

William “Wil” Zemp

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President & CEO ♦ Project Kitty Hawk

Wil Zemp is the chief executive officer of Project Kitty Hawk, a nonprofit ed-tech startup that will partner with UNC System institutions to serve adult learners. A strategist, team builder, and coach, Zemp brings together leaders in industry and education to build a stronger, more prolific workforce.

Zemp comes to Project Kitty Hawk from Amazon Web Services, where he served as the global director for Amazon’s Education Workforce Initiative since 2020. He and his team worked with industry leaders, educators, and entrepreneurs, building programs that helped public education systems meet workforce demands.

Prior to joining Amazon, Zemp spent seven years at Southern New Hampshire University, a nonprofit institution serving 170,000 online students, where he held multiple roles, including executive vice president and chief strategy and innovation officer for SNHU’s Innovation Center.

Zemp served 25 years in the U.S. Armed Forces, achieving the rank of colonel, and commanded Multi-National, Joint and Army combat formations. He was deployed to stability and peace operations around the globe, and served combat tours in Africa, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

During his career, he has held high-level security clearances and diplomatic credentials, serving in senior policy roles in the State Department and the National Security staff. He was director of the Joint and Army Future Concepts Division, creating strategies, systems, technologies, and training programs.

Zemp received his undergraduate degree from The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, and master’s degrees from The Catholic University of America and the U.S. Army War College. He completed his postgraduate studies as a fellow to the Foreign Service Institute through the U.S. Naval War College and the Postgraduate School.