



Lieutenant Colonel Leonel A. Peña hails from the city of Edinburg in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. He currently serves as the Deputy Commandant & Director of Training for the U.S. Army School of Music. In this capacity, he assists the Commandant in overseeing all aspects of operations, training, administration, planning, resource management, logistics, support, doctrine development, and execution of numerous programs of instruction.

From 2015 to 2019, he was assigned as Executive Officer of The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own” in Washington, D.C. where he also served as Officer-in-Charge of the Vocal Element. In this capacity, he served as Director of The U.S. Army Voices and Conductor of The U.S. Army Chorus, leading them in performances across the nation as well as at The White House, The U.S. Capitol, and throughout the Joint Force Headquarters – National Capitol Region/Military District of Washington (JFHQ-NCR/MDW) for The President and Vice President of the United States, Cabinet Secretaries, Congressional leadership, visiting dignitaries, and the military’s most senior leaders. Prior to leading these two ensembles he served as Director/Officer-in-Charge of The U.S. Army Ceremonial Band and Herald Trumpets, leading them in musical support of ceremonies for The White House, the Department of Defense, Arlington National Cemetery, and the JFHQ-NCR/MDW.

Prior to assignment at The United States Army Band, Lieutenant Colonel Peña served as Commander & Conductor of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Band from 2012 to 2015. In addition to leading a variety of traditional and contemporary instrumental ensembles, he was responsible for all administrative, operational, logistical, training, resource management, and strategic communications aspects of the unit. Under his leadership, the TRADOC Band was awarded both the Army Superior Unit Award and the Colonel George S. Howard Citation of Musical Excellence for Military Concert Bands, a prestigious international award presented by the John Philip Sousa Foundation’s Executive Committee recognizing only the finest military concert bands that have demonstrated particularly significant high standards of musical excellence.

Before assuming command of the TRADOC Band, Lieutenant Colonel Peña was deployed from 2011 to 2012 as the Army Bands Liaison Officer to the United States Army Central/Coalition Forces Land Component Command headquarters in Kuwait during operations NEW DAWN and ENDURING FREEDOM. In this position, he provided doctrinal and regulatory guidance to deployed Army bands, and worked with U.S. embassies to facilitate partnerships with foreign military music units throughout the Middle East and Southwest Asia. Prior to assignment overseas, Lieutenant Colonel Peña served as Director/Officer-in-Charge of the Soldiers’ Chorus & Associate Bandmaster of The United States Army Field Band, “The Musical Ambassadors of the Army” from 2009 to 2011. While there, he participated in frequent national concert tours, and in joint performances with renowned symphony orchestras.

From 2005 to 2008 Lieutenant Colonel Peña served as Commander of the U.S. Army School of Music Staff & Faculty Company where he was responsible for the welfare and supervision of soldiers and Department of the Army civilians in a variety of academic, administrative, curriculum development, training, and support departments. From 2004 to 2005 he served as the Staff Bands Officer for the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), where he was responsible for administrative oversight of 80 of the Army’s 105 active component, Reserve, and National Guard music units under FORSCOM’s operational control. As his first assignment in the Army from 2002 to 2004, Lieutenant Colonel Peña served as Executive Officer & Associate Conductor of The Army Ground Forces Band at Ft. McPherson, GA.

Lieutenant Colonel Peña holds Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctorate degrees in various academic disciplines, a diploma from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and certifications from the Contemporary Commercial Music Vocal Pedagogy Institute at the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music. Ensembles under his leadership or direction have performed for four U.S. Presidents, leaders of both Houses of Congress, foreign Heads of State and other visiting dignitaries, at music educator conventions, on numerous nationally televised appearances, with multiple Grammy-winning orchestras, and for the nation’s most senior civilian and military leaders. As a vocalist, Lieutenant Colonel Peña has performed and recorded with the 14-time Grammy Award-winning Atlanta Symphony Chorus and the critically acclaimed Virginia Symphony Chorus. In 2005, he was inducted into the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. In 2009, Lieutenant Colonel Peña was honored with Resolution 335 by the Texas State Senate for his professional achievements.