



RAYMOND M. POWELL
Founder and Director
SEALIGHT MARITIME TRANSPARENCY PROJECT

Ray Powell is the Founder and Director of SeaLight, a maritime transparency project of the Gordian Knot Center for National Security Innovation at Stanford University, California. He served 35 years in the U.S. Air Force, including posts in the Philippines, Japan, Germany, Qatar, defense attaché in Vietnam and Australia, and combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was a 2021 Fellow at Stanford's Distinguished Careers Institute.

Shortly after graduating from Harbor High School in Santa Cruz, California in 1985, Ray enlisted in the Air Force and was trained as a Vietnamese linguist at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. He then served tours in the Philippines and Hawaii before receiving his commission in 1993 through Officer Training School.

Ray commanded the United States Air Force Honor Guard in Washington DC from 2009 to 2011. Ray entered training to become a foreign area officer in 2011. He then served in diplomatic posts as the Air Attaché to Vietnam from 2013 to 2016, and the Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché to Australia from 2017 to 2020. His other assignments have included Northern California, Japan, Germany, two tours in Qatar and three in the Pentagon. He also deployed to combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ray completed his academic degrees while on active duty. These included a Bachelor of Science (Occupational Education) from Wayland Baptist University in 1992 while serving in Hawaii, and a Master of Science (Information Resource Management) from Central Michigan University in 2000 while serving in Washington DC.

Ray and his wife, Richelyn, were married in 1990. Aside from being his best friend and invaluable partner, Richelyn has also taught English as a Second Language in both public schools and foreign countries. Ray and Richelyn's three children and three grandchildren live in California, Washington and Virginia.
