



NPS IN THE NEWS

Weekly Media Report – Aug. 3-9, 2021

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SECNAV:

[Senate confirms Del Toro as 78th SECNAV](#)

(Military Times 8 August 21) ... Geoff Ziezulewicz

(Stars and Stripes 9 August 21) ... Caitlin Doornbos

The Senate on Saturday confirmed Carlos Del Toro, a retired Navy commander and businessman, as the 78th secretary of the Navy and the second Hispanic American to lead the department... Del Toro was born in Havana, Cuba, and his family came to the U.S. as refugees in 1962, settling in New York City. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the Naval Academy, a master's degree in national security studies from the Naval War College, a master's degree in space systems engineering from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, and a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University. He is married to Betty Del Toro, and they have four children and a granddaughter.

RESEARCH:

[Elroy Air's Series A Financing](#)

(sUAS News 4 August 21)

(FreightWaves 4 August 21) ... Grace Sharkey

Elroy Air, the Aerospace and Logistics company developing the world's first end-to-end autonomous vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aerial cargo systems, has raised a \$40MM Series A financing from Marlinspike Capital, Lockheed Martin Ventures, and Prosperity7 Ventures alongside continued backing from existing investors including Catapult Ventures, DiamondStream Partners, Side X Side Management, Shield Capital Partners and Precursor Ventures. The fresh financing brings Elroy Air's total investment raised to date to \$48MM...“This funding propels us into an exciting new stage of our business,” said David Merrill, CEO of Elroy Air. “We’re going to complete the build of full-capability pre-production aircraft, advance our certification programs, secure key supply chain partnerships, and enter into flight-test operations in collaboration with our partners at the **Naval Postgraduate School** and the US Air Force. It’s going to be an amazing next phase!”

FACULTY:

[Navy Cybersecurity Expert Explores ‘Weapons of Mass Disruption’](#)

(The Military Spot 2 August 21) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Norket

The German War Machine of World War II utilized a military tactic, known as Blitzkrieg, to create psychological shock and disorganization of enemy forces through surprise, speed and superiority in firepower. The German concept, which translates to “lightning war,” has been around – though under the earlier name Schwerpunktprinzip – since the Prussian military in the early 19th century.



ALUMNI:

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth takes command of Sudarshan Chakra Corps

(The Hitavada 2 August 21)

Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth took over the reins of the Sudarshan Chakra Corps as the 26th GOC on Saturday. A second generation Army Officer, his father Lt Gen KM Seth, PVSM, AVSM also commanded the illustrious Sudarshan Chakra Corps from October 1993 to October 1994, a rare distinction for the family. An alumnus of NDA, Khadakwasla, Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth was commissioned into 2nd Lancers (GH) on 20 December 1986. He has excelled in all courses of instruction, having been awarded the ‘Silver Centurion’ in the Young Officers Course and standing First in the Order of Merit in other important courses including Junior Command Course during his formative years of Army life. He went on to be awarded the Best all round student at the Defence Services Staff Course at Wellington. He has also attended the prestigious Defence Services Command and General Staff Course at Military College, Paris, France.

He is an alumnus of Higher Command Course, Mhow and the National Defence College at New Delhi. He has also qualified on the International Defence Acquisition Management Course at **Naval Postgraduate School**, Monterey, California, USA. During his illustrious service, he has tenanted varied important Command, Staff and Instructional appointments to include tenures in various capacities. His command appointments include command of Skinner’s Horse, an Armoured Brigade and General Officer Commanding of a Rashtriya Rifles Force in an active Counter Insurgency environment in Jammu & Kashmir. The staff appointments tenanted by the General Officer include Brigade Major of an Independent Armoured Brigade, Assistant Military Secretary at Military Secretary Branch and Brigadier General Staff (Operations) of a Command on Western Front of the country.

Rear Adm. Carl Chebi Nominated as NAVAIR Commander

(The Executive Gov 3 August 21) ... Carol Collins

Navy Rear Adm. Carl Chebi, deputy program executive officer for the Joint Strike Fighter, has been nominated by President Biden to serve as the next commander of Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR)... He holds a bachelor’s degree in computer systems engineering from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and an executive MBA from the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

Life Time buys the Sea Otter Classic

(Bicycle Retailer 3 August 21)

Frank Yohannan, who has owned and operated the Sea Otter Classic for more than 30 years, has found a new owner for the event — Life Time, Inc., a multi-billion dollar fitness and event company... Following a tour at the Pentagon where he managed a microcomputer development program, he was later transferred to the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey as an instructor. He retired in 1990 as a lieutenant colonel. After his retirement, Yohannan launched an event management business in Monterey and with co-founder Lou Rudolph, launched the festival. Yohannan remains president and CEO of Sea Otter Classic, Inc. and chairman of the Sea Otter Foundation.

Research center welcomes new military deputy

(The Red Stone Rocket 4 August 21) ... Katie Davis

If you ask Col. Steven Ansley what his job entails, he can sum it up succinctly: solving problems... Ansley holds a bachelor’s in human factors engineering from the U.S. Military Academy and a master of business administration from the **Naval Postgraduate School**. After seven years in operational Army aviation units, Ansley transitioned into the Army Acquisition Corps in 2001 and was assigned to Redstone as an assistant product manager within the Aviation Ground Support Equipment team – one month before the 9/11 attacks. He said coming from the field to a big corporate-style office building was a big adjustment – and then even that environment changed with the heightened security after the attacks. He returned as a product manager in 2011.

Former DOD Principal Director for Cyber Dr. Daniel J. “Rags” Ragsdale Joins Two Six Technologies

(Bakersfield 4 August 21)

Two Six Technologies, a high-growth, technology-focused provider of products and expertise to U.S. national security customers, announced that Daniel J. “Rags” Ragsdale, Ph.D. has joined the company as Vice President - Architect. With decades-long service in the U.S. Army, deep experience at the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and DARPA, and unparalleled expertise in cybersecurity, the addition of Ragsdale to the Two Six Technologies’



leadership team will help drive the company's aggressive growth... Ragsdale is a graduate from the U.S. Military Academy. He earned a Master of Science degree in Computer Science from the **Naval Postgraduate School** and a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Texas A&M University.

[Is the US using “Weapons of Mass Migration” against Pakistan and Turkey?](#)

(Tribune 7 August 21) ... Andrew Korybko

The US' newly promulgated policy of only processing Afghan resettlement applications from third countries has been met with opposition from Pakistan and Turkey which worry that this will encourage an uncontrollable influx of individuals across their borders. Both countries prefer that the US either processes such applications from within Afghanistan itself, or even better, proactively shapes the conditions to ensure their safety at home so that they're not pressured to leave in the first place. Whether intended or not, the emerging dynamics compellingly remind one of Ivy League scholar Kelly M. Greenhill's research on "Weapons of Mass Migration."

This concept refers to what she describes as "the coercive use of purposefully created migration and refugee crises". Those who are unfamiliar with it can refer to her publicly available 45-page academic article from 2010 that can be read at the **Naval Postgraduate School's** website here. In short, the prestigious researcher purports to prove that different types of coercers have historically pursued various goals through these means ever since World War II with mixed rates of success. Ms. Greenhill's concept is controversial among some who believe that it dehumanises its subjects while others praise it for its ingenious insight in explaining complex processes.

[USM Recognizes Newest Cohort of Hydrographic Science Graduates](#)

(Picayune Item 8 August 21)

Nine students in the prestigious Hydrographic Science Program at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) were recognized during graduation ceremonies held Wednesday, July 28 at the University's Gulf Park campus in Long Beach... Costa Neves holds a master's degree in meteorology and physical oceanography from the U.S. **Naval Postgraduate School** and a master's in naval sciences from the Brazilian Naval War College.

[IT Systems professional Richard Shinn joins HNTB Corporation](#)

(Patch 8 August 21)

Richard Shinn has joined HNTB Corporation as IT/ITS/Toll Systems program manager and associate vice president, based in the firm's northern California office. He is responsible for managing large toll system programs and building the firm's expanding ITS practice... Shinn received a Bachelor of Science degree in accountancy from Villanova University and a Master of Science degree in systems technology from the United States **Naval Postgraduate School**.

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

August 9-13: [Center for Executive Education NSL Seminar](#)

August 17-20: [Center for Executive Education SC Workshop](#)

August 23-28: [Joint Interagency Field Experimentation \(JIFX\) 21-4](#)

August 24-26: High Energy Laser Technical Area Working Group Meeting

September 20: [WIC Workshop 2021: Hybrid Force 2045](#) (Registration Open)



SECNAV:

Senate confirms Del Toro as 78th SECNAV

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The Senate on Saturday confirmed Carlos Del Toro, a retired Navy commander and businessman, as the 78th secretary of the Navy and the second Hispanic American to lead the department.

Del Toro graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1983 and then served in the Navy for 22 years. His assignments included serving as the first commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer Bulkeley, overseeing ship construction and fleet introduction activities as well as the integration of women into the crew. The vessel was one of the first mixed-gender warships.

He also served as a program manager for what was called Space and Naval Warfare Command — and is now Naval Information Warfare Systems Command — and as a senior executive assistant to the director for program analysis and evaluation within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where he made top-level decisions about program development and budgets.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin praised Del Toro's "lifelong pursuits and deep experience advancing America's national security" in a statement over the weekend.

"He understands firsthand the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing our Navy, from addressing the pacing challenge of China and modernizing our capabilities, to investing in our most valuable asset — our people," Austin said. "As an immigrant who has dedicated his life to public service, Carlos exemplifies the core values of honor, courage, and commitment in defense of our country."

Del Toro comes aboard as the Navy continues to be tasked with missions that some analysts say are stretching the readiness of some portions of the fleet.

At his July Senate confirmation hearing, Del Toro said he supports plans to maintain a 355-ship Navy, but that getting to that number will require "additional resources" from Congress in the coming years.

He also cited climate change and China as top threats the force will face in the coming years.

"The climate crisis demands U.S. Navy investment precisely because it exacerbates every other challenge our Navy faces, including great power competition," he said.

"Already, installation resilience is an issue, with vital installations facing threats from rising sea levels. Building energy and environmental resilience into our installations will make them more combat effective."

During his Navy career, Del Toro also worked with Congress and the White House, serving as a legislative strategy action officer for the Navy as well as a White House fellow and the special assistant to the director and deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget.

After retiring from the Navy, Del Toro founded SBG Technology Solutions, where he has served as president and CEO for 17 years. The company has participated in defense programs related to shipbuilding, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and space systems.

Del Toro was born in Havana, Cuba, and his family came to the U.S. as refugees in 1962, settling in New York City. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the Naval Academy, a master's degree in national security studies from the Naval War College, a master's degree in space systems engineering from the **Naval Postgraduate School**, and a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University. He is married to Betty Del Toro, and they have four children and a granddaughter.

[Senate confirms Del Toro as 78th SECNAV \(militarytimes.com\)](https://www.militarytimes.com/story/news/defense/2021/08/08/senate-confirms-del-toro-as-78th-secnav/7711170002/)

[Stars and Stripes - Carlos Del Toro confirmed as the 78th Navy secretary](https://www.starsandstripes.com/news/defense/2021/08/08/senate-confirms-del-toro-as-78th-secnav/)

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RESEARCH:

Elroy Air's Series A Financing

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The Elroy Air team is a dedicated, diverse group of experts in autonomous systems and software architectures, aerospace engineering, robotics, design, shipping logistics, supply chain and manufacturing. With headquarters in San Francisco, California the company was started by Dave Merrill and Clint Cope who met while working in the small unmanned aerial system (UAS) industry. Elroy Air's leadership has backgrounds from Stanford, MIT, Georgia Tech, the Wharton School of Business, and the aerospace, robotics, and drone industries. Recently added to Elroy Air's roster as Chief Operating Officer is Jay Wakenshaw. Jay is an experienced Aerospace business leader, and has held numerous high profile leadership roles in both Private Equity held companies and global publicly traded companies, including GKN Aerospace, Ascent Aerospace and Toray Advanced Composites.

Elroy Air is developing the Chaparral: an autonomous vertical-takeoff-and-landing (VTOL) aircraft to deliver cargo rapidly and flexibly by air. Chaparral is designed to fly 300–500 lbs of cargo at a time over a 300-mile range. The VTOL aircraft is differentiated from other “delivery drones” by its substantially larger payload capacity, and from “air taxi” vehicles by its long-range operation, unmanned / unpowered flight, and autonomous cargo loading/unloading. Elroy Air's patented autonomous cargo-handling systems enable rapid, efficient, safe operations of the Chaparral system — a unique capability that the company is the first to bring to aerial logistics.

The future impact of the cutting-edge Chaparral vehicle is dramatically expanded express capabilities and service areas for multinational parcel shippers, immediate humanitarian aid and relief in disaster and fire-fighting situations, flexible logistics for the energy and mining industries, and rapid autonomous aerial resupply for US and allied troops in the field.

Elroy Air's Chaparral prototype flying autonomously at Camp Roberts, CA

“This funding propels us into an exciting new stage of our business,” said David Merrill, CEO of Elroy Air. “We're going to complete the build of full-capability pre-production aircraft, advance our certification programs, secure key supply chain partnerships, and enter into flight-test operations in collaboration with our partners at the **Naval Postgraduate School** and the US Air Force. It's going to be an amazing next phase!”

[Elroy Air's Series A Financing - sUAS News - The Business of Drones](#)

[Elroy Air raises \\$40M for specialized military logistics drone - FreightWaves](#)

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FACULTY:

Navy Cybersecurity Expert Explores ‘Weapons of Mass Disruption’

(The Military Spot 2 August 21) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Norket

The German War Machine of World War II utilized a military tactic, known as Blitzkrieg, to create psychological shock and disorganization of enemy forces through surprise, speed and superiority in firepower. The German concept, which translates to “lightning war,” has been around – though under the earlier name Schwerpunktprinzip – since the Prussian military in the early 19th century.



In today's day and age, Dr. John Arquilla, Distinguished Professor of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School, believes Blitzkrieg is alive and well, but has evolved into a different form.

In his latest book, "Bitskrieg: The New Challenge of Cyberwarfare," Arquilla talks about how the art of warfare has changed over the past decade. He believes that the next generation of combat will be won with bits and bytes guiding the bullets and bombs.

"New technologies are changing how we protect our citizens and wage our wars," said Arquilla. "Among militaries, everything taken for granted about the ability to maneuver and fight is now undermined by vulnerability to 'weapons of mass disruption:' cutting-edge computer worms, viruses, and invasive robot networks."

Arquilla, a world-renowned expert in cybersecurity, has spent the last 30 years researching all things cyber warfare. Nearly three decades ago, he wrote an article dubbed "Cyber War is Coming," and now, he says it is upon us.

"We're dealing with it every single day in terms of ransomware attacks, the theft of intellectual property, infrastructure vulnerability, as well as increasing impact on the potential for military effectiveness," he continued.

The book covers a wide array of topics, from the potential weaknesses in cybersecurity to how we, as a nation, can improve our defenses against any cyberattacks.

"I spent quite a bit of time and research to get to the subjects that the book addresses, which include not only the military dimensions of cyber war, but also these questions of what I call strategic crime – ransomware, and intellectual property theft – but also the use of cyberspace or political warfare, as in trying to disrupt elections not just in the United States, but in any liberal and democratic societies.

"In fact, I think of cyber war as a kind of a 'weapon of mass disruption'. We spent many decades worrying about the mass destruction of nuclear weapons. Now we have to worry about mass disruption with cyber weaponry," he continued.

Arquilla believes his time at NPS has been invaluable, and thinks everyone, not just the Department of Defense, benefits from the work being done at the university every day.

"We have just tremendous opportunities for those of us on faculty here at NPS to be in a university research setting in which virtually every professor is thinking about the questions that bear upon national security," he said. "I can talk to an information scientist or computer scientist or an electrical and computer engineering faculty member about any question I might have."

NPS has "proved that it is on the leading edge in virtually every aspect of cyber affairs," he added. [Navy Cybersecurity Expert Explores 'Weapons of Mass Disruption' - MilitarySpot.com](#)

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ALUMNI:

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth takes command of Sudarshan Chakra Corps

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He has been an Instructor and Assistant Adjutant at National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla and instructor at School of Armoured Warfare, Ahmednagar. He has also done a foreign tenure with UN Peacekeeping Mission at Angola (Africa) as Operations Officer during 1995-96. Prior to taking over the Sudarshan Chakra Corps, he was the Director General, Discipline Ceremonial and Welfare at Integrated Headquarters of Defence (Army) at Delhi.

[Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth takes command of Sudarshan Chakra Corps - The Hitavada](#)

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Rear Adm. Carl Chebi Nominated as NAVAIR Commander

(The Executive Gov 3 August 21) ... Carol Collins

(SEAPOW Magazine 3 August 21)

Navy Rear Adm. Carl Chebi, deputy program executive officer for the Joint Strike Fighter, has been nominated by President Biden to serve as the next commander of Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR).

In line with his nomination, Chebi will also be promoted to the rank of vice admiral, the Department of Defense said Monday.

Chebi served as the Navy PEO for command, control, communications, computers and intelligence and space systems from February 2017 to September 2019 and held a short stint as vice commander of NAVAIR.

From 2014 to 2016, he was program manager of the Naval Integrated Fire Control/Counter Air system and led engineering, integration, test, fielding and training efforts for the branch's air warfare systems.

He also worked as deputy program manager in the F/A-18 and EA-18G Program Office and program manager in the Precision Strike Weapons Program Office.

Chebi has logged more than 3,700 flight hours and 700 carrier arrested landings with various military aircraft platforms. His awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal.

He holds a bachelor's degree in computer systems engineering from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and an executive MBA from the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

[Rear Adm. Carl Chebi Nominated as NAVAIR Commander \(executivegov.com\)](#)

[Chebi Nominated for NAVAIR Commander, Bierman for III MEF - Seapower \(seapowermagazine.org\)](#)

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Life Time buys the Sea Otter Classic

(Bicycle Retailer 3 August 21)

Frank Yohannan, who has owned and operated the Sea Otter Classic for more than 30 years, has found a new owner for the event — Life Time, Inc., a multi-billion dollar fitness and event company.



Life Time is best known in the cycling industry for its ownership of the Leadville 100, UNBOUND Gravel, Crusher in the Tushar and the Chequamegon MTB Festival among other events. It's also a significant player in triathlon, hosting the New York and Chicago Triathlons, as well as iconic running events including the Miami Marathon and Chicago Half Marathon.

Besides events, the company operates fitness centers in more than 150 locations in the U.S. and Canada, boasting several million members, as well as database of about a million athletes who have participated in Life Time events over the last half-dozen years.

Yohannan announced the sale saying he would remain as Sea Otter's director for the next three years. His staff, many of whom have been with the company for upwards of 20 years, will join Life Time.

"What's most important to me is to continue to grow," Yohannan said. "Certainly there is financial growth, which is a key part of my responsibilities. But we also need to grow with our industry — to help forecast and support major trends like e-bikes and gravel. We also need to be prepared to take advantage of new opportunities."

More importantly, said the 73-year-old Yohannan, the sale to Life Time, with its financial resources and history in event management, is essential for Sea Otter's continued growth. "The synergies Life Time brings are some that we could never have done on our own," he said. Yohannan, who declined to reveal the sales price, said he will continue to independently license the Sea Otter name to events in Canada, Spain and Australia.

"We think of Sea Otter as a hub in our ecosystem related to cycling" — Kimo Seymour, Life Time

In the meantime, plans for Sea Otter's Oct. 7-10 event remain in place with what Yohannan described as robust early registrations for racing and camping sites. And, at this point, purchases of exhibitor space continue to exceed earlier estimates, Yohannan said. Sea Otter was canceled in 2020 and the traditional season opened was moved to the fall.

Kimo Seymour, Life Time's president of Events and Media with offices in Boulder, Colorado, said Sea Otter has been leading the growth and transition of cycling in North America for years. Seymour said he first met with Yohannan several years ago and expressed an interest in acquiring the West Coast event.

"Frank said he appreciated the interest, but to give him two or three years and he could be at a point where an acquisition would make sense," he said. Seymour, an accomplished triathlete and cyclist, has finished the Leadville 100 MTB race 13 times, posting an average time of 7:40. He has deep roots in the cycling industry and is currently a NICA board member.

"We think of Sea Otter as a hub in our ecosystem related to cycling," he said. "Sea Otter will be our largest single event and our first foray into the B2B side of the cycling industry," he said.

"We've only been interested in acquiring events that have iconic brands, like Sea Otter, that offer great experiences and are in iconic locations," Seymour said, citing the Leadville 100, UNBOUND Gravel, Crusher in the Tushar, and others.

Yohannan and Seymour agree that while Sea Otter is a first-in-class race and ride consumer event, it's also a key player within the industry, especially its role in organizing an annual business conference prior to Sea Otter's opening day. Sea Otter had helped organize the Bicycle Leadership Conference, which is owned by PeopleForBikes, for many years. Last year, the two groups went separate ways, with Sea Otter planning to eventually develop its own conference. The spring event had become a showcase for the cycling media to see and report on new products being launched for the upcoming season. The event's expo was a consumer bonanza but behind the scenes, it was an opportunity for OE vendors to meet with bike brand product managers.

Yohannan plans to resume a business conference tied to the spring event, which he said brings industry executives together to meet in a positive atmosphere. "We think it's important to identify challenges and opportunities for the future. We think that's one of our responsibilities," he said. "It's the best time on the calendar and Monterey is one of the best places to hold one. So it's our goal to reintroduce the conference in April 2022," he added.

However, conference content and attendees could change in the future, Yohannan and Seymour said. "Sea Otter is really expanding beyond purely cycling-related types of exhibitors and issues, so we think



there might be an opportunity to do something focused on outdoor versus just purely cycling,” Seymour said.

A key goal for Seymour and Yohannan is to expand consumer attendance and to boost exhibitor sales. Yohannan pointed out that presently Sea Otter is about at 60% capacity. “There is the capacity at Laguna Seca for some really robust growth over the next few years,” he said. “More importantly there is plenty of community capacity, whether its restaurants, hotel beds or other facilities,” he said, noting that some race events, like moto GPs, are twice as large as Sea Otter.

Seymour said Life Time, with its database of athletes and spa members could help expand festival attendance by pulling in visitors from around the U.S. However, that will take complex transportation planning including bussing and off-site parking. “We don’t want to wind up with a thousand exhibitors and the same number of attendees — that’s not a great experience for exhibitors,” he said.

Yohannan, who holds an MBA from the University of Colorado, plans to continue his work at Sea Otter, capping a military and business career that began in Spokane, Washington, when he joined the U.S. Marine Corps as an enlisted man. He later went to Officer Candidate School and began a 22-year aviation career including combat assignments during the Vietnam War.

Following a tour at the Pentagon where he managed a microcomputer development program, he was later transferred to the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey as an instructor. He retired in 1990 as a lieutenant colonel. After his retirement, Yohannan launched an event management business in Monterey and with co-founder Lou Rudolph, launched the festival. Yohannan remains president and CEO of Sea Otter Classic, Inc. and chairman of the Sea Otter Foundation.

Life Time was founded in 1992 by Bahram Akradi with the opening of a 27,000-square foot fitness club in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. Its corporate offices are in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

Akradi immigrated to the U.S. from Tehran, Iran, as a 17-year-old to attend college in Colorado. He earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, paying his way through school by first working as a janitor at a chain of fitness companies where he soon began selling memberships. He later managed a fitness center in Minneapolis and became co-owner.

By 2011, the company had posted more than \$1 billion in revenue and four years later it was acquired by Leonard Green & Partners and TPG Capital, both private equity firms, in a transaction estimated at more than \$4 billion. In 2019, the privately held company, announced revenues of \$1.7 billion. Akradi remains founder, chairman and CEO of Life Time.

[Life Time buys the Sea Otter Classic | Bicycle Retailer and Industry News](#)

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Research center welcomes new military deputy

(The Red Stone Rocket 4 August 21) ... Katie Davis

If you ask Col. Steven Ansley what his job entails, he can sum it up succinctly: solving problems.

Sounds pretty easy. But the Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center doesn’t do easy. Cracking complex problems is kind of their thing. Luckily its new military deputy has 30 years in uniform to draw on for experience.

Ansley came to DEVCOM AvMC in July from his previous position as chief of staff at the Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office. It is actually not his first time at Redstone Arsenal, nor with DEVCOM. Ansley has returned to the Rocket City for a third time and if he has his say, it will be where he and his wife retire once his military service is completed. It is a military service started out as a two-year enlistment as a pathway to college tuition.

“I wanted to be a tanker and go to Germany,” Ansley said. “They said, not for a two-year enlistment. Well, what can I do? You can either do infantry or combat engineer. So I enlisted as a combat engineer bridge crewman. I mean, it’s fun to blow things up, but I also got to drive boats and build floating bridges at Fort Carson, Colorado.”



The Illinois native said he didn't plan to spend his career in active duty service and tongue firmly in cheek, questions anyone that would. Military life is not easy. But the young Soldier knew when the U.S. Military Academy accepted him as a cadet, opportunities opened. The opportunity to become an officer, the opportunity to train to be an Army helicopter pilot, and eventually the opportunity to marry a fellow West Point classmate, Lisa, who had her own successful military career before deciding to stay home with their two daughters.

Ansley would eventually get to Germany and many more duty assignments across the world. It is not a surprise that both of the Ansley daughters are following in the example of their parents – and their grandfathers and great-uncle, Vietnam veterans, and three great-grandfathers, members of the Greatest Generation. Both girls are attending Norwich University in Vermont, on four-year Army ROTC scholarships. The family has always embraced adventure – the type that comes with both military life and the great outdoors – which makes the hills of North Alabama a perfect fit.

“Everyone is hooked on hiking,” Ansley said. “This place is amazing for hiking. When we moved back, we moved over in the Hampton Cove area because of all of the Land Trust areas – Monte Sano, Green Mountain, all of those areas. Every weekend we are usually out hiking with the dogs.”

Ansley holds a bachelor's in human factors engineering from the U.S. Military Academy and a master of business administration from the **Naval Postgraduate School**. After seven years in operational Army aviation units, Ansley transitioned into the Army Acquisition Corps in 2001 and was assigned to Redstone as an assistant product manager within the Aviation Ground Support Equipment team – one month before the 9/11 attacks. He said coming from the field to a big corporate-style office building was a big adjustment – and then even that environment changed with the heightened security after the attacks. He returned as a product manager in 2011.

As for leadership style, Ansley said that over his decades as an officer, he has developed an open door, collaborative method. While collaboration looks different now with the telework model adopted by AvMC during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ansley believes it is the exchange of ideas that is important, not the proximity of those ideas, whether they are in-person or via a Teams meeting.

“My biggest goal is to be an effective integrator, between all of the different directorate teams and the AvMC team as a whole,” he said. “I don't have a technical background so I have to rely on people who are experts and know what they are doing. I am going to be asking people questions and what they think. I don't think you can make a good informed decision unless you have gotten those opinions.”

[Research center welcomes new military deputy | Military Scene | theredstonerocket.com](#)

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Former DOD Principal Director for Cyber Dr. Daniel J. “Rags” Ragsdale Joins Two Six Technologies

(Bakersfield 4 August 21)

Two Six Technologies, a high-growth, technology-focused provider of products and expertise to U.S. national security customers, announced that Daniel J. “Rags” Ragsdale, Ph.D. has joined the company as Vice President - Architect. With decades-long service in the U.S. Army, deep experience at the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and DARPA, and unparalleled expertise in cybersecurity, the addition of Ragsdale to the Two Six Technologies' leadership team will help drive the company's aggressive growth.

“I'm thrilled to announce the addition of an accomplished military, DOD, and DARPA veteran like ‘Rags’ to our leadership team,” said Joe Logue, CEO of Two Six Technologies. “Rags’ reputation goes before him, and his unmatched experience and expertise in cyber and other sectors will have a significant impact on our organic growth and strategic expansion.”

Ragsdale most recently served as Acting Director of Defense Research and Engineering for Modernization, where he was responsible for driving DOD-wide innovation by facilitating the rapid development and disruptive integration of advanced technologies to deliver vastly enhanced capabilities for the Joint force. He was also responsible for unifying and advancing the investment and capability



analysis of the Pentagon's modernization priorities outlined in the National Defense Strategy. He managed and provided leadership oversight for Artificial Intelligence; Autonomy; Biotechnology; Cyber; Directed Energy; Fully Networked Command, Control, and Communications (FNC3); Hypersonics; Microelectronics; Quantum Science; Space; and 5G.

Previously, as Principal Director for Cyber, Ragsdale was responsible for coordinating cyber modernization efforts across the DOD. Among his specific responsibilities were the establishment of DOD-wide policies, and portfolio management of all DOD cyber modernization programs and activities, including research and engineering, technology development, prototyping, experimentation, test and evaluation, and capability transition.

Prior to his return to the DOD in early 2019, Ragsdale was the founding director of the Texas A&M Cybersecurity Center. In that capacity, he led, coordinated, and facilitated cybersecurity research and educational activities across the university. Ragsdale also previously served as a DARPA Program Manager, where he managed a \$175M portfolio of R&D programs focused on cybersecurity, cyber operations, and behavioral science.

Before joining DARPA, Colonel (retired) Ragsdale served 30 years in the U.S. Army in a variety of operational, R&D, and educational roles. His combat deployments included Operations Urgent Fury (Grenada), Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), and Iraqi Freedom (Iraq). Ragsdale served nearly 15 years at the United States Military Academy, West Point, in an array of teaching and research roles, which culminated in his service as Vice Dean for Education.

“Two Six Technologies is a brilliantly formed, forward-looking, and people-focused company. It has a proven track record of rapidly developing breakthrough innovations which directly address some of the most critical challenges facing our government and military,” said Ragsdale. “I’m beyond excited to have the opportunity to work closely with the deeply passionate and well-respected experts who comprise the Two Six Technologies team. I’m very confident that collectively we will accelerate the delivery of leap-ahead capabilities, which will be instrumental in addressing the increasing array of threats to U.S. national security interests.”

Ragsdale is a graduate from the U.S. Military Academy. He earned a Master of Science degree in Computer Science from the **Naval Postgraduate School** and a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Texas A&M University.

About Two Six Technologies Two Six Technologies is a high-growth technology company providing products and expertise to national security customers. The Company solves complex challenges in six focus areas: cyber and space operations, data science, information operations, microelectronics, decision support and planning, and nextgen communications.

The Company offers a family of operationally deployed products including Pulse, IKE™, SIGMA™, 8Wire™ and others. Major customers include DARPA, Department of State, U.S. Cyber Command, Department of Homeland Security and the broader Department of Defense and Intelligence Community. Headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, Two Six Technologies has more than 300 employees and a global operational footprint that includes a technical presence in more than 40 countries, coupled with native proficiency in more than 20 languages. For more information, visit twosixtech.com.

[Former DOD Principal Director for Cyber Dr. Daniel J. “Rags” Ragsdale Joins Two Six Technologies | News | \[bakersfield.com\]\(http://bakersfield.com\)](#)

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Is the US using “Weapons of Mass Migration” against Pakistan and Turkey?

(Tribune 7 August 21) ... Andrew Korybko

The US’ newly promulgated policy of only processing Afghan resettlement applications from third countries has been met with opposition from Pakistan and Turkey which worry that this will encourage an uncontrollable influx of individuals across their borders. Both countries prefer that the US either processes such applications from within Afghanistan itself, or even better, proactively shapes the



conditions to ensure their safety at home so that they're not pressured to leave in the first place. Whether intended or not, the emerging dynamics compellingly remind one of Ivy League scholar Kelly M. Greenhill's research on "Weapons of Mass Migration".

This concept refers to what she describes as "the coercive use of purposefully created migration and refugee crises". Those who are unfamiliar with it can refer to her publicly available 45-page academic article from 2010 that can be read at the **Naval Postgraduate School's** website here. In short, the prestigious researcher purports to prove that different types of coercers have historically pursued various goals through these means ever since World War II with mixed rates of success. Ms. Greenhill's concept is controversial among some who believe that it dehumanises its subjects while others praise it for its ingenious insight in explaining complex processes.

The relevance of "Weapons of Mass Migration" to the present analysis is that the US might be employing this stratagem for the purpose of pressuring Pakistan and Turkey through plausibly deniable means as punishment for their recent foreign policy recalibrations that some interpret as being disadvantageous to America's national interests. Specifically, the US' refusal to process Afghan resettlement applications within Afghanistan itself encourages such individuals to flee to Pakistan or Turkey (the latter of which via Iran which is accused of "passively facilitating" their transit by at the very least not stopping them en route to the Anatolian nation).

What makes "Weapons of Mass Migration" so difficult to defend against is the humanitarian element and optics thereof. Those who refuse to allow such individuals into their country on pragmatic or security pretexts risk being accused of immoral calculations that some might argue are even at variance with their international legal responsibilities. This throws the targeted state(s) into a dilemma whereby they're pressured to either submit to possibly uncontrollable migrant flows or face potentially very serious consequences to their reputations.

It can also be challenging to prove that a suspect is responsible for catalysing or at the very least facilitating such crises. The US can easily defend itself by claiming that it's due to simple pragmatism amidst the difficult security situation within Afghanistan that it's unable to process resettlement applications within that country itself. It can also remind the international community that its members have the responsibility to allow refugees to receive safety within their borders, especially if they're fleeing from a conflict zone like Afghanistan arguably is.

Pakistan and Turkey are so concerned about this possible "Weapons of Mass Migration" plot because both of them might not be able to care for any more refugees than they already are. Those countries host some of the largest such populations within their borders, which not only entails certain financial and social costs, but also carries with it unconventional security risks related to terrorists infiltrating their territories under the guise of being refugees or even simply the large-scale influx of foreigners destabilising the local state of affairs wherever it is that they ultimately end up residing as could be expected irrespective of the origin and destination states.

Some countries are more sensitive to these security risks than others, but there's no denying that they exist regardless of however one feels about the moral and possibly legal obligations that members of the international obligation have to keep their borders open for such individuals. The most effective solution in these cases is to deal with the political, security, and socio-economic causes behind these migrant crises, but that requires significant international coordination and burden-sharing, especially when it comes to the financial costs involved. It's much easier to talk about these solutions than it is to effectively implement them.

For these reasons, Pakistan and Turkey are bracing themselves for what can arguably be described as more "Weapons of Mass Migration", which to be clear, isn't intended as a so-called "dehumanising term" since every person is unique and should be respected but simply refers to the strategic role that these individuals inadvertently play in terms of the larger dynamics. In the US' defence, it's still participating in the Afghan peace process with the hope of promoting a political solution, but it also behaved irresponsibly by announcing its new third-party resettlement program without first coordinating with Pakistan and Turkey.

That's why those two countries are justified in their opposition to the US' policy since their ally can rightly be suspected of ulterior motives speculatively connected to punishing them for their increasingly



independent foreign policies as of late. This puts Pakistan and Turkey in a difficult position since there's no "silver bullet" solution to this "Weapons of Mass Migration" dilemma. The best that they can do is support refugee facilities along their borders in each neighbouring state, Afghanistan and Iran respectively. Even better, Iran should proactively prevent Afghan migrants/refugees from entering its territory for the purpose of reaching Turkey.

Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran should therefore work closer together to confront this unconventional threat. Islamabad and Tehran have the largest roles to play since they border Afghanistan, but Ankara is also affected since so many Afghan migrants/refugees might intend to eventually flood into its territory too. The US and its allies (including their media outlets) might attempt to pin the blame for any forthcoming crisis on those three countries, but the fact of the matter is that America is arguably the one most directly responsible since it destroyed Afghanistan and is now refusing to process resettlement applications from within that country.

[Is the US using "Weapons of Mass Migration" against Pak & Turkey? \(tribune.com.pk\)](http://tribune.com.pk)

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USM Recognizes Newest Cohort of Hydrographic Science Graduates

(Picayune Item 8 August 21)

Nine students in the prestigious Hydrographic Science Program at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) were recognized during graduation ceremonies held Wednesday, July 28 at the University's Gulf Park campus in Long Beach.

USM is the only university in the United States to offer an undergraduate program in hydrography and one of just two to offer master's and doctoral degree programs in this challenging field. Since the program's debut in 1999, USM has graduated 233 students, including 55 international students from 33 different countries.

The Hydrographic Science Program is administered through USM's School of Ocean Science and Engineering. The graduation ceremony honored all recipients of certificates that indicate the student successfully completed either a Category "A" or Category "B" program in hydrographic science. At USM, Category "A" certification customarily identifies those who earn master's degrees, while Category "B" recognizes those who earn undergraduate degrees. Some doctoral students opt for the Category "A" certificate on route to their degree without received the master's degree.

Alberto Costa Neves became the program's new coordinator earlier this month. He notes that hydrographic science graduates can expect to enter a profession that offers a wide range of opportunities.

"Hydrographic surveying is an exciting, multidisciplinary profession that is involved with every aspect of the collection, analysis and management of marine data used for charting the ocean frontier and for engineering projects," said Costa Neves. "The blue economy and the protection of our seas, rivers and lakes depends on the work of the hydrographic surveyors, or hydrographers."

Hydrographers work in areas such as:

Bathymetric mapping of the oceans, rivers and lakes

Oil and gas exploration

Navigational safety

Natural disaster and sea level rise studies

Habitat mapping

Ocean environment studies

Offshore renewable energy projects

Defense and security operations

A native of Cacador, Brazil, Costa Neves joins the USM community with a long and distinguished career portfolio in hydrography and related sciences. His expertise includes data gathering, seismic surveying, environmental prediction, safety of navigation, strategic planning, capability development and technical standards.



For the previous nine years, he has served as Assistant Director at the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Secretariat in Monaco, where he provided support to inter-regional coordination and capacity building. Since leaving the Brazilian Navy Hydrographic Service in 2008, Costa Neves has provided consultation for the maritime industry and port authorities.

Costa Neves holds a master's degree in meteorology and physical oceanography from the U.S. **Naval Postgraduate School** and a master's in naval sciences from the Brazilian Naval War College.

When asked what might be among his immediate goals as the new coordinator of USM's Hydrographic Science Program, Costa Neves stated: "First and foremost to ensure that the USM program remains compliant with the International Standards for Hydrographic Surveyors and is connected to all of the other related sciences that may be explored to the fullest. We need to ensure that our graduates are the best professionals in the world."

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IT Systems professional Richard Shinn joins HNTB Corporation

(Patch 8 August 21)

Richard Shinn has joined HNTB Corporation as IT/ITS/Toll Systems program manager and associate vice president, based in the firm's northern California office. He is responsible for managing large toll system programs and building the firm's expanding ITS practice.

"Richard is an industry leader in ITS strategic planning and has extensive experience assisting public agencies with preparing for future implementation of connected and automated vehicles and integrated corridor management," said Yoga Chandran, HNTB Los Angeles office leader and vice president. "His experience in applying technology solutions will be helpful for clients as they work to solve critical mobility challenges."

Shinn has more than 30 years of experience in ITS, smart cities, Internet-of-Things, systems engineering, telecommunications engineering, network analysis, systems management and system integration. Prior to joining HNTB, he led the system integration and network monitoring for a multiagency ITS deployment in San Mateo County, California.

Shinn received a Bachelor of Science degree in accountancy from Villanova University and a Master of Science degree in systems technology from the United States **Naval Postgraduate School**.

"Integrating intelligent transportation systems into existing projects and as stand-alone solutions is helping departments of transportation, toll authorities and transit agencies overcome congestion, funding shortages, and more importantly, improve safety," said Wayne Feuerborn, HNTB West Division president. "Richard's design experience with Traffic Operations Centers and his in-depth understanding of the Federal Highway Administration systems engineering process will be an asset to our current and future corridor management programs."

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