

Captain Joshua F. Wenker



Captain Wenker, a native of Tinley Park, Illinois, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science in History. He earned his Wings of Gold in 2001 as an E-2C *Hawkeye* Naval Flight Officer (NFO) while assigned to Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 120 “Greyhawks.” Additional educational accomplishments include graduation from the United States Naval War College in 2012, where he received a Master of Arts in Defense and Strategic Studies with Highest Distinction, Navy Nuclear Power School and Nuclear Prototype in 2019, and Joint Forces Staff College in 2023.

His career as a Naval Aviator included assignments as VAW-117 “Wallbangers” Safety Officer, VAW-113 “Black Eagles” Maintenance Officer, Commanding Officer of VAW-116 “Sun Kings,” and Executive Officer of USS [*Nimitz*](#) (CVN 68). During those tours, he completed numerous deployments aboard *Nimitz*, USS [*Ronald Reagan*](#) (CVN 76) and USS [*Theodore Roosevelt*](#) (CVN 71), flying and leading missions in support of Operations *Iraqi Freedom*, *Enduring Freedom*, *New Dawn*, *Inherent Resolve* and *Tomodachi*.

Ashore, he was assigned to VAW-120 as an Instructor NFO and Assistant Operations Officer; the East Africa Desk Officer for Commander Naval Forces Africa; Flag Aide to Commander US SIXTH Fleet and Joint Command Lisbon; USNORTHCOM, J55, as the Lead Planner for Homeland Defense; and as the Federal Executive Fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Strategic Studies Program.

CAPT Wenker served as the Commanding Officer of USS [Anchorage](#) (LPD 23) during her first-ever Drydocking Selected Restricted Availability. He most recently took command of USS [Carl Vinson](#) (CVN 70) on 30 July 2025.

Captain Wenker has accumulated more than 2,200 flight hours, 400 carrier arrested landings, and 80 combat sorties. His decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (3), Strike Flight Air Medal (2), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (2), the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (3), and various other unit citations and campaign ribbons.

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