission as a Navy Nurse Corps Officer via the Broadened Opportunity for Officer Selection and Training program. He received a Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps nursing scholarship at the University of Arizona.

From August 2000 to May 2004, he attended the University of Arizona, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and commissioned as a Naval Officer. His first officer duty station was Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Florida. He promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade in May of 2006. In 2007, Garcia-Duenas deployed as a casualty receiving nurse at the expeditionary medical facility in Kuwait, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. In 2008, he was promoted to Lieutenant and deployed aboard the USS Boxer in support of Operation Continuing Promise 2008. He then received orders to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He served in several leadership positions in the Emergency Department there. In 2009, he deployed as a trauma team leader to Camp Bastion Medical Facility in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2010, Garcia-Duenas was selected for the Duty Under Instruction program. He attended the University of Virginia, where he graduated with Honors and a Master of Science in Nursing as an Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist and Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. In September 2013, he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander and received follow-on orders to the ED at Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune. He was the clinical nurse specialist, code blue, and mentorship program coordinator. Additionally, he performed duties as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner in the ED.

In 2016, he served as the Battalion Training Officer and Senior Nurse at 2nd Medical Battalion, Camp Lejeune. Additionally, Garcia-Duenas served as the Specialty Leader for Emergency/Trauma Nursing from November 2015 to July 2018. In 2018 he attended the Marine Corps University, Command and Staff College, Quantico, VA, where he completed resident Joint Professional Military Education.

He was promoted to Commander in September 2019 and served at the Marine Corps Combat Development Integration Command as the Clinical and Doctrine subject matter expert from July 2019 to July 2022. Following this tour, he was the first nurse to serve as the Executive Officer of an operational Marine Corps command for 3rd Medical Battalion, Okinawa, Japan, from August 2022 to September 2024. He was selected and served as the Deputy Executive Assistant to the Navy Surgeon General at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery until August of 2025. He now serves as the Deputy Assistant Director J-3/5 for the Defense Health Agency, Falls Church, VA.

Garcia-Duenas is designated as a Fleet Marine Force Warfare Officer. His Decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (three awards), Army Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (three awards), and various service and unit decorations.