



Lieutenant Colonel James E. Willard graduated from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1993 as the Distinguished Military Graduate earning a commission as a Field Artillery Officer. LTC Willard also holds a Masters of Business Management from Webster's University and a Masters of Military Arts and Science from the Command and General Staff College. His military education includes the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course, Infantry Officer Advanced Course, Combined Arms Staff Services School, Command and General Staff College and is a graduate of the Advanced Military Studies Program at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

LTC Willard's initial assignment was to 3rd Brigade, 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized), later re-flagged 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Benning, Georgia as a Platoon Fire Direction Officer for 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery and then as Service Battery Executive Officer, Firing Battery Platoon Leader, and Battalion Fire Support Officer. During this assignment, he deployed with the Battalion to Southwest Asia in Support of Operation Vigilant Warrior.

In July 1997, following attendance to the Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, LTC Willard was assigned to 212th Field Artillery Brigade at Fort Sill, Oklahoma where he served until May 2000. While in the 212th Field Artillery Brigade, he served as Brigade Operations Officer then as the Battalion Assistant S-3 and Battery Commander in 2nd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery. Upon completion of battery command, he received assignment instructions to Headquarters, United States Army, Pacific at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. From June 2000 until June 2004, LTC Willard served in positions to include Current Operations Officer, Special Technical Operations Plans Officer and Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, United States Army, Pacific.

After graduating from the Army Command and General Staff College and the Advanced Military Studies Program, LTC Willard served at Fort Riley, Kansas, with the 1st Infantry Division from July 2006 to April 2010. His duties included serving as the Chief of Plans, 1st Infantry Division, as well as Battalion S3 and Battalion Executive Officer of 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment. LTC Willard deployed with the Battalion to Operation Iraqi Freedom in support of Multi-National Division- Baghdad from September 2008 to October 2009.

LTC Willard's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal as well as the Meritorious Unit Citation and Army Superior Unit awards and the Parachutist Badge.