



STRATEGIC DETERRENT COALITION

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May 6, 2025

RE: SDC Symposium Welcome

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of the Strategic Deterrent Coalition, our Board of Directors, and Board of Regents, WELCOME you to our Eleventh Annual Symposium. Our 2025 Symposium continues to educate and inform on the *importance to our nation of maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.*

In the history of the SDC, there has never been a time when all legs of the nuclear triad are undergoing major modernization efforts. Thus, never has there been a time when continued support from our nation's leaders has been more vital to continue those modernization efforts. It is our hope that this symposium renews support for these efforts and highlights the vital need for nuclear modernization to secure our nation's security thru deterrence into the future.

Our symposium speakers will address many aspects of our Nation's strategic systems and those of our Allies, and how these capabilities account for and are prepared to respond to threats from our adversaries. Our symposium agenda will also include a continued dialogue on the SDC's national conversation on recruiting and sustaining human talent in the Nuclear Enterprise.

The SDC will continue to pose the relevant questions and provide different perspectives to continue the dialogue about the strategic capabilities of and threats to our national security. We will attempt to highlight the critical touchpoints that require our constant attention.

If at any time during the symposium you need assistance, please contact any member of the SDC Board of Directors in attendance.

Again, welcome and thank you for joining us.

SCOTT P. LANDGUTH
President



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today, while modernizing
for the future.**



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President
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Dr. Christopher Yeaw
Research Director, Nuclear Programs
National Strategic Research Institute

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DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



U.S. Senator Deb Fischer

A lifelong Nebraskan, Deb Fischer is the senior senator from Nebraska. Senator Fischer was first elected to the U.S. Senate in November 2012, becoming the first Nebraska woman elected to a full term and the first Nebraska state senator elected directly after service in the state legislature. She was reelected for a second term in 2018, and in November 2024, Nebraskans voted to send her back to the Senate for a third term. During the 119th Congress, she serves as deputy whip under Senate Majority Whip John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), working to present the concerns of Nebraskans directly to Republican Senate leadership. She also serves on six important Senate committees: Armed Services, Appropriations, Commerce, Agriculture, Rules, and Ethics.

Senator Fischer believes the first duty of Congress is to defend the nation. As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, she is committed to defending against growing threats to our homeland and our allies. She serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, which focuses on America's nuclear triad and associated delivery systems, the emergence of space as a warfighting domain, and defending the nation against increasingly sophisticated missile threats. The subcommittee directly oversees two unified combatant commands: U.S. Strategic Command, headquartered at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, and U.S. Space Command.

Senator Fischer also serves on the Appropriations Committee, which helps shape the federal government's spending policies. This position ensures that Nebraskans have greater input into the programs and agencies that directly affect their lives. Senator Fischer is committed to leveraging this role to rein in irresponsible spending and benefit Nebraska.



Markus Garlauskas

Markus Garlauskas is the director of the Indo-Pacific Security Initiative of the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. He leads this initiative's efforts focused on conflict and nuclear deterrence, United States strategy, and building cooperation with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. He led projects focused on deterrence and defense issues in East Asia as a nonresident senior fellow from August 2020 until assuming his duties as director in January 2023.

Garlauskas served in the US government for nearly twenty years. He was appointed to the Senior National Intelligence Service as the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for North Korea on the National Intelligence Council from July 2014 to June 2020. As NIO, he led the US intelligence community's strategic analysis on North Korea issues and expanded analytic outreach to non-government experts. He also provided direct analytic support to top-level policy deliberations, including the presidential transition, as well as the Singapore and Hanoi summits with North Korea.

Garlauskas served for nearly twelve years overseas at the headquarters of United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command and US Forces Korea in Seoul. His staff assignments there included chief of the Intelligence Estimates Branch and director of the Strategy Division. For his service in Korea, he received the Joint Civilian Distinguished Service Award, the highest civilian award from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



General Thomas A. Bussiere

Gen. Thomas A. Bussiere is Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command and Commander, Air Forces Strategic - Air, U.S. Strategic Command, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. AFGSC provides strategic deterrence, global strike capability, and combat support to USSTRATCOM and other geographic combatant commands. The command is comprised of more than 33,700 professionals operating at two numbered air forces; 11 active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve wings; and the Joint Global Strike Operations Center. Weapons systems assigned to AFGSC include all U.S. Air Force intercontinental ballistic missiles and bomber aircraft, UH-1N helicopters, E-4B National Airborne Operations Center aircraft, and the U.S. Air Force NC3 weapons system.

Gen. Bussiere is a 1985 distinguished graduate of Air Force ROTC from Norwich University. He has held a variety of flying, staff and command assignments including the Deputy Director for Nuclear, Homeland Defense and Current Operations, Joint Staff; Inspector General, Headquarters, AFGSC; Advanced Programs Division, Headquarters, Air Combat Command and duty as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Multi-National Force-Iraq, Camp Victory, Baghdad. He commanded the 325th Bomb Squadron, 13th Bomb Squadron, 509th Operations Group and the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman AFB, Missouri. He also served as the Commander, Alaskan Command, United States Northern Command; Commander, Eleventh Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; and Commander, Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; Commander, Eighth Air Force; Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, and Commander, Joint Functional Component for Global Strike; Commander, Task Force 204, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. Gen. Bussiere is a graduate of the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies and the U.S. Army War College Advanced Strategic Arts Program. Prior to his current position, Gen. Bussiere served as Deputy Commander, USSTRATCOM.

Gen. Bussiere is a command pilot with more than 3,400 hours in the T-38 Talon, F-15C Eagle, B-2A Spirit, B-1B Lancer and F-22 Raptor. He led F-15C combat missions during operations Southern Watch and Vigilant Warrior and B-2 combat missions during operations Allied Force and Iraqi Freedom.



Lieutenant General Steven L. Basham (ret)

Steven L. Basham is a retired United States Air Force lieutenant general who last served as the deputy commander of the United States European Command from 2022 to 2024. He previously served as deputy commander of United States Air Forces in Europe – Air Forces Africa from 2019 to 2022.

Born and raised in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Basham was commissioned through Officer Training School in 1989. He has completed numerous flying, staff and command assignments and is a command pilot with more than 3,400 flying hours in the B-1, B-2 and B-52.

In April 2022, Basham was nominated for assignment as deputy commander of the United States European Command.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Anna Dowd

Anna M. Dowd is a senior international defense researcher at RAND. Her research focuses on transatlantic security and defense, NATO, deterrence, military capabilities, defense strategy and planning, economic security, resilience, defense industrial base and technological innovation.

Previously, she served in several senior positions, including at NATO, European Defence Agency, EU Institute for Security Studies and the Polish Ministry of National Defence. Most recently Dowd was a Principal Officer and Head of Industry Relations at the NATO Communications and Information Agency at the NATO HQ in Brussels, Belgium, where she focused on addressing complex policy, strategy and operational challenges at the nexus of national and global security, technology and innovation.

She holds a master's degree in international economic and political relations from the Warsaw School of Economics. She is also a graduate of a joint program of European Union Studies from the Warsaw School of Economics and Institute d' Études Politiques (SciencePo), as well as the NATO Executive Development Program.

In addition, she is an adjunct fellow (non-resident) with the Defense-Industrial Initiatives Group at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).



VADM Terry J Benedict (Ret)

Vice Admiral Terry Benedict, USN, Ret., is President of Systems Planning and Analysis (SPA), Inc. Since completing his Navy career, Vice Admiral (Ret.) Benedict served as Chief Operating Officer of Blue Origin and Operations Manager for the Nuclear Security and Operations Group at Bechtel. He also served on SPA's Board of Directors from 2019–2021.

Vice Admiral (Ret.) Benedict was associated with the Navy's Strategic Systems Programs for thirty years, where he held ten different positions, ultimately serving as the Program's Director for eight years (2010-2018). Before assuming command of Strategic Systems Programs, Vice Admiral (Ret.) Benedict served as Program Executive Officer for Integrated Warfare Systems, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Vice Admiral Benedict graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science Degree. He also holds a Master of Science in Engineering Science from the Naval Postgraduate School and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. He is a graduate of the Advanced Program Management course at the Defense Acquisition University and the Executive Leadership Course at Carnegie Mellon. Vice Admiral Benedict serves on the Board of Directors at Draper Laboratories, the Board of Advisors of X-Bow, the Board of Advisors for the Naval Submarine League, Livermore Laboratory's External Advisory Board, and is a member of the STRATCOM Senior Advisory Group, Stockpile Assessment team.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Major General Mark B. Pye
Director, Global Power Programs, Office of the
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Acquisition,
Technology and Logistics.

Maj. Gen. Pye is the Director of Programs, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va. He leads a staff of military and civilians in the development, integration, evaluation and analysis of the Air Force program across the Future Years Defense Program and maintains the integrity and discipline of the Air Force corporate structure process.

Maj. Gen. Pye entered the Air Force in 1994 after commissioning through the U.S. Air Force Academy. His operational experience includes flying combat support missions in the KC-10 during operations Desert Strike, Southern Watch and Allied Force. Following entry into the B-2 program, Maj. Gen. Pye flew combat missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, became a weapons officer and later led the opening strike mission for Operation Odyssey Dawn in 2011. He has more than 3,600 flying hours, including operational test pilot time in the B-52, having served as Vice Commander, 53rd Wing, Eglin AFB, Florida.

Maj. Gen. Pye has commanded at the squadron and wing level, served on Headquarters 8th Air Force staff, led joint strategy and operational design teams at U.S. Strategic Command, served as Deputy Director of Strategic Plans, Programs and Requirements, Headquarters Air Force Global Strike Command and served as a National Defense Fellow at Stanford. Prior to his current position, Maj. Gen. Pye was the Director of Global Power Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, at the Pentagon.



ERIC WOLLERMAN
President,
Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies

Eric Wollerman is president of Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies (FM&T). FM&T manages and operates the U.S. Department of Energy's Kansas City National Security Campus (KCNSC). With nearly 7,000 employees in Kansas City, Missouri, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, KCNSC provides national security through its diverse engineering, manufacturing and secure supply chain management activities.

As Honeywell FM&T president, Eric is responsible for applying best-in-class commercial standards in managing operations and delivering outstanding mission results with a \$1.8 billion annual operations budget.

Since joining FM&T in April 2020, Eric has been leading KCNSC's strategies, including: delivering operational excellence in nuclear weapons and national security missions with a focus on quality, early design engagement and delivery requirements; embracing digital transformation tools and technologies to enhance our mission; strategic planning for KCNSC's infrastructure; supply base and workforce needs for today and the future; and unlocking the value of our people and processes.

In addition to leading the Honeywell FM&T business, Eric supports community reinvestment with key focus areas in society, education and the environment. He has a strong partnership with the Grandview schools' STEMM and advanced manufacturing programs. He is a board member for the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, National Security Executive Council, Strategic Deterrence Coalition and serves on the Leadership Council with the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Matthew Burno
GDMS Director of Strategy and Business
Development, Strategic Systems

Mr. Burno oversees and manages the execution of business strategy, advance development, and Independent Research and Development (IRAD) activities for the Strategic Systems in alignment with the Navy and Airforce Modernization programs. These programs include Nuclear Command and Control, Strategic Weapons Control, Strategic Guidance, Hypersonic Weapon Control, and Nuclear Weapons Security (NWS).

Prior to this role, Mr. Burno served as Program Director for Navy Trident D5 Life Extension 2 (D5LE2) program supporting the initial planning for Fire Control modernization, establishing GDMS investments for independent research and development, and the Navy's System Engineering and SWS architecture development. He assumed those responsibilities following his time as Business Segment Director for Navy BYG1 Submarine Combat and Weapon Control, Air and Missile Defense Radar (AMDR), and Surface Electronics Warfare systems; Program Manager for Nuclear Weapons Security; and Program Manager for Trident conversion to SSGN Attack Weapon Control System overseeing development, integration, and production services. An employee of GDMS (formerly General Electric Ordnance Systems) for over 40 years, Mr. Burno began his career as a Field Engineer on the Poseidon program, including a tour as a forward site representative in Holy Loch, Scotland. Upon returning from Scotland, he has held numerous systems engineering and leadership responsibilities as test director for Phalanx Close In Weapon System (CIWS) as well as qualification testing at China Lake, CA, and as lead systems engineer for the Strategic Weapon System modernization, transforming the system from a 1990 closed architecture, to an open and modular design, introducing Commercial off the Shelf based technologies, and a more affordable and reliable product for the Navy.



Michael R. Shoultz

Michael R. Shoultz, a member of the Senior Executive Service, is the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. Mr. Shoultz assists in the oversight of the Air Force's Nuclear Deterrence Operations, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction efforts, Nuclear Command Control and Communication portfolios and international treaties and arms control agreements. In this capacity, he provides direction, guidance, integration and advocacy while engaging with joint, interagency and international partners. Mr. Shoultz was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force upon graduation from Parks College of St. Louis University in 1982. He has an extensive background in Air Force operations, amassing more than 3,000 hours in the B-52H Stratofortress and B-1B Lancer. In addition, he has held several key operational and staff positions at the squadron, wing, numbered Air Force and Headquarters, U.S. Air Force levels. After more than 27 years of active-duty service in the Air Force, Mr. Shoultz retired as a colonel and was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2013. Prior to his current position, Mr. Shoultz served as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy, Integration and Requirements.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Dr. Steven Van Dyk (SES) Chief Engineer, Strategic Systems Programs

Dr. Steven Van Dyke, member of the Senior Executive Service, is the Chief Engineer at Strategic Systems Programs (SSP). He assumed his current role as the eighth Chief Engineer at SSP in January 2022.

In his role as Chief Engineer, SSP Dr. Van Dyk is senior technical authority responsible to the Director, SSP for the technical processes and rigor to execute the Command's mission. His oversight includes defining and enforcing the engineering disciplines; setting quality standards; and auditing compliance to ensure the performance, safety and quality of the Navy's strategic nuclear deterrent capability – including weapon system technical documentation, fleet maintenance, and calibration programs for the Trident II (D5) Strategic Weapon System (SWS). He is further responsible for the SSP technical evaluation program and oversight of civilian Technical Qualifications and engineering workforce competencies. He is also the Deputy Program Officer for the Polaris Sales Agreement (PSA) with the United Kingdom.

Dr. Van Dyk began his career as an officer in the U.S. Navy. He was commissioned in 1980 through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Program following graduation from the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. He served on various Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarines as a Strategic Weapons Officer where he gained a subspecialty rating in Strategic Weapons and Electrical Engineering and as the Engineer on a Diesel Submarine. His shore duty assignments included engineer in charge of the production and repair of the Mk48 submarine launched torpedo program at Naval Sea Systems Command and Executive Officer of SSP's Program Management Office Fire Control System responsible for the technical management of the guidance and fire control subsystems production and repair. Following his retirement from the U.S. Navy in 1996 as a LCDR, he accepted a position with Kaman Sciences Corporation and worked in radiation effects.

Dr. Van Dyk returned to SSP as a government civilian in 1998 and held positions in the Reentry System Branch (1998-2000); Guidance System Branch (2000-2004); and Missile System Branch (2004-2014). He then served as the Assistant to the Chief Engineer for Missile Engineering Systems (2014-2017) and was responsible for all matters pertaining to missile system design, development, flight test data acquisition, production and Fleet support as well as integration of flight hardware system components into the TRIDENT II missile. He was appointed the Chief Deterrence Technology Officer in 2017, where - in addition to being the principal point of contact for SSP with the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command - he was responsible for establishing and directing research and exploratory development programs in support of future Strategic Weapon Systems; providing executive leadership for all Navy matters related to Arms Control Treaty implementation and compliance; and directing SSP's efforts as a participating or supporting Program Office for other Navy programs.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Colonel Timothy Griffith, Deputy Commander, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri

Colonel Timothy Griffith is the Deputy Commander, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. He is responsible for the combat readiness of the Air Force's only B-2 base, including development and employment of the B-2's combat capability as part of Air Force Global Strike Command. As the installation Deputy Commander, he provides logistics support for the 442d Fighter Wing, Air Force Reserve; 131st Bomb Wing, Missouri Air National Guard; 20th Attack Squadron, Air Combat Command; and the 1st Battalion, 135th Assault Helicopter Battalion, Missouri Army National Guard. Additionally, he manages flying assets in excess of \$46 billion and an annual operations and maintenance budget of \$147 million.

Colonel Griffith received his commission in 2002 after graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. He served in a variety of operational assignments as a B-1 instructor and evaluator pilot. His staff assignments include positions on the Joint Staff and the Air Staff in Washington, D.C. Prior to his current assignment, Colonel Griffith served as the director of the B-21 Integration and System Management Office where he liaised between Air Force Global Strike Command and the Department of the Air Force Rapid Capability Office, supporting the development of the B-21.

Colonel Griffith is a Command Pilot and graduate of the U.S. Air Force Weapons School with more than 2,600 total flight hours, including 1,100 combat hours in support of multiple contingency operations.



Colonel (ret) Samuel G. White III

Colonel (ret) Samuel G. White III is a 757/767 Captain and instructor for Delta Airlines. He retired from active duty in 2017 after over 25 years of service. Col White has served in various positions to include test engineer, B-52H instructor pilot, B-2A instructor/evaluator pilot, senior leader personnel division chief, AF Element Commander at the Army Command and General Staff College and USCENTCOM planner.

He commanded a B-2A bomber squadron as well as an operations group where he led B-52, B-1, B-2, KC-135, F-16, and RQ-4 squadrons. Col White is a Command Pilot and Airline Transport Pilot with over 7,000 hours in the B-2A, B-52H, T-38A, KC-135R, F-16B, 757-200/300, 767-300ER, MD-88 and MD-90.

Colonel White was commissioned through the USAF Academy in 1992 earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He also holds Master of Science degrees in Mechanical Engineering (Fresno State) and Systems Engineering (AFIT). He is married to the former Chareda Evans and they have four children.

MODERATORS



Major General C. Donald Alston (USAF Ret)
Executive Director
Board of Regents
Strategic Deterrent Coalition

General Alston's 34-year career included command of ICBM units at the squadron, group, wing and numbered air force levels, and culminated as commander of 20th Air Force and U.S. Strategic Command Task Force 214. General Alston served as the Director of Air, Space and Information Operations, Air Force Space Command; Director of Strategic Communications and Spokesman for Multinational Force–Iraq; and as the first Assistant Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration on the Air Staff. He earned his B.S. at the Air Force Academy and holds an MBA from Golden Gate University. He is also a graduate of the National Security Management Course at The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University; and the Senior Executives in National and International Security Program, Harvard University.



Joe Scallorns
President Emeritus
Strategic Deterrent Coalition

Mr. Scallorns resides in California, Missouri. He is an Air Force Civic Leader (Emeritus) and a Civic Leader of Air Force Global Strike Command. He continues to be an active supporter of Whiteman Air Force Base. He is a retired community banker with over thirty years' experience. He has served on the boards of several banks, insurance companies and other business organizations. He has also served on the boards of numerous not-for-profit, community development and charitable organizations. Mr. Scallorns is a graduate of the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri and The Stonier Graduate School of Banking, Rutgers – The State University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. He is the recipient of the United States Air Force Distinguished Public Service Award and the United States Air Force Scroll of Appreciation.



Richard W. "Rick" Hartle
Treasurer
Strategic Deterrent Coalition

Mr. Hartle graduated from New Mexico State University with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He retired from a 35 year career with The Boeing Company as Director of Business Development for the company's Directed Energy and Strategic Systems programs. His assignments ranged from design engineering, corporate internal audit, product development engineering/program management and he led strategy, investment decision and capture activities as a senior leader in business development. While with Boeing, he worked on ICBM and related deterrent programs for nearly 30 years. He remains deeply engaged in community support of the military as a board member of the Utah Defense Alliance and as Treasurer and past-Chair of the Top of Utah Military Affairs Committee executive board. He is a life member of the Air Force Association and a former AFA National Secretary. Mr. Hartle also serves on the Board of Directors for SIMX Tactical LLC and remains active in strategic systems programs through Triad Systems International.



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Dr. Christopher Yeaw

Dr. Christopher Yeaw is the Associate Executive Director for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Programs at the National Strategic Research Institute, U.S. Strategic Command's University Affiliated Research Center (UARC). An integral component of the University of Nebraska, NSRI leads and leverages collaborative efforts with other academic institutions, National Laboratories, FFRDCs, UARCs, and non-profit organizations. NSRI's responsively and enduringly supports the US government in successfully executing the strategic deterrence, nuclear and counter- WMD missions with world class research and analysis. The Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Programs Department leads thought and collaborates across the entire range of strategic and nuclear issues: deterrence policy, threat analysis, weapon design, strategic materials, NC3, wargaming, nonproliferation, counter-terrorism, and education.

Immediately prior to his appointment at NSRI, Dr. Yeaw was the National Nuclear Security Administration's Senior Policy Advisor for Defense Programs, having served as the Department of Energy's lead official in the development and rollout of the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. Formerly, he was the founder and director of the Center for Assurance, Deterrence, Escalation, and Nonproliferation Science & Education (CADENSE), a nuclear weapons think tank at the Louisiana Tech Research Institute. From 2010- 2015, Dr. Yeaw served in a Senior Executive position as the first Chief Scientist of Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC), which was established in 2009 to organize, train, equip, operate, secure, and maintain all U.S. intercontinental ballistic missile and nuclear-capable bomber forces.



Dr. John Swegle

Dr. John Swegle is a consultant to the National Strategic Research Institute at the University of Nebraska, to which he came from the Savannah River National Laboratory. At SRNL, where he was a Senior Advisory Scientist, his research concentrated on the analysis of foreign nuclear-weapon programs, nuclear proliferation, nuclear nonproliferation treaties and agreements, and regional nuclear security. In his study of foreign nuclear-weapon programs, he worked with experts at SRNL in paying special attention to tritium production and supplies as a program enabler. He has also been a regular participant in the DEGRE nuclear-escalation war games directed by the U.S. Naval War College for the U.S. Strategic Command.

Dr. Swegle came to SRNL after 21 years with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where he spent the majority of his time working in Z Division, except for three years in a nuclear-design division. In Z Division, his activities included the analysis of foreign science and technology programs, the analysis of Russian and Chinese nuclear-weapons development, and the management of a section of over 30 analysts covering foreign nuclear weapons programs and nuclear proliferation. Prior to his time at LLNL, he worked for five years in the Plasma Theory Division at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque where he conducted research in technologies that are today employed in stockpile stewardship activities.

YPG SESSION FACILITATORS



Drew N. Peterson

Drew N. Peterson is a policy practitioner with expertise at the intersection of diplomacy, strategy, national security, foreign investment, and emerging technologies. During nearly 12 years as a Foreign Service Officer, he served as senior advisor, speechwriter, or assistant to numerous Department of State senior officials, including the Special Presidential Envoy for Northern Ireland and four U.S. Ambassadors, and the director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. He also fulfilled political-military, public diplomacy, and consular roles at U.S. embassies in Israel, Kazakhstan, and Lithuania.

As Director for Southern Africa and Regional Economy on the staff of the White House's National Security Council from 2019 to 2020, Peterson coordinated the "Prosper Africa" initiative to expand international business opportunities and bolster the resilience of African partners against predatory trade, investment, procurement, and lending practices. Earlier in his career, he was the Department of State's liaison to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) and spearheaded a diplomatic campaign to harmonize investment screening practices across U.S. allies and partners.

Peterson currently works as an independent consultant in a variety of areas relevant to national security, including trusted technology network design, geopolitical and regulatory risk advisory, and the construction and execution of wargames, tabletop exercises, and other simulations. He has led or contributed to technical assistance and capacity-building missions in Europe, Africa, and East Asia. He is also an adjunct instructor at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, where he teaches courses on diplomacy and foreign policy.



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Red Tail Academy, Merriam, Kansas

Red Tail Academy was inspired by the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of professional African Americans who broke down racial barriers in aviation during World War II. RTA was built to honor the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen to continue their work of removing obstacles in aviation and to promote excellence. For youth and particularly youth of racial and ethnic minority or low socio-economic status, there are many barriers to success in aviation. The barriers include lack of exposure to the field, insufficient resources, unclear pathways, inadequate support systems, cultural stigmas, psychosocial factors, and a lack of representation. While such barriers do not uniquely affect the aviation industry, RTA seeks to tackle these obstacles to improve youths' individual outcomes and support KC Metropolitan Area youth. RTA's interventions have the possibility to change individual lives, create pathways for economic mobility and community development, change the face of the aviation industry, and ensure a robust workforce for a developing segment of the American economy.

We will host two STEM camps in 2025. The first camp is located at Lees Summit Airport. It is an exciting educational opportunity designed specifically for elementary and middle school students aged between 10 through 13. This day camp aims to introduce young participants to various aspects of aviation, including its rich history, fundamental science concepts, weather effects and terminology, aircraft systems and components, and the variety of related career fields.

The second camp will be held at the University of Central Missouri and is for ages 14 – 16. This is a residential camp that provides a more in-depth look at aviation. This includes flight safety, flight planning, airspace, air traffic control, aerodynamics, weather, and aeronautical decision making.



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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Brett Watkins
Technical Manager - Industrial Engineering
Kansas City National Security Campus

Brett Watkins is a technical manager in industrial engineering with Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies (FM&T). FM&T manages and operates the U.S. Department of Energy's Kansas City National Security Campus (KCNSC). With nearly 7,000 employees in Kansas City and Albuquerque, the KCNSC provides national security through their diverse engineering, manufacturing and secure supply chain management activities.

Watkins has worked for KCNSC for 8.5 years and is responsible for all Industrial Engineering efforts at KCNSC inclusive of equipment capacity planning, constraint management, manufacturing item planning and costing, factory layout conceptual designs, and discrete event simulations. Prior to this assignment, he has held roles in lab supervision and purchased product engineering.

Brett holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Missouri and a master's degree in engineering management from Kansas State University.

David Lartonoix
Principal Mechanical Engineer
Kansas City National Security Campus

David Lartonoix is a Principal Mechanical Engineer with Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies (FM&T). FM&T manages and operates the U.S. Department of Energy's Kansas City National Security Campus (KCNSC). With nearly 7,000 employees in Kansas City and Albuquerque, the KCNSC provides national security through their diverse engineering, manufacturing and secure supply chain management activities.

Lartonoix has worked at KCNSC for nearly ten years, supporting multiple nuclear weapon programs and manufacturing process development efforts. He has held various positions in the nuclear security enterprise for the past two decades.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Hallie Buyle
Chemical Engineer II
Kansas City National Security Campus

Hallie Buyle is a Chemical Engineer II at the Kansas City National Security Campus (KCNSC), managed by Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies. Hallie's career started at KCNSC in Materials Engineering, where she solidified her role as a subject matter expert in Adhesives, Coatings, and Thin Films. She has a pending patent for her work on polyurethane adhesives. Hallie received a 2024 Honeywell Outstanding Engineer award, a peer-nominated and peer-reviewed honor, for her work in materials engineering, including materials production mitigation and research accomplishments. In 2025, Hallie joined Systems Engineering to support the technical engineering effort for a wide array of product realization teams. In addition, Hallie holds a leadership position through KCNSC's Young Professionals Employee Network, focusing on knowledge transfer and mentorship to help early in career employees with professional development.

Hallie holds a degree in Chemical Engineering from Kansas State University. She is an avid K-State football fan. She also enjoys running, reading, and playing pickleball in her spare time.



Drew Noble
Systems Engineer
BAE Systems

Drew has supported the Sentinel Weapon System and digital engineering initiatives since 2022. Prior to his time with BAE, he served as an Air Defense Control Officer in the United States Marine Corps with Marine Air Control Squadron (MACS)-4 and MACS-24, attaining the rank of Captain. Drew holds a Master of Science in Systems Engineering from George Washington University (2025) and a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering (2016).

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Paul Mundt
Scientist II, Digital Transformation Office
BAE Systems

Air and Space Force Solutions, BAE Systems, Inc. is a Data Scientist at BAE Systems Inc, where he loves uncovering hidden patterns and trends within our data. He uses his skills in machine learning and data visualization to help the team understand risks and improve decision making in our fields. Mundt is always excited to explore new algorithms and data challenges!



Jared Oleksiak
General Dynamics Mission Systems

Jared Oleksiak is a Program Manager with almost nine years of experience working in Defense Contracting. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, a Master's in Engineering Management, and an MBA from Western New England University. Since joining the General Dynamics Mission Systems team back in 2016, Jared has fulfilled a variety of roles within the organization, all of which directly supported our Nation's Strategic Deterrent mission. In his current position, Jared works closely with General Dynamics' Strategic Systems Programs (SSP) customer to develop the next generation of Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs). In his spare time, Jared enjoys remodeling his home and is always willing to lend a hand to family and friends whenever a new project arises.



Hannah Andrick – Military Operations Analyst
Systems Planning and Analysis (SPA)

Hannah Andrick is a Military Operations Analyst at Systems Planning and Analysis (SPA), where she supports the Navy's Sea-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM-N) program and select Strategic Weapons System (SWS) Support Equipment initiatives under Strategic Systems Programs (SSP). A former U.S. Air Force nuclear and missile operations officer, Hannah has extensive experience leading missile combat crews and managing nuclear operations, policies, and programs. Since joining SPA, her focus has been on Department of Defense acquisitions, systems engineering, and program management for key naval projects. She holds master's degrees in health administration and public health and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in international relations, along with a certificate in project management. Outside of work, Hannah enjoys traveling, riding her motorcycle, and preparing to launch her own social media channel.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Alan Tom
Raytheon

Alan Tom is a Contracts Professional within Raytheon's Strategic Strike portfolio, supporting efforts pertaining to the United States Air Force's long range effectors. A primary focus of this portfolio is the Long Range Stand Off (LRSO) weapon as part of the nation's nuclear modernization efforts. As a graduate of RTX's Contracts Leadership Development Program as well as prior work experience at General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., Alan has built a strong foundation in strategic execution and cross-functional collaboration. He holds an undergraduate degree, as an Economics Major from Pomona College, and is currently pursuing his MBA at the University of Arizona to further his knowledge at the intersection of business and the aerospace/defense industry. Grateful for the opportunity to support work in this critical field, Alan is passionate about driving forthcoming innovation and committed to continuously growing as a leader. Outside of work, Alan is an avid golfer and Southern California sports fan.



Ian Oxborrow
Northrop Grumman

Ian Oxborrow is a project engineer working at Northrop Grumman with Propulsion Systems.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Edwin Sanjurjo
Sr. Electrical Engineer, Mission Systems
Integrated Strategic Solutions (ISSE)
Collins Aerospace

Edwin joined Collins Aerospace in 2023. Edwin specializes in A-Kit design and has contributed to the development of A-Kit in support of the E-6B mission. He has designed Circuit Card Assemblies for his DoD development contract and is currently serving in the role of Control Account Manager.



Ryan Foley
System Engineer, Mission Systems,
Project Communications Systems Sub Business Unit
Collins Aerospace

Ryan is a System Engineer at Collins Aerospace (heritage Raytheon), in the Protected Communications Systems (PCS) Sub Business Unit within Mission Systems since 2019. He has worked on multiple Advanced EHF (AEHF) Satellite Communications (SATCOM) programs, providing on-site customer support, system integration expertise, and formal test conduct among other Integration and test related activities. Ryan is currently the Test Director for one of the more recent AEHF programs, responsible for overall planning, budgeting, and detailed activities, ensuring overall requirements verification and mission success. Ryan holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology and a Master of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.



Aaron Savel
Aaron is a Space, Intelligence, and Weapon Systems
GN&C Engineer
Boeing

Aaron is currently engaged in the Inertial Guidance Lab (IGL), where he supports inertial instrument testing, evaluates new technologies, and works on life extension for guidance system components of the Minuteman III ICBM (MMIII). In addition to his ICBM workload, Aaron also provides technical support for inertial navigation across a diverse range of Boeing Defense Products. Aaron graduated with a bachelor's degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from The Ohio State University in 2023 and plans to pursue his master's degree in Computer Engineering later this year.

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Cynthia Jarvis

Structural Design Engineer supporting the Phantom Works Advanced Weapons organization

Boeing

Cynthia has worked on a variety of vehicles, including a program where she designed and coordinated the manufacturing of a captive carriage test vehicle. Cynthia also supports interdisciplinary activities, ranging from engine testing to range safety coordination. Cynthia graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas A&M University, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at Washington University in St. Louis.



Jacob Tompkins

Systems engineer specializing in MBSE, supporting advanced weapons development

Boeing

With experience across the full development lifecycle, he utilizes SysML tools to design and analyze complex systems. Known for bridging traditional engineering with digital, model-centric approaches, Jacob helps teams improve traceability, collaboration, and system performance. He is passionate about advancing MBSE practices to support the future of aerospace innovation. He has a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a Master of Engineering in Aerospace Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis.



Abigail Lang

Systems Engineer with 4 years of experience in ICBMs

Boeing

Abigail is currently supporting the FT3 program for Minuteman Missiles as a responsible engineer over cables. Abby has worked for multiple space/defense companies including Northrop Grumman and Boeing and has been involved in several different types of engineering including Quality, Process, and Systems. She has also worked on several different programs involving the Navy, Lockheed Martin, and Air Force. Abby graduated with a bachelor's degree in Aerospace Engineering with a concentration in Astronautics from Arizona State University in 2021. When she's not working, she's at the Salt Lake City airport pursuing her pilots license in single engine land Cessnas.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Nate Cunningham
Analyst, Global Military Sales and Strategy
Weapon Systems
Textron Systems

Nate Cunningham currently serves as Textron Systems' Military Sales & Strategy Analyst for the company's Weapon Systems business line in Wilmington, Massachusetts. In this role, he is responsible for identifying new contract opportunities for new and emerging DOD programs through monitoring customer messaging and databases for RFIs, RFQs, and RFPs. Also in this role, Nate conducts in-depth market research to help strategize company positioning. Products and capability areas include strategic reentry systems, reentry vehicles and hypersonics, kinetic anti-armor and non-kinetic capabilities for counter-mobility, air/ground-launched long range strike missions.

Prior to this role, Nate served as a Global Military Sales and Strategy Intern in the summer of 2023 supporting the Air business line in Hunt Valley, Maryland providing business development support for the Aerosonde UAS program. Nate also utilized various coding programs to scrape relevant market information.



Dr. Zachary Tobin
Material Scientist Engineer, IV - Weapon Systems
Textron Systems

Zachary Tobin currently serves as a Material Scientist Engineer for the R&D and Advanced Materials team for the Weapon Systems division at Textron Systems in Wilmington MA. In this role, he is responsible for supporting ongoing materials work and proposing new projects and directions. Capability areas in the Materials division at Textron Systems include reentry vehicles, hypersonics, thermal protection systems and heatshields. Textron leverages prior experience in these fields with ongoing and proposed programs to support new and emerging DoD programs.

Prior to his current role, Zachary has worked as a Research Scientist at Free Form Fibers, a company in Saratoga Springs, NY and GVD Corporation, a company in Cambridge, MA. In both roles, he was responsible for undergoing R&D work, interfacing with government and industrial contract partners, presenting results at conferences and identifying new directions. At Free Form Fibers, he applied his PhD ceramic and chemical vapor deposition experience towards the fabrication of high-quality ceramic fibers via laser chemical vapor deposition, and used this technology in a variety of collaborations, including grants from the Navy and Air Force labs. At GVD, he used chemical vapor deposition to fabricate thin functionalized polymer films for multiple microelectronic and environmental protection applications.

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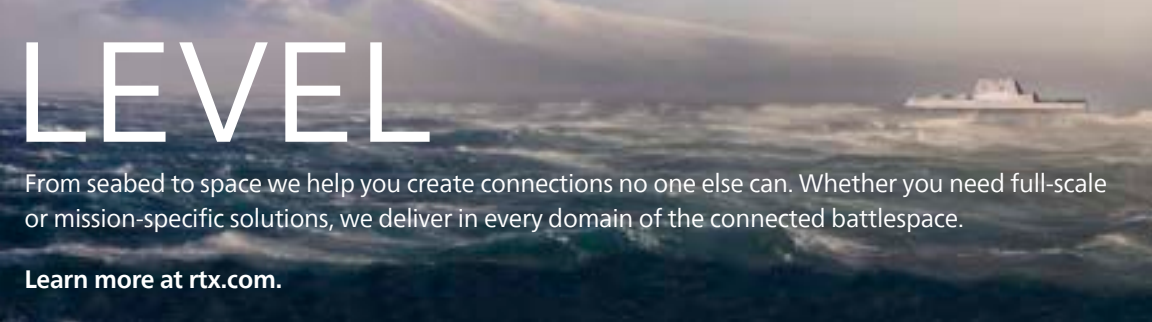
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