

William A. Anders
Major General William A. Anders, USAFR (Ret.)

Distinguished Graduates Award—2000



Class of 1955
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William A. Anders traveled from California to Annapolis, entering the Naval Academy's Class of 1955 with every intention of embracing a life at sea, in the footsteps of his father, Commander Arthur F. Anders, Class of 1927. At the Academy, he excelled in both academics and sports, graduating with a degree in engineering and a reputation as a fierce soccer player.

The *Lucky Bag* praised his optimistic outlook, saying, "a bit of California sunshine is always apparent in everything he does." Life at the Academy also nurtured Bill's passion for flying, and upon graduation he accepted a commission in the Air Force, where he served as a fighter pilot and earned a Master's in nuclear engineering.

In 1964, he was selected as an astronaut, joining Frank Borman and Jim Lovell four years later on Apollo 8's historic journey around the moon.

Back on earth, Major General Anders helped direct policy for the space program, as Executive Secretary of the National Aeronautic and Space Council, which paved the way for the space shuttle and development of a space station.

Bill was appointed to the Atomic Energy Commission in 1973, and later became the first Chairman of the newly established Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He ended his career in government service in 1977 as United States Ambassador to Norway.

Bill then put his knowledge of technology to work in the private sector. He joined General Electric as Vice President and General Manager of the Nuclear Products Division. In 1980, Bill was appointed General Manager of G.E.'s Aircraft Equipment Division, then took the helm at General Dynamics, where he prepared the giant defense contractor to meet the realities of the post-cold war world.

Since "officially" retiring, Bill enjoys spending time with his wife Valerie, and their six grown children. He currently serves as a member of the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation's Board of Directors.

His love of soccer remains intense. He recently led the effort to build the Academy's new state-of-the-art Glenn Warner Soccer facility.