

Don Potoczny serves as the Commandant of the Patton Academy at Farragut High School in Chicago. The program provides leadership and civics instruction to hundreds of disadvantaged students.

Colonel Potoczny served in the US Army for over thirty-four years. After retiring from a distinguished military career, Don quickly became a leader in several community organizations. He serves as the President of the DuPage Symphony Orchestra, the Director for Professional Development for Project Management Institute Chicagoland, and a senior advisor for Operation Support our Troops. He is a member of the Exchange Club of Naperville, the American Legion, and The Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Colonel Potoczny developed a reputation as one of the most innovative trainers in the U.S. Army. He has built diverse teams all over the world to solve some of our allies' most difficult problems.

Don managed the development of a "resiliency campus" on Fort Carson, Colorado. This project coordinated the construction of a world-class gymnasium, mental health clinic, child care facility, and civilian personnel wellness center at a cost of \$34 million. It provided the community with a holistic approach to wellness.

Don deployed to Baghdad, Iraq in the last year of the US occupation. Don developed a team of officers from every service – US Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Customs, and Border Patrol. This "ISF Team" maintained assessments of every Iraqi security organization. They developed training strategies based on those detailed assessments. Don and his ISF Team clearly had an enormous impact on Iraq and its future as an independent nation. Their methodical approach to developing training strategies ensured the readiness of our ally, reduced the need to increased US involvement, and save countless lives.

Don served in the Republic of Korea for ten years culminating in his selection to command the Army's rocket artillery battalion just thirteen miles from North Korea. His highly effective training programs addressed his two priorities – unit readiness and leader development. To address readiness, he developed a system of alerts that ensured every subunit was ready to deploy with no notice. His weekly officer development program with guest speakers, hands-on practicum, book clubs, and rigorous intellectual debate became the standard for the entire division.

Don served his last two years of duty as an exchange officer with the Canadian Armed Forces. He served with the Canadian Joint Operations Command which oversees all activities of the Canadian Armed Forces.

In Ottawa, Don created a team to address Canada's most complex and pressing challenge – the information domain. Numerous government activities endeavored to address developing threats and build capabilities. Don created the Joint Operational Effects (JOE) Team to synchronize many of these efforts. The JOE Team integrated public affairs into operation, coordinated senior leader engagements around the world, and operationalized a host of capabilities.

Don also identified challenges for staff coordination across the headquarters. The functionally-aligned staff had developed impenetrable silos with officers assigned regional responsibilities. Don recognized a transformative opportunity to increase collaboration. He developed Regional Working Groups to connect desk officers across the functional staff. He led these working groups to share perspectives and they reached a level of teamwork they never imagined possible.

Don holds a BA in Philosophy from Western Illinois University; an MS in Education from Kansas State University; and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

Colonel Potoczny's awards include the Canadian Meritorious Service Commendation, the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (5), the Army Commendation Medal (3), the Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Army Achievement Medal (5), and others.

Colonel Potoczny and his wife, Didem, have a nine-year-old son and have settled in downtown Naperville.