



## **Biography** **Brigade Commander** **1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team**



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### **Colonel Eric D. Kerska**

Colonel Eric D. Kerska assumed command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry "Red Bull" Division on 1 July 2009. He has been a National Guardsman for more than 21 years and a Soldier for more than 27 years.

Colonel Kerska earned his Bachelor's Degree from Winona State University in 1987. His military education includes the Armor Officers Basic Course, Reserve Component Tank Commanders Course, Armor Officer Advanced Course, Combined Arms Services Staff School, Command and General Staff College and currently enrolled in the U.S. Army War College.

Colonel Kerska joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 1983 as an 11B Scout in Winona, MN. In 1985, he earned his commission as a Second Lieutenant and became a platoon leader for Company C, 1-94<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion. In 1987, he went on active duty and was assigned to 4-34<sup>th</sup> Armor, 1<sup>st</sup> BDE, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Mainz, West Germany. As part of 4-34 Armor he served as the mortar platoon leader, executive officer for A CO during Operation Desert Storm, and BN motor officer. Following promotion to Captain he was assigned to Fort Riley, KS and served as Squadron S4, 1/4 Cavalry, and BN S4 and HHC commander for 4-1 Aviation, 4<sup>th</sup> BDE, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. In 1994, he left active duty and rejoined the Minnesota Army National Guard. His first assignment was as the Assistant S3 for 1-94<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion in Duluth, MN. In 1995, he assumed duties as the BN S4 for 2-135 IN in Mankato, MN. He later served as the Commander for Bravo Company, 2-135 IN in Rochester, MN. In 1997, he was the S1 for 1<sup>st</sup> BDE, 34<sup>th</sup> ID in Stillwater, MN. In 1999, he was reassigned to 1-94<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion as the BN S3 in Duluth, MN. Upon completion of his assignment in 2001, he was assigned to the Minnesota Organizational Readiness Evaluation Team in STARC (-), St. Paul, MN. In 2003, he was assigned as the commander of 1-194<sup>th</sup> Armor Battalion in Brainerd, MN. Upon completion as the battalion commander, he was assigned as the S3 for 1<sup>st</sup> BDE, 34<sup>th</sup> ID for the deployment to Iraq in 2005. Upon redeployment, he was reassigned as the Deputy Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> BDE, 34<sup>th</sup> ID through 2009. In July 2009, he assumed command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, Bloomington, MN

In his civilian career, Colonel Kerska is a battalion chief for the Rochester Fire Department.

Colonel Kerska's military Awards includes the Bronze Star Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> award), Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> award), the Army Achievement Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> award) , Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> award), National Defense Service Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> award) Southwest Asia Service Medal with 3 Bronze Service Stars, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2<sup>nd</sup> award), Armed Forces Reserve Medal, with M device, Kuwait Liberation Medal (SA), Kuwait Liberation Medal (KU) Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon.

He is a member of the Minnesota National Guard Association of the United States and the U.S. Army Armor Association.

Colonel Kerska is married to his wife Tina and resides in Rochester, MN. He and his wife have one son and one daughter.