



United States Navy Biography

Rear Admiral Christina M. "Tina" Alvarado (RET) Shanahan

Rear Adm. Alvarado is a registered nurse and graduate of the Alexandria Hospital School of Nursing, Alexandria, Va., Columbia University School of Nursing, New York, N.Y., and holds a Master of Health Care Administration from the University of North Carolina, School of Public Health. She has worked in the clinical areas of orthopedics, neurosurgery and intensive care. Alvarado became certified in critical care nursing in 1983, and held civilian professional nurse positions at United Hospital, Portchester, N.Y., Alexandria Hospital and Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center. She was the first nurse to command Naval Reserve (NR) Expeditionary Medical Facility (EMF) Dallas One, a commissioned unit whose mission is expeditionary medicine. She led the transformation of the unit and stood up the first Reserve EMF in 2011.



Alvarado began her Navy Reserve career as a direct commissioned officer and attended school at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., She was called to active duty from 1990 to 1991 in support of Operations *Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm* and served in the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md. In January 2002, she was again called to active duty in support of Operations *Noble Eagle* and *Enduring Freedom*. She has held a variety of leadership positions including officer in charge, executive officer, administrative officer and training officer. She served as the executive officer, Operational Health Support Unit Jacksonville, Fla., from 2008 to 2010, and commanding officer of EMF Dallas One from 2010 to 2012.

Upon promotion to admiral, she served as Deputy Commander of Navy Medicine East, Commander of Expeditionary Medicine (RC) and in her final tour as Deputy Chief, Reserve Policy and Integration. In this role, she was responsible for strategy and oversight for over 8,000 medical reservists worldwide.

Rear Adm. Alvarado has extensive experience in strategic health care planning. She joined Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina in 1994 as Director of Public Policy & Regulatory Affairs and held a number of senior health policy and strategic positions there until 2006. Prior to BCBSNC, she dedicated 10 years of service to our Nation's veterans on Capitol Hill, in both the House and Senate, serving as Staff Director of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Hospitals and Health Care and Professional Staff Member of the U.S. House Committee on Veterans' Affairs from March of 1989 to July of 1994. In this position, she was responsible for health care legislation affecting veterans' and the \$15 billion health care delivery system designed to serve them. She was instrumental in the design and passage of major legislation that made improvements to VA such as the Nurse Pay Act of 1990, the Department of Veterans Affairs Physicians' and Dentists' Compensation and Labor Relations Act of 1991 and the Women Veterans Health Programs Act of 1992. She helped shape and advance efforts to reform the Department of Veterans' Affairs health care eligibility and position the VA's health care system to meet the future needs of America's aging and indigent veterans. Rear Adm. Alvarado was recognized for her outstanding contributions to veterans in July of 1994 by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives Resolution and has been recognized for distinguished service to veterans at a ceremony in her honor by every major veteran's service organization.

In June 2006, she became President and CEO of Be Active North Carolina, a state-wide non-profit that promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyles. She resigned that position in August 2007 to serve on active duty at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. In 2008 she launched CompassNC, a business consulting company focusing on health policy and strategy solutions in a dynamic market. She serves on the Board of Directors of WakeMed Health and Hospitals, a billion dollar, level 1 trauma center health system in Raleigh, NC. She served as the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Quality Care and currently as the Chairman of Strategic Planning and Vice Chair of the full Board. Alvarado also serves on the Board of Visitors for Columbia University School of Nursing. She retired from the US Navy after 30 years of service in 2018. She was the first female of Hispanic origin to achieve the rank of Rear Admiral Upper Half.

Her military awards include the Legion of Merit (two awards), Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards), Meritorious Unit Commendation (two awards), the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device and the National Defense Medal (two). Alvarado is a recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's highest service award. She was also named Columbia University School of Nursing 2011 Distinguished Alumni, is a 3-time World Champion equestrian and was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame in 2019.

