

Ray Eldridge

Dr. Ray Eldridge, a 1975 NHS graduate, is a man of two careers. First he served in the Army and retired after 21 distinguished years of active duty; then, he stepped into the world of academia. Today he is the Chair of the Management Department at Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN. Business management is the common thread that runs through both of his careers.

Born in 1957, Ray earned a BS in Business Administration from The Citadel in Charleston, SC (1979); an MBA in Management from the Golden Gate University in San Francisco, CA (1989); a Master's Degree equivalent in Leadership/Strategic Planning from the US Army Command & General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS (1994); an MS in Instructional Design, Development & Evaluation from Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY (1999); and a Doctorate of Business Administration in Management from the University of Sarasota, Sarasota, FL (2001).

Upon graduation from The Citadel, Ray was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant with assignment to the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division, Fort Campbell, KY. His army career consisted of numerous worldwide deployments and US assignments leading to command at the platoon, company, and battalion levels. His experience included logistics planning and execution for real-world" operations--the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games being but one example. Ray's military career culminated as a professor and later Chair of Military Science, Army ROTC at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY (1996-2000).

While in the Army, Ray received the Legion of Merit and qualified for Airborne Parachutist, Air Assault, and Jungle Expert. Also, he was awarded the US Army's highest faculty development award Master Instructor. At Syracuse University he was one of three university faculty members selected for the annual Chancellor's Faculty Inspiration Award for Excellence.

After leaving the military and earning his master's degree, Ray began his academic career as an Associate Professor of Management, at Freed-Hardeman University (2000), where he taught undergraduate and graduate business administration courses, designing many of these courses himself. He still teaches there today. In 2005 Ray became Dean of the School of Business at Freed-Hardeman, providing strategic direction for the school that included assisting in the design, move-in, and transition to a new \$11 million business building. Ray held this position until May 2008 when he left to become Chair of the Management Department at Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN in June 2008.

Along with publishing and presenting papers, Ray conducts seminars and training sessions and performs consulting and evaluation work. He belongs to several professional organizations Certified Quality Manager/Organizational Excellence (CQM/OE) and Senior Member, American Society for Quality (ASQ) (2003-present); Board of Examiners for Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) (2004); and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) as an examiner and mentor (2006-present), to name only three. In addition, he attends conferences each year and serves on several collegiate development committees. He is a Deacon and a Bible School teacher at the Estes Church of Christ in Henderson, TN (2003-08).

I am forever indebted to my Northridge teachers for showing me how to dream and to my parents, Harold and Bettie Eldridge, for giving me the confidence and opportunity to pursue my dreams. My favorite verse is Whatever you do, work at it with all of your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men Colossians 3:23. A quote from one of his favorite books, Once an Eagle, is You can't help when or what you were born, you may not be able to help how you die; but you can--and should--try to pass the days as a good man.

In 1983, Ray married Darlene, who is the Office Manager at Freed-Hardeman University Health Clinic. They have two children Raynor (1986) who was salutatorian at the Chester County HS and is a senior chemical

engineering major at Vanderbilt University; and Bethany (1990), who was valedictorian of her senior class at the same high school.