Mark C. Stevens

Mark C. Stevens came to UTA from Kimball High School in Dallas, TX, and joined the Corps of Cadets in 1966. During his senior year he commanded the Sam Houston Rifles and was Corps S1. He graduated in 1972 with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering.

During the last part of his senior year the Vietnam War was winding down and many ROTC graduates were being commissioned active duty for training only. He had always wanted to fly and had noticed that his eyesight had improved, so he tested with the Air Force and aced the tests for pilots. He was accepted for pilot training after being released from his Army commitment by the professor of military science. Mark was a distinguished graduate (top 10%) from his Officer Candidate School, completed pilot school, and then went to Luke Air Force Base for F-4 upgrade training. After graduation he deployed to Thailand and flew air missions as an F-4E combat pilot. He flew air cover during the evacuation of Saigon and actually watched the helicopters evacuating people off the American Embassy. Later during the Mayaguez incident he was in the lead four-ship formation that verified the capture of the ship.

Mark was selected to join the first F-15 squadron, but due to production delays, was given an assignment with the Aggressors at Nellis AFB. The mission of the Aggressor squadrons was to act as the Russian Air Force and train all the other squadrons in air combat tactics. It was quite an honor to be selected. He was a charter member of the second Aggressor squadron. Mark developed a kidney problem that led to his permanent grounding from flying. He elected to get out of the USAF and pursue a career in engineering.

Mark joined the Boeing Corporation in 1979 and was a test engineer for the air-launched cruise missile program and the Air New Zealand P-3 avionics upgrade program. In 1984 he became the lead operations analyst for the new F-22 Advance Fighter program. He developed the F-22 concept of operations, was the lead author for the Boeing ATF system effectiveness proposal, and chaired the first pilot advisory group. In 1991 he became the lead system engineer and acting manager for the F-22 pilot training system. In this capacity he led the developmental effort to define all pilot training devices and courseware as well as simulator specifications. In 1997 he became the lead system engineer for the Darkstar Unmanned Air Vehicle program where he managed configuration control of all interface control documents and was the lead for vehicle diagnostics system and vehicle management system requirements.

He next joined the NATO AWACS midterm upgrade program. In this role he was the lead engineer and later acting manager for software requirements. He produced the software requirements documents and developed a software problems and issues database, which evolved into the weapons system problem database. He also led the software process improvement group. In 2002 Mark joined the X-45 program, developing the first fully autonomous unmanned air vehicle capable of tactical decision-making. In 2005 Mark was the senior manager for weapons system analysis and integration for the P-8A program. He chaired the program interface control working group, directed power analysis to define power and cooling budgets to meet startup and mission timelines, and managed development of system simulation laboratory and fiber optics IRAD projects. In 2009 he joined the Black Ram Engineering Services as a consultant system engineer. He continues to work at the company today and works on functional product specifications development and airworthiness of small tactical unmanned air vehicles.

Mark is married with two children and four grandchildren. His son is following in his dad's footsteps. He is flying the A-10C Warthog in the Air Force and has completed two tours in Afghanistan.