

REAR ADMIRAL BENJAMIN F. MONTOYA, CEC, USN (RET.)



Benjamin Franklin Montoya was born in Indio, CA, and graduated from Coachella Valley High School. During his years at the Naval Academy, “Bennie” was an “ace chucker” for the baseball team, according to the *Lucky Bag*, beating Army in his youngster year and serving as captain in 1958. He was a Striper in the 5th Company and “known also for a big heart.” He was commissioned an Ensign in the Navy Civil Engineer Corps.

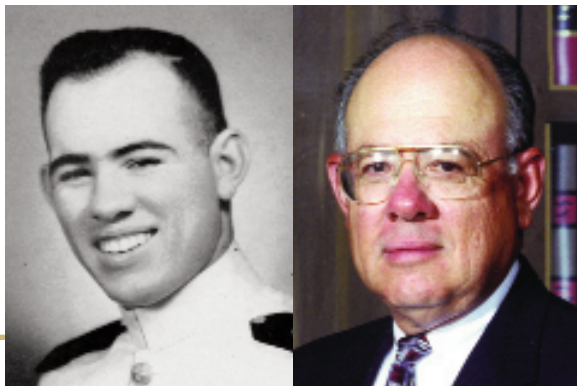
Rear Admiral Montoya earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1960 and was then assigned to Long Beach Naval Shipyard as Resident Engineer. In 1964, he was deployed to Guam with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Three, followed by Vietnam where he led an advance party in country to supervise the construction of the first base camp built by SeaBees in Da Nang. He returned in 1966 to Chu Lai, constructing a base camp, supply point, hospital and a Marine Corp helicopter base.

He returned to Port Hueneme, CA, as a Lieutenant Commander and the most junior CEC Chief Staff Officer of the 31st NCR in CEC history.

A master’s degree in environmental studies from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1967 followed, which he utilized for the Navy from Puerto Rico to California. 1974 found him in Washington, DC, as director of the Navy’s Environmental Quality Division getting the Navy up on environmental compliance. In 1977 he became responsible for compliance for the entire Department of the Navy. He earned a law degree from Georgetown University to cover the legal as well as physical aspects of compliance.

Because of his superior performance as the Navy’s environmental expert, Rear Admiral Montoya assumed his first command in 1981 as Commanding Officer of the Navy Public Works Center in San Diego, followed by Commander, WestDiv Engineering Command, San Bruno in 1984. He was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1986, serving in the office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Logistics). During this time, he provided vital support to the Superintendent, Admiral Charles Larson ’58, USN, in securing the funding for Alumni Hall.

CLASS OF 1958



He retired from the Navy in 1989 as Chief of the Navy Civil Engineer Corps and Commander of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, attaining the highest position for an active duty Civil Engineer Corps officer. During his career, Rear Admiral Montoya was awarded the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, the Bronze Star with Combat “V” for service in Vietnam, and a number of other citations. Upon retirement, HENAAC awarded him their 1989 Hispanic Engineer of the Year. He has also received multiple accolades and awards from the private sector for his service and leadership.

His work continued after retirement, as Rear Admiral Montoya joined Pacific Gas and Electric in San Francisco where he became a senior vice president and general manager of the gas supply business unit. In 1993 he became president and CEO of the Public Service Company of New Mexico and the chairman of the board in 1999.

In 2006, Rear Admiral Montoya was appointed to the NASA Advisory Council as a member of the Space Operations Committee. That same year he was honored with membership into the National Academy of Construction for his work on the Navy’s major shore facilities environmental restoration program (1970-1981), as Director of the Environmental Protection Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, and as Chief of the Civil Engineers Corps. He was inducted into the National Academy of Engineering in 2001. He has served on multiple boards and for the past 11 years, he has served as chairman of the CEC/SeaBee Historical Foundation. He was appointed by the President of the United States to the 1995 Base Realignment and Closure Commission and the Naval Academy Board of Visitors, which he chaired for two years.

Rear Admiral Montoya has been described as “one of the most accomplished civil engineers in the history of the United States Navy” and “a man of action.” With his “great personal integrity and high sense of honor... Ben stands in the front ranks of distinguished Americans.” He resides in northern California with his wife of nearly 50 years, Virginia. They have seven children and 17 grandchildren.