



NPS IN THE NEWS

Weekly Media Report –Oct. 6-12, 2020

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EDUCATION:

1. [Marine Corps' Landmark PhD Program Celebrates First Technical Graduate](#)

(Marines.mil 7 Oct 20)

(Navy.mil 7 Oct 20)

(NPS.edu 7 Oct 20)

(Military Spot 12 Oct 20) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Taylor Vencill

When the Marine Corps developed its new Doctor of Philosophy Program (PHDP), the service recognized the need for a cohort of strategic thinkers and technical leaders capable of the applied research and innovative thinking necessary to develop warfighter advantage in the modern, cognitive age. The Technical version of the program, PHDP-T, just celebrated its first graduate, with Maj. Ezra Akin completing his doctorate in operations research from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Sept. 25.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS:

2. [Denver Startup Kayhan Space Lands \\$600k Seed Round for Collision Avoidance Software](#)

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FACULTY:

3. [Will Armenia and Azerbaijan Fight to the Bitter End?](#) [AUDIO INTERVIEW]

(English News Highlights 5 Oct 20)

Armenia and Azerbaijan accuse each other of attacking civilian areas as the deadliest fighting in the South Caucasus region for more than 25 years continues.

KAN's Mark Weiss spoke with South Caucasus expert Brenda Shaffer, formerly a professor at Haifa University and now at the US Navy Postgraduate University.

4. [Iran at Risk from Spillover of Armenia-Azerbaijan Clashes](#)

(Foundation for Defense of Democracies 5 Oct 20) ... Brenda Shaffer, **Naval Postgraduate School Research Faculty Associate, Energy Academic Group**

Intense fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan is taking place in proximity to Iran's northwestern border, which it shares with both countries. While Turkey has sided firmly with Azerbaijan and Russia stands behind Armenia, Iran may face the greatest risk of any neighboring country because the war has resulted in vocal domestic opposition, sparked tensions with Turkey and Azerbaijan, and carries the risk of a potential spill-over into Iranian territory.



5. [Iran on Edge as Azeri Minority Backs Karabakh War](#)

(*Asia Times* 8 Oct 20) ... Kourosh Ziabari

Tensions flaring up between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the intractable Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, deemed to be Europe's oldest "frozen war," have spilled over into the neighboring Iran, which shares borders and longstanding amicable relations with both nations... **Professor Brenda Shaffer, a foreign policy specialist and faculty member of the US Naval Postgraduate School**, echoed those views, ruling out the unification of Iran's Azeri-speaking provinces with Azerbaijan or Turkey as a possibility.

6. [Al-Qaida and Islamic State: a 'Fratricidal' Clash](#)

(*Courthouse News Service* 9 Oct 20) ... Didier Lauras

To the uninitiated, Al-Qaida and the Islamic State group may be pursuing the same long-term goal of spreading Islamic law through territorial expansion and deadly violence.

But actually, their ideology and methods differ so fundamentally that they are increasingly turning on each other.

According to **Mohammed Hafez, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, internecine fighting has claimed the lives of some 300 jihadists in West Africa's Sahel region since July alone.

7. [Sustaining an Intellectual Overmatch: Management Education for Our Naval Forces](#)

(*Center for International Maritime Security* 9 Oct 20) ... **Dr. Mie Augier, Professor, NPS GSDM**; USMC Maj Sean F.X. Barrett; **Dr. Nick Dew, Professor, NPS GSDM**; & **Dr. Gail Fann Thomas, Associate Professor, NPS GSDM**

The Joint Chiefs of Staff's May 2020 vision and guidance for Professional Military Education (PME) and talent management states, "There is more to sustaining a competitive advantage than acquiring hardware; we must gain and sustain an intellectual overmatch as well." Developing flexible, agile minds was also a major theme a century ago in the Knox-King-Pye report, which helped the Navy steer away from an earlier technical education focus and toward broader skills that helped produce the ideas and leaders that proved critical in WWII.

Fast forward 100 years, and we have reached another inflection point. Numerous studies point to a geostrategic environment that has shifted radically in the past decade toward a future that is filled with uncertainty. The Navy and Marine Corps have realized that key aspects of our institutions, war planning, training, education, and resource management are inadequate to deter and, if necessary, win against our adversaries when the situation arises.

ALUMNI:

8. [County Manager's Contract Extended Due to 'Stellar' Leadership Amid COVID-19, Wildfires](#)

(*Redwood City Online* 6 Oct 20)

The contract of San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy, a Naval Postgraduate School alumnus, has been extended by four years following a unanimous vote Tuesday by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, which touted his "exceptional" leadership amid the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis and during the recent wildfires.

9. [Carlos Solari Pens a Sports-Adventure, Immersively Well-Crafted Book Titled "El Capitán"](#)

(*Web Wire* 7 Oct 20)

In this day and age, it's quite a challenge to find inspiration to do more, becoming their own best versions and see greatness in their everyday lives.

This is exactly what author Carlos Solari, a Naval Postgraduate School alumnus, wants to share with his readers and more. He creates a wonderful story of an immigrant family from Ecuador that landed in Queens and why people cross those borders; leaving home; leaving behind what they know. The story featured how Sports soccer took part in molding a character that will hopefully inspire each heart that will finish the book. He crafts Story inspired by True life that challenges readers to see how often you don't get to know what kind of opportunity you have until you're committed and you can't go back.



10. [Andrew Salas Appointed Belen's New City Manager](#)

(*News Bulletin 8 Oct 20*) ... Clara Garcia

Excited about the future of the Hub City, retired Gen. Andrew Salas, a Naval Postgraduate School alumnus who has decades of public-service experience, said he's honored to be selected as Belen's new city manager.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS:

- [Physical Layer Security for Multiple-Input Multiple-Output Systems by Alternating Orthogonal Space-Time Block Codes](#) ... by USN Lt. Cmdr. Michael Cribbs, PhD Student; Dr. Ric Romero, Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering Department; and Dr. Tri Ha, Emeritus Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, was published in the [IEEE Open Journal of the Communications Society](#).

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

October 13: [V-SGL with Lt. Gen. John Shanahan and Nand Mulchandani](#)

November 3: Election Day

November 11: Veteran's Day



EDUCATION:

Marine Corps' Landmark PhD Program Celebrates First Technical Graduate

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(NPS.edu 7 Oct 20) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Taylor Vencill

When the Marine Corps developed its new Doctor of Philosophy Program (PHDP), the service recognized the need for a cohort of strategic thinkers and technical leaders capable of the applied research and innovative thinking necessary to develop warfighter advantage in the modern, cognitive age. The Technical version of the program, PHDP-T, just celebrated its first graduate, with Maj. Ezra Akin completing his doctorate in operations research from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Sept. 25.

Combining his operational background with a PhD in Operations Research, Akin now possesses both the operational and technical mastery necessary to apply innovative thinking to the most technically-complex challenges.

“The Marine Corps recently determined that we have a legitimate requirement for uniformed PhDs,” said Marine Corps Col. Randolph Pugh, NPS Senior Marine Corps Representative. “Identifying technological breakthroughs, determining how they should be integrated into our warfighting concepts, and then guiding the Marine Corps’ research and development efforts will require officers with highly developed expertise as well as connections to a large network of experts that this PhD program helps Marines like Akin develop.

“In the past, the Marine Corps generally integrated new technologies as they reached maturity,” continued Pugh. “Now we can pursue, or even guide the development of war-winning technologies years or decades ahead of time which we think will help give us decisive combat advantage.”

NPS, and even Akin himself, has been engaged with the Marine Corps in the evolution of the technical version of the PHDP program, recognizing the critical importance of both strategic thinking, and technical mastery, to meet the higher education needs for its future leaders.

“There’s growing recognition within the Marine Corps that advanced education is important and my graduation is proof of that,” said Akin. “The Marine Corps values education and understands that advanced technical degrees are going to be key in our future fights.”

Akin’s doctoral dissertation, which further advanced the research he began while earning his master’s degree from NPS, involved the introduction of estimators in random sample simulations in military contexts, demonstrating a reduction in variance without sacrificing speed. His results are fundamental contributions to the Marine Corps’ ability to improve the speed of analysis in edge computing.

For Akin, it was just the beginning of his contributions to the service.

“Some of the things the Marine Corps will now expect from me is to inform decision makers with regards to what the future fight will look like, and what are some of the potential solutions or better ways of thinking about some of the complex problems we’re facing,” said Akin.

“NPS is the obvious choice to educate our technologists,” stressed Pugh. “The faculty has extensive expertise and robust relationships with other research-universities and industrial partners. They also have years of involvement with naval capability development which means that they understand what our PhDs will need to know and know how to do, as well as the challenges of forecasting emerging technologies and tracking them into capabilities.”

Being the first Marine to graduate with his doctorate from the Marine Corps PHDP-T, Akin has set the standard for future Marines that will follow in his footsteps.

“Ezra is a pathfinder and I think that the Marines and the future PhD candidates owe him a large debt of gratitude for helping to establish the program and then clearing a trail that they can now run down,” stated Pugh. “He has done something that no other Marine has ever done.”

Several Marines are already enrolled in doctoral programs at the university, following in the footsteps that Akin has trailblazed. Doctoral programs currently open to PHDP’s technical track include operations research; computer science; modeling, virtual environments and simulation (MOVES); and information sciences.



“It’s a great opportunity to get selected for the program,” said Akin. “It’s definitely a mark of your leadership’s respect for you and the investment you can provide the Marine Corps in the future.”

<https://www.marines.mil/News/News-Display/Article/2376214/marine-corps-landmark-phd-program-celebrates-first-technical-graduate/>

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2375890/marine-corps-landmark-phd-program-celebrates-first-technical-graduate/>

<https://nps.edu/-/marine-corps-landmark-phd-program-celebrates-first-technical-graduate>

<http://www.militaryspot.com/news/marine-corps-landmark-phd-program-celebrates-first-technical-graduate>

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INDUSTRY PARTNERS:

Denver Startup Kayhan Space Lands \$600k Seed Round for Collision Avoidance Software

(ColoradoInno 6 Oct 20) ... Nick Greenhalgh

Much like on city streets, space traffic can be hectic and near misses are becoming all too common.

Just last year, an in-orbit European Space Agency satellite was forced to perform an evasive maneuver to avoid a collision with a SpaceX satellite.

The cause of the near miss? A bug in SpaceX’s email communication system.

As more and more companies send hardware to space, these occurrences are only going to increase, unless a better avoidance communication system is adopted, said Kayhan Space co-founder and CEO Siamak Hesar.

He compared the current space traffic landscape to that of air traffic control in the 1950s. Some companies have advanced systems to detect potential incidents, but not all of the companies going to space have that same technology.

“As a result, that puts everybody at risk,” he said.

With a PhD in aerospace engineering and prior experience building software for aerospace companies, Hesar said the current space software market can be antiquated and repetitive.

“I saw myself building the same software over and over again for different entities,” he said.

So, along with lifelong friend Araz Feyzi, he built Kayhan Space.

The company, which was founded in 2019 and is dually based in Boulder and Atlanta, has developed a software platform to help government and commercial satellite operators more efficiently and effectively avoid collisions.

The company’s avoidance system sends automated collision notifications, calculates optimal maneuver plans, automatically performs maneuver screening and preemptive collision avoidance and tracks and predicts satellite patterns of life.

The company’s initial customers are small- to mid-size aerospace companies that are looking for a safety software solution as they go to space. Ultimately, much like Salesforce did for sales, Kayhan wants to be a software provider for aerospace companies of all sizes.

“Places like us that bring down the barrier to entry to access to high end software capabilities will really help and allow these medium to small size constellations and operators to be able to fly safely in space,” Hesar said.

Kayhan Space recently completed the Techstars Allied Space Accelerator program and has now brought on its first outside capital to help the company grow.

On Tuesday, Kayhan closed a \$600,000 pre-seed funding round led by Overline, an Atlanta-based seed-stage venture capital firm. Investors also included Techstars and Dylan Taylor.

The funding will primarily be used to further expand Kayhan’s team and product.



In recent months, Kayhan Space tripled the size of its team to nine employees, submitted proposals to the U.S. government with a total value of \$2 million, won the AFWERX Space Resiliency Challenge and partnered with a commercial space companies.

Kayhan Space currently provides satellite collision assessment and avoidance support to the **Naval Postgraduate School** and BlackSky missions.

<https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/inno/stories/profiles/2020/10/06/denver-startup-raised-600k-to-help-satellites-avo.html>

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FACULTY:

Will Armenia and Azerbaijan Fight to the Bitter End? [AUDIO INTERVIEW]

(English News Highlights 5 Oct 20)

Armenia and Azerbaijan accuse each other of attacking civilian areas as the deadliest fighting in the South Caucasus region for more than 25 years continues.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg added his voice to calls for an immediate end to the clashes over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountain enclave that belongs to Azerbaijan under international law but is populated and governed by ethnic Armenians.

But prospects for a ceasefire appeared remote after the fighting intensified over the weekend and following uncompromising comments by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev.

KAN's Mark Weiss spoke with South Caucasus expert **Brenda Shaffer, formerly a professor at Haifa University and now at the US Navy Postgraduate University.**

<https://omny.fm/shows/english-news-highlights/will-armenia-and-azerbaijan-fight-to-the-bitter-en>

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Iran at Risk from Spillover of Armenia-Azerbaijan Clashes

(Foundation for Defense of Democracies 5 Oct 20) ... Brenda Shaffer, **Naval Postgraduate School Research Faculty Associate, Energy Academic Group**

Intense fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan is taking place in proximity to Iran's northwestern border, which it shares with both countries. While Turkey has sided firmly with Azerbaijan and Russia stands behind Armenia, Iran may face the greatest risk of any neighboring country because the war has resulted in vocal domestic opposition, sparked tensions with Turkey and Azerbaijan, and carries the risk of a potential spill-over into Iranian territory.

Iran has a substantial Azerbaijani minority – approximately one-third of the population – which is protesting Tehran's support for Armenia. Most of Iran's Azerbaijani population is concentrated near its border with the conflict zone, but Tehran also has a significant Azerbaijani community. The outbreak of fighting last week has prompted protests in multiple Iranian cities, including Tehran, Tabriz, Urmia, and Zanjan. More than 20 Azerbaijani activists in Ardebil have been arrested, and Amnesty International has warned that they are at risk. Unrest among Azerbaijanis may augment ongoing anti-regime activity.

The current protests demand that Tehran stop Russian convoys to supply Armenia via Iran, as confirmed by Iranian state television. Representatives of the Azerbaijani community in Iran have also threatened to disrupt the convoys if they continue. Iranian officials acknowledge that Tehran has supported Armenia since the onset of the latter's conflict with Azerbaijan in the early 1990s, out of fear that Azerbaijan could attract Iran's own Azerbaijani population. If domestic Azerbaijani opposition remains active, Tehran may find it difficult to sustain its material support for Armenia.

Many of the battles between Armenia and Azerbaijan are taking place in close proximity to the Iranian border, leading Iranian officials to declare their readiness to defend that border. Already,



Azerbaijan has regained control of regions and infrastructure near the border, such as the Khudafarin bridge on the Araz River. Tehran runs a joint hydroelectric project near the bridge together with Armenia's occupation authorities.

Tehran warned both sides to avoid "intrusions" after it alleged that artillery fire hit villages on the Iranian side of the border. Reportedly, Iran is fortifying its troops and air defenses in the region. The return of Baku's control over some Armenian-occupied territories bordering Iran now lengthens the border between Azerbaijan and Iran, something Tehran has worked to avoid, preferring an Armenian presence.

Iranian alignment with Armenia and Russia has also led to tension with Turkey, whose media outlets, including government-sponsored TRT, have criticized Iran's support for Armenia. Some Turkish outlets have mocked Iran's alleged commitment to "Islamic solidarity" given that it now sides with majority-Christian Armenia. Over the last year, Turkey has significantly reduced its imports of natural gas from Iran, a trend that is likely to continue in light of their further disagreements.

Tehran also is likely not happy that Azerbaijan is using Israeli-supplied weapons in close proximity to Iran's border. Israel's support for Azerbaijan also seems to be fostering appreciation for Israel among a significant number of Azerbaijanis in Iran. Since Turkey and Israel both support Azerbaijan, this may provide an opportunity for Ankara and Jerusalem to improve relations.

While Russia and Turkey may each gain from the developments in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, it seems that Tehran only loses.

<https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2020/10/06/iran-risk-spillover-armenia-azerbaijan/>

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Iran on Edge as Azeri Minority Backs Karabakh War

(Asia Times 8 Oct 20) ... Kourosh Ziabari

Tensions flaring up between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the intractable Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, deemed to be Europe's oldest "frozen war," have spilled over into the neighboring Iran, which shares borders and longstanding amicable relations with both nations.

When the exchange of fire started on September 27 to reignite a three-decade-old battle on the sovereignty of a mountainous enclave both Azerbaijan and Armenia claim to be part of their territory, it was scarcely expected that the skirmish involving two Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe member states would degenerate into ethnic chaos in Iran, which has mostly been preoccupied with its own economic pains and global isolation.

But Iran, home to nearly 20 million ethnic Azeris and about 200,000 Armenians, has been shaken by the repercussions of the tussle in South Caucasus and appears to be prodded into taking sides, rowing back from an initial position of neutrality.

Ali Rabiei, the spokesperson for the government of Iran, said in a press conference on Tuesday that the official stance of Iran is that Armenia should evacuate the "occupied regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan," respect its sovereignty and uphold the United Nations Charter.

In recent days, widespread protests broke out in some of Iran's major Azeri-speaking cities including Tabriz, Urmia, Ardabil and Zanjan. Demonstrators called for the "liberation of Karabakh" and voiced anger at rumors that the Islamic Republic had dispatched truckloads of military aid to Armenia.

According to some accounts, 60 people have been arrested in these cities.

Racially-charged slogans

The demonstrations also became a venue for the expression of racially-charged and secessionist sentiments, with some participants chanting slogans decrying Iran's Persian-speaking majority and other ethnic communities as the nemesis of the Azeri people.

In one instance, large groups of protesters in Tabriz chanted "Kurds, Persians and Armenians are the enemies of Azerbaijan."



In a rare move, widely criticized by Iran's pro-reform newspapers and social media users, representatives of the Supreme Leader in four Azeri-speaking provinces unconditionally threw their weight behind the Republic of Azerbaijan. They emphasized in a joint statement that "there is no doubt that Karabakh belongs to Azerbaijan, that it is being occupied and that these territories need to be returned to Azerbaijan."

The four influential clerics – Seyed Mohammad Ali Al-e Hashem, Seyed Hassan Ameli, Ali Khatami and Seyed Mehdi Ghoreishi – attributed their decision to issue the statement to the verses of the Quran and the "philosophy of Islamic Republic" necessitating the "protection of the oppressed."

They also called those Azerbaijani troops and civilians killed in the clashes "martyrs."

Shargh, a major reformist newspaper, warned that the clerics having a political axe to grind in a dispute which is the jurisdiction of Iran's foreign ministry will "undermine the position of the administration to further the role of an intermediary" between Azerbaijan and Armenia, while giving a pretext to ethnic extremists to stoke sectarianism.

Many Iranians have been posting patriotic comments on social media since then, in reaction to what they perceive to be machinations to put Iran's independence and territorial integrity in jeopardy.

Iran's Azeris

Iran's Azeris, represented in high political offices, large businesses and key economic and social sectors, share cross-border cultural ties with the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey, intermarry with families in the region, travel to the two countries frequently, watch Azeri and Turkish movies on satellite TV and some view themselves as successors of a historic Ottoman civilization.

In extreme cases, fans of Iran's football clubs from Azeri-speaking cities have been seen carrying the flags of Azerbaijan and Turkey to the stadiums, to the chagrin of authorities in Tehran.

This latent Azeri Turkic nationalism has at times unsettled the Islamic Republic leadership that has been struggling for some 40 years to preserve the territorial integrity of a multi-ethnic country in which minorities of Azeris, Arabs, Kurds, Lurs, Turkmens, Balochs, Armenians and Gilaks make up more than half the population.

Emil Aslan, a researcher at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, says Iran's Azerbaijanis have become increasingly exposed to ethnic nationalism over the past two decades, and it is against this backdrop that they are wading into the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which to them is a largely symbolic cause.

"Available evidence suggests that a significant portion of Iran's urban Azerbaijani community has come to politically side with Azerbaijan in a nationwide process of return to ethnic roots," he said.

"For youth that are more educated, secular and hedge against increasingly strong Persian nationalism, Karabakh has become a cornerstone of their Turkic Azerbaijani nationalism, partly due to their larger exposition to Azerbaijani and Turkish media," he told Asia Times.

Yet Aslan believes a predisposition to independence from Iran or annexation with either Azerbaijan or Turkey is quite uncommon among Iran's Azeris, even though nationalistic tendencies are markedly powerful.

"My experience from fieldwork in Iran's Azerbaijan (community) suggests that even in the midst of nationalist urban youth, the attitudes toward the idea of Iranian statehood are quite strong, with only a minority, albeit vocal, being in favor of attaining independence from Iran," he said.

"Most wish to coexist with Persians, which is particularly the case amid more religiously-minded Azerbaijanis, who equate Shiite Islam with Iranian statehood," he said.

Professor Brenda Shaffer, a foreign policy specialist and faculty member of the US Naval Postgraduate School, echoed those views, ruling out the unification of Iran's Azeri-speaking provinces with Azerbaijan or Turkey as a possibility.

"While Turkey and Azerbaijan, especially through their TV broadcasts widely viewed among the Azerbaijanis in Iran, are important cultural magnets, I don't see any meaningful interest of unification with either among the Azerbaijanis in Iran," she said.



“In parallel, Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan are interested in the welfare and fulfillment of rights of the Azerbaijanis in Iran, but neither seeks a change in Iran’s borders nor to incorporate the territories populated by the Azerbaijani group,” she told Asia Times.

Warning the neighbors

But while separatist attitudes might be inconsequential, there are media and political elites in the Republic of Azerbaijan and Turkey who refer to Iran’s Azeri-speaking provinces as “South Azerbaijan,” holding conferences and events in Baku and Istanbul from time to time advocating the separation of these provinces, featuring speakers from Iran and elsewhere.

The Southern Azerbaijan National Awakening Movement, based in Baku, was founded in 2002 and claims to represent the interests of Iran’s Azeris, seeking to unify Azerbaijanis “living on both sides of the Aras river.”

Iran’s Azeris also have their own grievances. They complain about being sometimes belittled by the national media, being the target of racist jokes and not being entitled to use their language for education in schools and universities.

Shaffer believes these grievances and the simmering Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will not pit Iran’s ethnic groups against each other, even though Tehran’s policies with each of its neighbors can have domestic implications since the country’s ethnic minorities mostly reside in border provinces.

“The Azerbaijani community numbers approximately 28 million, while the Armenians number close to 200,000. In Tabriz, which is an almost all Azerbaijani city, there is an Armenian community and the leaders of the protest movement in Tabriz have openly stated that they want no harm to come to this community,” she told Asia Times.

It is difficult to predict the outcome of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, especially given that Turkey is openly backing Azerbaijan, and major powers such as Russia and France may also wade in with conflicting interests.

Yet Tehran’s role in the fighting may become more explicit with time as it works to moderate the tensions raging in close proximity to its borders.

Several rockets and some shelling have been reported to have inadvertently hit Iranian soil since fighting broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia. At least 20 mortar shells have landed in villages of the border city of Aslan Duz in Ardabil Province, while three rockets have fallen inside the villages of Khoda Afarin County, injuring a six-year-old child.

Iran’s Defense Minister Amir Hatami stated these mistaken firings are not acceptable and that “necessary and serious warning” was given to both countries to ensure Iran’s territory is not encroached on while they fight.

<https://asiatimes.com/2020/10/iran-on-edge-as-azeri-minority-backs-karabakh-war/>

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Al-Qaida and Islamic State: a ‘Fratricidal’ Clash

(Courthouse News Service 9 Oct 20) ... Didier Lauras

To the uninitiated, Al-Qaida and the Islamic State group may be pursuing the same long-term goal of spreading Islamic law through territorial expansion and deadly violence.

But actually, their ideology and methods differ so fundamentally that they are increasingly turning on each other.

Last month, IS in West Africa (ISWAP) released a video showing its men butchering fighters presented as members of the JNIM, an al-Qaida franchise, in Mali.

Fifty-two were killed.

According to **Mohammed Hafez, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, California, internecine fighting has claimed the lives of some 300 jihadists in West Africa’s Sahel region since July alone.



The reasons for the fighting range from control of territory or profitable trafficking corridors to filling power vacuums left behind when local leaders are killed.

“The civil war raging between global jihadis is intensifying,” said Hafez.

“These dueling factions have failed to overcome the challenge of fragmentation under the stress of conflict and territorial retreat,” he wrote in the journal CTC Sentinel of the US Military Academy’s Combating Terrorism Center.

“They turned their attention away from near and far enemies and instead prioritized fighting the nearest enemy of all — each other.”

IS arose from the ashes of an Al-Qaida offshoot, Al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), largely decimated by U.S.-led forces backed by local militias in the mid 2000s.

Hearts and minds

But IS immediately took a different course to Al-Qaida — until then the West’s public enemy number one because of the 9/11 attacks in the US.

Whereas Al-Qaida views the destruction of the West as a prerequisite for the establishment of an Islamic state, IS set out to establish a caliphate in “liberated territories” from where to launch its war of conquest, geopolitical researcher Nathanael Ponticelli wrote in the journal of the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (IRIS).

IS was uprooted last year from the “caliphate” it proclaimed in Syria and Iraq in 2014.

According to Hafez, Al-Qaida has sought to position itself as an “inclusive, pragmatic, and populist pan-Islamist movement” whereas IS represents “an exclusive, uncompromising, and puritanical vision of jihadism.”

IS claims the exclusive legitimacy to punish “takfirs,” Muslims considered to have strayed from the teachings.

“Whereas Al-Qaida and other Islamists seek to work hand-in-hand with their beleaguered populations in order to win their hearts and minds, the Islamic State cares little about populism and instead advances an exclusive, vanguardist vision that seeks to mold hearts and minds through the divine imperative to command the good and forbid vice,” said Hafez.

In April, IS issued a 52-minute video pointing out what it says are instances of Al-Qaida’s deviance from scripture.

“The self-declared caliphate has developed a significant institutional hatred for al-Qaida,” said Thomas Joscelyn of The Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

“It is always possible that some factions within each group are currently working together, or they will do so in the future. But the video indicates that a grand reconciliation between the two jihadist rivals is unlikely in the near future.”

No shortage of fighters

But, say observers, the Western world should not take comfort in the two jihadist groups being at each other’s throats.

A lot can get trampled in their battle for supremacy, territory, followers and media attention, they warn.

“Since 9/11, the problem of violent jihadis has grown in scale, scope, and violent magnitude — all this despite being divided and pursued by a superpower, multinational coalitions, and local governments,” wrote Hafez.

“Whereas in the past the international community was dealing with one global jihadi movement headquartered in Afghanistan, today there are two with branches that span several regions and countries.”

Furthermore, the jihadists have proven they can “plan operations and fight their adversaries even as they are killing each other,” said Hafez.

For Elie Tenenbaum, a researcher at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), the two groups are seeking to outdo each other — and neither is likely to run out of fighters.

“By fighting, the groups consolidate their domination and even conquer new territories,” he told AFP.



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Sustaining an Intellectual Overmatch: Management Education for Our Naval Forces

(Center for International Maritime Security 9 Oct 20) ... **Dr. Mie Augier, Professor, NPS GSDM; USMC Maj Sean F.X. Barrett; Dr. Nick Dew, Professor, NPS GSDM; & Dr. Gail Fann Thomas, Associate Professor, NPS GSDM**

The Joint Chiefs of Staff's May 2020 vision and guidance for Professional Military Education (PME) and talent management states, "There is more to sustaining a competitive advantage than acquiring hardware; we must gain and sustain an intellectual overmatch as well." Developing flexible, agile minds was also a major theme a century ago in the Knox-King-Pye report, which helped the Navy steer away from an earlier technical education focus and toward broader skills that helped produce the ideas and leaders that proved critical in WWII.

Fast forward 100 years, and we have reached another inflection point. Numerous studies point to a geostrategic environment that has shifted radically in the past decade toward a future that is filled with uncertainty. The Navy and Marine Corps have realized that key aspects of our institutions, war planning, training, education, and resource management are inadequate to deter and, if necessary, win against our adversaries when the situation arises.

We should look at how management education, with its interdisciplinary and integrative focus, is an essential tool for developing future naval warfighters who have the skills to draw out peak performance from personnel and maximize the effectiveness of a wide range of naval organizations. Most people know from personal experience the difference that excellent management makes to organizational performance. A recent study shows that workers who moved from an average boss to a high-quality boss improved their productivity by 50 percent. Leaders with high-quality management skills can really make an impact. And while the context of management varies, the practice of management across a broad range of situations fundamentally requires a similar set of core skills. Given the need for the Navy team to perform at its peak under challenging circumstances, the Navy would be well-served by incorporating more management education into PME for both officers and enlisted sailors.

The Human Element in High-Performance Organizations

Our naval forces do not operate in a vacuum and are oftentimes nudged by larger economic and societal trends. Therefore, it is worth looking briefly at some general trends in U.S. management before turning to what specifically might be relevant to defense management.

Industries throughout the U.S. have been grappling with issues similar to those facing the naval services. Technology is changing faster and faster. Attracting, engaging, and retaining top talent is an unrelenting task. In response to these challenges, corporations have recognized the need to create learning organizations that support high performance. Evidence of these issues in the Navy is apparent in recently retired Vice Admiral Luke McCollum's 2018 report in response to the 2017 U.S. Navy ship collisions. The report, *Industry Best Practices & Learning Culture – The Competitive Advantage of a Learning Culture*, provided a series of findings after surveying 30 Navy-relevant corporations to learn how they build and sustain high-performing organizations. Human factors topped the list.

The most important component of building a learning culture is inculcating these "human factors" into the organization. High-performance and mission effectiveness are dependent on the humanistic aspects of employees, teams, and leaders. This people-centric perspective dominates high-performing organizations.

This human-oriented theme has long been recognized by our naval leaders. Admiral Arleigh Burke clearly understood the importance of developing the Navy's leaders:

"There is one element in the profession of arms that transcends all others in importance; this is the human element. No matter what the weapons of the future may be, no matter how they are to be

employed in war or international diplomacy, man will still be the most important factor in naval operations.”

More recently, the Joint Chiefs emphasized the human factor in their May 2020 report:

“All graduates must possess critical and creative thinking skills, emotional intelligence, and effective written, verbal and visual communication skills to support the development and implementation of strategies and complex operations.”

Given the centrality of the human element to our naval success, we must understand how to manage it well. This involves a shift in the kinds of skills, capabilities, attitudes, and values at the center of PME. Two central issues stand out.

An increasing need for generalist skills in an uncertain world. In his book, *Range*, David Epstein claims that cognitive flexibility is increasingly important in today’s world. Training in specific tools and techniques is efficient for mastering repetitive, well-structured problems. However, a world full of uncertainty, ambiguity, and ill-structured problems requires more diverse skills and knowledge (i.e., range and flexibility). Cognitive flexibility manifests in the ability to transfer knowledge between domains and apply knowledge to new situations, which is increasingly important in today’s specialized world. Teaching broad concepts rather than specific information is more advantageous to developing this ability, as well as instilling a broad intellectual preparedness and the ability for ongoing learning. Warfighters need to learn *how* to think rather than *what* to think about. As the Nobel Laureate Herbert Simon cautioned, “What we must avoid above all is designing technologically sophisticated hammers and then wandering around to find nails that we can hit with them.” An ability to think abstractly can be capitalized on across a range of problems as opposed to specific skills that are limited to particular types of problems. Thus, instruction focused on helping students make connections is more conducive to learning and later achievement than focusing on formulas and procedures. Such skills are very relevant to warfighters where there is a high need for flexibility and taking initiative in executing operational orders.

An explicit focus on soft skills. Operating effectively in a world in which technology has connected individuals and organizations more than ever requires warfighters with sophisticated soft skills in addition to technological expertise. The **President of the Naval Postgraduate School, Vice Admiral Ann E. Rondeau**, USN (ret.), explains, “Employers today require the whole package when looking for people to hire and join their teams... They want individuals who have developed intangible skills not necessarily listed as part of a certificate or degree.” Today’s reality requires warfighters to have the soft skills necessary to manage organizational ecosystems where leaders do not necessarily wield formal authority but instead must build mutually aligned communities. As Richard Straub writes in the June 2019 *Harvard Business Review*, “To succeed in the era of platforms and partnerships, managers will need to change practice on many levels... Both practitioners and scholars can begin by dispensing with mechanistic, industrial-age models of inputs, processes, and outputs. They will have to take a more dynamic, organic, and evolutionary view of how organizations’ capacities grow and can be cultivated.” Soft skills have thus emerged as a key requirement for managing the performance of ecosystems of organizations.”

By identifying the Navy’s requirements for high-quality management skills among its warfighters, we can invest in PME that equips naval warfighters with the skills they really need to lead a wide range of naval organizations to high performance.

Management Education for Seapower

Given the need for superior generalist and soft skills to match the challenges of the strategic environment the Navy faces, management education provides many key opportunities for warfighters to develop the right intellectual abilities. Some of the most relevant themes and approaches include the following:

Educating minds to be prepared for the unexpected. Retired Admiral Mike Mullen, who spoke at the Naval Postgraduate School’s first virtual SECNAV Guest Lecture, stated, “We live now in a tremendous time of great uncertainty and even greater ambiguity. We’re facing and will face a completely new, and in many ways unknown, reality where nothing will be the same in the future.” Management approaches and education can help in this instance. Management education is centrally concerned with anticipating and



adapting to change. It develops proactive problem-solving skills. While the ability to analyze known problems using optimizing techniques has a place, it is important for the Navy also to focus on developing warfighters with skills in thinking through ambiguous and changing situations.

Leading warfighting organizations to become more agile through change and transformation. In their May 2020 report, the Joint Chiefs observed, “We cannot simply rely upon mass or the best technology... Our job is to learn how to apply our capabilities better and more creatively.” Admiral Mullen similarly emphasized the importance of leading change. However, change is not easy. For example, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted in his memoir, *Duty*, that the greatest challenge he faced was changing organizations. Any change, to be effective, must be understood and communicated by people to be implemented in our organizations. In the DoD, this becomes even more complicated because it involves government civilians, military personnel, and contractors, and requires leading across generational divides and a diverse workforce. Given these complexities, warfighters need to use evidence-based approaches on how to best lead change.

Excelling in communication skills. An intelligent workforce knows how to communicate clearly. Kline’s “Owl Speaks to Lion” humorously describes the detrimental results when an analyst does not know how to translate his findings adequately for the vice admiral who requires the results to make an important decision. Such skills are taught and honed over time and experience. One critical communication skill that must be fostered is writing. The writing process hones one’s thinking and helps one discover the real problem, define the root causes of the problem, and describe the costs and benefits of various courses of action.

Building exemplary people skills. As the Department of the Navy’s *Education for Seapower* report explains, “[N]aval leaders must be just as ready to... solve a social problem below decks or in the platoon” as they are “to move against the enemy.” Research shows that emotional intelligence, coaching, and feedback upward, downward, and horizontally are key to high performing organizations. And these skills are not “one and done.” Each level of leadership presents new challenges concerning the types and complexity of the problems encountered and the number of people one leads. Social skills are developmental and change over the life of the leader. Additionally, there is evidence that leaders’ skills are directly related to retention. Most have heard the adage, “Employees don’t leave their organization; they leave their managers.” Good bosses not only contribute to the high performance of their employees but also increase employee retention because workers quit bad bosses.

Understanding the influence of cultures. Complementary to (but different from) traditional international relations approaches, management and leadership education emphasize understanding how culture influences decision-making and how it affects collaboration. This is increasingly important to warfighters in an era featuring more and more “shared responsibility for security with other nations,” wherein “[s]trong global relationships and defense partnerships help mitigate the risks of... unpredictability.” Greater mutual understanding and mutual trust has enormous practical value in operational environments.

Developing meaningful organizational leadership skills. Vice Admiral Rondeau notes the essential connection between leaders and their organizations: “Leaders set the tone for the culture of their organizations. Meaning of the community, no matter how defined, becomes essential for interconnectedness, for bonding, and for understanding. It all has to do with the relationship between the organization and the individual.” The Navy’s PME institutions are uniquely positioned to develop warfighter skills in how to communicate and build essential interconnections using best practices from both civilian and military approaches to leadership development.

Building historical understanding to be decisive in the future. In an operational environment featuring a lack of combat deployments, we must increasingly turn to history to learn vicariously through others. The first President of Marine Corps University, Lieutenant General Paul K. Van Riper, USMC (ret.), reflected, “I wanted to impart a simple lesson: a properly schooled officer never arrives on a battlefield for the first time, even if he has never actually trod the ground, if that officer has read wisely to acquire the wisdom of those who have experienced war in times past.” A champion of PME throughout his career in Congress, Representative Ike Skelton also recognized the importance of an appreciation for history: “I



cannot stress this enough because a solid foundation in history gives perspective to the problems of the present. And a solid appreciation of history...will prepare students for the future.” Management education has long championed these kinds of vicarious learning through the extensive use of case studies. The case study approach heightens students’ sensitivity to history, context, and the particulars of a wide variety of situations. It gives warfighters a reservoir of examples to draw on as they face an unpredictable future.

These elements of management education can help naval warfighters improve their personal performance and create a higher-performing Navy team that is better positioned to cope with the unpredictability of the future operating environment. In an era when investment dollars are at a premium, these management skills should be emphasized to a greater extent in PME because they provide high return on the Navy’s investments. Management skills can be applied across a wide range of situations and roles, and they typically stay relevant longer than technical skills. Management skills are particularly valuable for warfighters that advance into higher-level positions that usually involve more complex organizational and leadership challenges, and less technical know-how. A recent study by Harvard economists David Deming and Kadeem Noray puts it this way:

“[High]-ability workers choose STEM careers initially, but exit them over time...[This] is explained by differences across fields in the relative return to on-the-job learning. High ability workers are faster learners in all jobs. However, the relative return to ability is higher in careers that change less because learning gains accumulate”(emphasis added).

Return on investment explains why management degrees (principally MBAs) dominate lists of the most popular graduate degrees, since individuals know that as their careers advance, the returns on graduate education favor developing strong management skills. Investing in management know-how is also less risky than investing in technical knowledge because the general applicability of management skills means they never abruptly go out of fashion.

Conclusion

“Whoever can make and implement his decisions consistently faster gains a tremendous, often decisive advantage. Decision making thus becomes a time-competitive process, and timeliness of decisions becomes essential to generating tempo. Timely decisions demand rapid thinking, with consideration limited to essential factors. We should spare no effort to accelerate our decision-making ability.” –*FMFM 1*

The changing geostrategic landscape demands changes in the skillsets of our naval leaders. Because of rapid advancements in technology, the human element will play an increasingly important factor in future operating environments. While tactical naval warfighters need to be technically savvy, operational-level warfighters must excel in the managerial skills needed to get peak performance out of the human element. Fundamentally, this is a general management challenge that applies across a wide range of Navy organizations. The *Education for Seapower* study and strategy, and the remarks of our naval leaders highlight that this entails a paradigm shift in our approach to PME. The Navy should invest more in management education to develop the intellectual and practical competencies required for excellence in naval warfighting.

<http://cimsec.org/sustaining-an-intellectual-overmatch-management-education-for-our-naval-warfighters/45172>

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ALUMNI:

County Manager's Contract Extended Due to 'Stellar' Leadership Amid COVID-19, Wildfires

(Redwood City Online 6 Oct 20)

San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy's contract has been extended by four years following a unanimous vote Tuesday by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, which touted his "exceptional" leadership amid the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis and during the recent wildfires.

Callagy, who was appointed to a two-year contract as county manager in 2018, oversees a \$3.7 billion budget and over 5,500 County employees who provide safety net, health, parks, public works and public safety services to a county of over 760,000 residents.

Such services have been particularly critical amid the pandemic, during which time Callagy has also served as the County's Director of Emergency Services. Under Callagy's leadership, the County installed the state's first no-cost COVID-19 testing site through Verily at the San Mateo County Event Center, stockpiled personal protective equipment, secured hotel rooms to house homeless and those needing to isolate outside the home, launched a countywide recovery initiative and implemented several Board-funded programs to help renters, landlords, immigrants, students and other vulnerable communities. Similarly, the County swiftly rounded up and delivered resources to support victims of the CZU Lightning Fires, officials said.

The supervisors described Callagy as forward-thinking, hands-on, with strong communication skills and an ability to multi-task.

"He seems to juggle a lot of balls in the air and does it quite well," Supervisor Don Horsley said. "Nothing gets dropped, nothing gets missed."

Supervisor Carole Groom said county residents are "fortunate to have you leading the County at this particular time."

Callagy previously served for five years as deputy county manager and assistant county manager under retired former County Manager John Maltbie. Before that, he spent 29 years with the San Mateo Police Department, retiring as deputy chief where he ran day-to-day operations.

Callagy holds a law degree from Santa Clara University, a Bachelor of Arts and master's degrees in public administration from Notre Dame de Namur University and a **master's degree in homeland defense and security from the Naval Postgraduate School.**

<https://climaterwc.com/2020/10/06/county-managers-contract-extended-due-to-stellar-response-to-covid-19-wildfires/>

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Carlos Solari Pens a Sports-Adventure, Immersively Well-Crafted Book Titled "El Capitán"

(Web Wire 7 Oct 20)

In this day and age, it's quite a challenge to find inspiration to do more, becoming their own best versions and see greatness in their everyday lives.

This is exactly what author Carlos Solari, a **Naval Postgraduate School alumnus**, wants to share with his readers and more. He creates a wonderful story of an immigrant family from Ecuador that landed in Queens and why people cross those borders; leaving home; leaving behind what they know. The story featured how Sports soccer took part in molding a character that will hopefully inspire each heart that will finish the book. He crafts Story inspired by True life that challenges readers to see how often you don't get to know what kind of opportunity you have until you're committed and you can't go back.

El Capitán, lets readers see a place called "in-between" where the young of other places come to America (or to any new place) to find that they have one foot in the culture of their parents and the other in the American culture. And they find that they belong to neither one. Finding their way out of that "in-



between” place is maybe as simple as acceptance and accepting - the act of giving and taking, learning, and being willing to rethink the walls we build for ourselves.

El Capitán is a fictional story, but it is a slice of real America. It showcased how sports is not only a physical activity but a way of life. It teaches each reader that life always presents opportunities for each one to peek through in order to see that there are quite a lot more wonders to come. Ultimately, the book inspires readers to learn how to see life in a different way at every turn of the page.

<https://www.webwire.com/ViewPressRel.asp?aId=264917>

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Andrew Salas Appointed Belen’s New City Manager

(News Bulletin 8 Oct 20) ... Clara Garcia

Excited about the future of the Hub City, retired Gen. Andrew Salas, who has decades of public-service experience, said he’s honored to be selected as Belen’s new city manager.

“It’s a great place to serve and I want to make a difference,” said Salas.

During Monday’s council meeting, Mayor Jerah Cordova nominated the retired National Guard brigadier general, and the council unanimously voted to approve the nomination.

Belen Mayor Jerah Cordova received 13 applicants, and a committee interviewed nine candidates in the first round of the process. From there, they selected the top three for a second round of interviews. The committee then whittled it down to the top two. Cordova’s final and top candidate was Salas.

The mayor said while he was impressed with the quality of applicants for the city manager’s position, he said Salas “just shined.”

“There’s no doubt about it that he’s a professional, he has worked at the highest levels of state government, he’s been in the military working at the high levels of the federal government,” Cordova said. “We have seen for decades that he has stellar performance, he’s smart and most important, he has ambition and wants to see Belen succeed.”

Salas told the council it’s “a great honor” to be able to help, and said he knows it will be hard work, sometimes emotionally draining and sometimes it might not feel rewarding but ultimately it’s the right thing to do.

“I promise you two things: competent leadership and I promise you loyal leadership — loyal to the mission of helping the citizens of Belen ...,” Salas told the council. “Thank you very much for this opportunity. I’m so excited and charged up in working for these high-performing directors to achieve your strategic vision.”

All members of the city council, including Cordova, thanked Roseann Peralta, the city’s finance director, for her work while acting as interim city manager for the past 4 1/2 months. They praised her dedication to the city and the exceptional ongoing communications she had with the council and city staff.

“Mr. Salas has my full support, and I will help him along the way,” Peralta said.

As Salas prepares to start working for the city of Belen on Tuesday, Oct. 13, he’s also preparing for the Nov. 3 general election. The Republican, a Bernardo resident, is running for the Socorro County Commission District 2 seat, a position his wife, Martha, currently holds.

“My wife, Martha, is termed out, and I had been looking to see if someone was interested in following her,” Salas said.

When he couldn’t find anyone run, Salas decided to throw his hat into the political ring. He ran unopposed in the primary, but is facing Democrat Craig Secatero in the general election.

“I’m in full agreement with the mayor and the city council that my heart and soul is with the city manager’s position,” Salas said in an interview with the News-Bulletin Tuesday morning. “After carefully analyzing what a commissioner’s duties are, I don’t believe there is a conflict of interest if elected. In fact, I think it would be complementary arrangement if elected.”

Cordova agrees, saying he doesn’t have any concerns about Salas running for a seat on the neighboring county commission.



As for the future, Salas says his primary objective is to “fully support the mayor and council in achieving their goals for the city of Belen.” He said by doing that, he will be forging ahead and leading high-performing teams of city employees.

“They’re the ones who provide the essential services to residents, and that essential job has to be matched with a vision for the future in respect to economic activity,” Salas said. “I will waste no opportunity to bolster, attract and keep good-paying businesses that are sustainable and reliable.”

Salas, a Belen High School graduate, grew up and continues to live and farm in Bernardo in northern Socorro County. He served 38 years in the New Mexico National Guard, and rose to the ranks of brigadier general, a position he was appointed to by former Gov. Susanna Martinez.

After leaving the Guard, Salas served in the southern command for the U.S. Air Force overseeing the nation’s cooperation of military in Central and South America.

For several months after, he was the chief executive officer for the Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc. He then went to Washington, D.C., to work as a special assistant to the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Salas also holds a master’s degree in government studies and international relations from the **Naval Post Graduate School**.

http://www.news-bulletin.com/news/andrew-salas-appointed-belen-s-new-city-manager/article_ca492226-08c2-11eb-a8d8-d7f527c0343e.html

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