



NPS IN THE NEWS

Weekly Media Report – March 1-7, 2022

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SECNAV:

[SECNAV Del Toro Kicks Off Naval Education Task Force](#)

(Mirage News 2 Mar 22)

(Military Spot 2 Mar 22)

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STUDENTS:

[Killing with a Borrowed Knife: Exploring Chinese Influence in Hollywood](#)

(Small Wars Journal 1 Mar 22) ... Morgan A. Martin and Clinton J. Williamson

In 2017, Mr. Darren Tromblay wrote *No More Fun and Games: How China's Acquisition of US Media Entities Threatens America's National Security* for *Small Wars Journal*. In his article, Mr. Tromblay posits that Chinese investments in American theater chains and film studios create pathways for the People's Republic of China (PRC) to "achieve its political objectives... with a minimum of saber-rattling". In the ensuing four years, the PRC has expanded its de facto control over the American film industry through investments, economic coercion, and acquisitions. Overall, Mr. Tromblay's assessment was correct; this article explores involvement in the entertainment industry, and finds that China has the placement and access to shape public perceptions. An examination of film as propaganda in general, the scope of Chinese interests in Hollywood, and CCP's use of propaganda films will demonstrate that the PRC's creeping influence has become a grave security threat indeed... Morgan A. Martin is a



Psychological Operations Officer and has operational experience in the Caribbean and Afghanistan. He graduated with a BA from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and is currently working towards a Masters at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

FACULTY:

[Annual Menneken Awards Honor NPS Faculty for Research Achievements](#)

(NPS.edu 1 Mar 22) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Norket

(Navy.mil 1 Mar 22) ... Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James Norket

Dr. Marcello Romano of the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, and Dr. Di Zhang of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, have been named the 2021 winners of the Carl E. and Jessie W. Menneken Research Awards. Presented annually, the Menneken awards recognize two Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) faculty for exceptional scholarly research that has a direct impact on Navy and defense operations.

[If Putin Stumbles, Will Erdogan Recalibrate?](#)

(War on the Rocks 2 Mar 22) ... Ryan Gingeras

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As Russia launched its assault on Ukraine, significant voices within Turkey's nationalist and pro-government commentariat seemed to revel in the West's weakness. Many sympathized with Ukraine's plight, but this was outweighed by their sense of vindication and schadenfreude. The fact that neither the United States nor NATO stood prepared to defend Kyiv was touted as evidence of the West's moral and political weakness. "The question of 'who is wrong,'" one pro-government commentator wrote, "is futile." What mattered most was that those countries who "used Ukraine for a proxy war are busy today moving their embassies while glancing to their rear." For Turkey, the West's unwillingness to confront Moscow validated Ankara's effort at balancing between the United States and Russia. The likelihood of Russian President Vladimir Putin's success, several observers suggested, pointed to a new multipolar world order, one that potentially tilted in Turkey's favor. Putin, as one prominent commentator put it, now commands the initiative: "For this reason, the world is looking at what Putin has done and will do, rather than the U.S. and E.U. leaders."

[Can The Iowa-Class Battleships Be Reactivated?](#)

(Rebellion Research 4 Mar 22)

Can the Iowa-class battleships be reactivated? The U.S. Navy retained the four Iowa-class battleships long after other nations abandoned their heavy fleets in favor of rapid aircraft carriers and discrete submarines... We spoke with The **Naval Postgraduate School's** Professor of Practice & former Deputy Director of the US Navy's Sixth Fleet Jeff Kline on the issue. Professor Kline sees the issue from an efficiency standpoint.

[Why India Must Not Remain Silent on Ukraine](#)

(National Interest 4 Mar 22) ... S. Paul Kapur

India cannot change Russia's course in Ukraine. But it can end its acquiescence in Russian aggression... S. Paul Kapur is a Professor at the **Naval Postgraduate School** and a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution. He served on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff from 2020-2021.

[Give Purpose First: Using Self Determination Theory as a Tool for SOF Retention](#)

(Small Wars Journal 4 Mar 22) ... Wes Dyson, Kyle Martin and Shannon C. Houck

United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) is losing special operators via voluntary separation at an alarming rate, with some organizations manned at less than 50% of desired levels after key retention milestones such as O-3 to O-4. This is unsurprising in many ways; civilian life offers more time for family, new (and often less taxing) career opportunities, more money, and greater autonomy. While some attrition is inevitable, losing experienced operators is costly for USSOCOM. The specialized skills that operators acquire and develop during their careers require significant time and monetary investments. More critically, losing these high-value, experienced warfighters imposes costs on overall force readiness...Dr. Shannon C. Houck is an Assistant Professor in the Defense Analysis Department at the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, CA. She is a social psychologist with expertise on the social psychology of influence, cognitive rigidity, and political polarization. Her other publications can be found here.



[A Russian Oil and Gas Embargo Is in the Cards. And Analysts Warn It Will Have Huge Consequences](#)

(NBC New York 3 Mar 22) ... Sam Meredith

Western sanctions imposed on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine have so far been carefully constructed to avoid directly hitting the country's energy exports... Brenda Shaffer at the **Naval Postgraduate School**, senior advisor for energy at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies think tank, told CNBC via telephone that the prospect of removing Russian energy exports from the market would likely result in "a tremendous jolt" to global oil prices and the world economy.

ALUMNI:

[Manuel Morales Named Miami Police Chief Full-Time](#)

(Local 10 28 Feb 2022) ... Author Name (Times New Roman/10pt)

Manuel Morales has been with the Miami Police Department since 1994 and was named interim chief after Art Acevedo was removed in October... According to a city news release, Morales holds a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership from St. Thomas University and a Master's degree with distinction in security studies from the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

[Nuclear South Asia: Three Years After the February 2019 Kashmir Crisis](#)

(South Asian Voices 28 Feb 22) ... Brig. Imran Hassan

In the months following the February 2019 crisis between India and Pakistan, reports emerged that India had deployed its naval assets—including the nuclear powered submarine the INS Chakra and the nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) the INS Arihant—during the crisis. As resurfaced in a recent SIPRI report, India's deployment of an SSBN, particularly in the midst of a crisis, has been seen in Pakistan as a move towards preemption. This assessment was reinforced by the Indian Army Chief statement in March 2020 that: "Balakot demonstrated that if you play the escalatory game with skill, military ascendancy can be established in short cycles of conflict that do not necessarily lead to war."... Brigadier Imran Hassan is Director at Arms Control and Disarmament Affairs, Strategic Plans Division, Pakistan. He is a graduate of Command and Staff College, Quetta; Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Monterey. He also holds an MPhil in Strategic Studies from National Defence University. He is former visiting research fellow for South Asia (Strategic Affairs) at International Institute of Strategic Studies, London. The views expressed by the author are his own.

[Former NASA Astronaut Winston Scott Inspires in EFSC Event](#)

(Eastern Florida 1 Mar 22)

(Space Coast Daily 1 Mar 22)

Winston Scott shared his inspirational journey from the segregated schools of his youth in Miami to high-flying NASA astronaut and Naval aviator in a presentation that wowed the crowd watching the Simpkins Speaker Series event Tuesday on campus at Eastern Florida State College and online... Scott was among the first group of Black students to integrate Florida State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in music education before getting his Master's Degree in aeronautical engineering from the United States **Naval Postgraduate School**.

[Etsy Store Making a Difference Financially for Omaha Couple](#)

(Lincoln Journal Star 5 Mar 22) ... Marjie Ducey

Adam and Ana Herring hoped for a sale a day when they first opened their Etsy shop, Fabberforge, last May... Adam, who is from York, Pennsylvania, contracted meningoencephalitis in 2007 while attending the Naval Academy. Only 22, he was in a coma for a month and nearly died. He went on to earn his master's at the **Naval Postgraduate School** in 2012, studying space systems engineering.

COMMUNITY:

[Presidio of Monterey Hike Brings Community Together for 'Fitness, Fun, Friendship and Food'](#)

(Army.mil 1 Mar 22) ... Winifred Brown

The Hot Chocolate Hike at the Presidio of Monterey on Feb. 26 highlighted how the installation's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation supports the well-being of the community... Hikers included a mix of



service members from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center on PoM and the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, family members and civilian personnel. Chhoeung and Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Traylor, USAG PoM senior enlisted advisor, hiked the course together, as did Lt. Col. Matthew Upperman, commander of the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Lourdes Barragan, the battalion's senior enlisted advisor.

[Monterey Service Members Earn German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency](#)

(Army.mil 2 Mar 22) ... Winifred Brown

Thanks to members of the German Armed Forces studying in Monterey, 182 members of the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy have received the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency... Most of those who earned the badge are students at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at the Presidio of Monterey and the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey. Service members from all branches of the military attend the schools and serve at the installations.

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS:

Mar 7-10: [CEE Leadership and Communication Program for Senior Supervisors](#)

Mar 14: [NWSI Seapower Conversation: Fighting the Fleet: Operational Art and Modern Fleet Combat](#)

Mar 14-18: [Center for Executive Education LCA Course](#)

Mar 21-24: [NWSI Nimitz Research Group Warfare Innovation Workshop](#)

Mar 25: [Winter Quarter Graduation](#)



SECNAV:

SECNAV Del Toro Kicks Off Naval Education Task Force

(Mirage News 2 Mar 22)

(Military Spot 2 Mar 22)

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro met with his recently established Naval Education Task Force at the Pentagon Feb. 24 to kick off the group's efforts in reviewing the Department's Naval University System.

The task force, comprised of senior-level subject matter experts in education, leadership, talent management and development, and transformational change includes individuals with enlisted, officer, and non-military backgrounds.

"Over the last three years, a number of internal studies have explored the fitness and capabilities of the institutions in our Naval University System from numerous perspectives, and in conjunction with strategic guidance documents, have provided prescriptive direction for facets of professional military education," said Del Toro. "Building on this body of work and looking ahead, I want this task force to inform how we can make the Department of the Navy an even more adaptive learning organization that prepares our people to prevail over current and expected threats in the operating environments of the present and future."

The task force received introductory briefs by stakeholders in the Secretariat, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Marine Corps Training and Education Command. They also visited the Marine Corps University and the U.S. Naval Community College, with future visits planned to the U.S. Naval Academy, **Naval Postgraduate School**, and Naval War College.

The task force will brief the Secretary on findings and observations suggested to strengthen the Department's alignment with SECNAV's One Navy-Marine Corps Team: Strategic Guidance, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. David H. Berger's Force Design 2030 to modernize the expeditionary posture of the Marine Corps, and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday's Navigation Plan to expand our fleet capabilities for distributed operations.

"Our Nation is confronting increasing and more varied threats to national security," said Del Toro. "To remain the preeminent naval force in the world, the DON must make strategic investments in our naval education that develop our Sailors and Marines throughout their careers."

Naval Education Task Force Members include:

- Dr. Mark Hagerott, Chancellor for the North Dakota University System (Task Force Chair)
- Vice Adm. William "Ted" Carter, USN (Ret), President of University of Nebraska
- Lt. Gen. Loretta Reynolds, USMC (Ret)
- Ms. Steffanie Easter, Vice President of Strategy and Planning Defense and Civilian Sector, SAIC
- Sgt. Maj. Ronald Green, USMC (Ret)
- Dr. Lisette Nieves, President of the Fund for New York City
- Dr. Stefanie Sanford, Chief of Global Policy and External Relations at the College Board

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RESEARCH:

Forecasting Our Future: Naval Postgraduate School Studying Clouds After Rainfall

(KSBW 7 Mar 22) ... Alani Letang

An ongoing experiment in the Monterey Bay region is studying weather following a cold front. As part of Hearst Television's "Forecasting Our Future" initiative, Naval Postgraduate School researchers take us behind the scenes of studying clouds after rainfall.

It's the study after the storm, the perfect time after a cold front passed when there is convection or build-up of clouds. Scientists at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey along with San Jose State University are using a weather balloon to collect data, to understand how individual clouds are developed. Scientists are essentially looking at, what causes them to be bigger or smaller clouds.

Advertisement

Scott Powell, an assistant professor of meteorology at the Naval Postgraduate School, said "based on our results from those studies, we may be able to make recommendations for how to improve the representation of clouds and other models that are actually used operationally for weather prediction and climate prediction."

The weather balloon is sent in the air, several miles high. As it rises it takes measurements of temperature, humidity and based on GPS coordinates, the balloon will give wind speeds every second.

The data is being sent back to researchers in real-time, while the balloon is in the air. When it pops and comes back down, more data is saved to a file.

"What it will do, however, is provide us information about the vertical structure, the atmosphere, the temperature, and the humidity in the atmosphere so that we can study how that affects the growth of clouds," Powell said.

The weather balloon is just one tool scientists use to analyze clouds. They also use aircraft for the same thing, but they can discover more.

"The balloon is just one location. It launches and gives a profile of the atmosphere. But we can go various locations and we can go at different altitudes, multiple altitudes, and different locations and get more statistical sampling at each altitude," said Anthony Bucholtz, the AIRBORNE Aviation Facility director and a research professor at the Naval Postgraduate School.

The aircraft is taking measurements out of the cloud and within the cloud. It can also gather data on pollution, dust, and aerosol particles in the atmosphere.

Researchers' goal with this study is to be able to predict a better forecast.

Powell explained, "they will study the correlations, they'll use it in their of the models to better understand and predict the properties."

[Forecasting Our Future: Naval Postgraduate School studying clouds after rainfall \(ksbw.com\)](http://ksbw.com)

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Classified Naval Postgraduate School Study Explores Convergence of Electronic and Cyber Warfare

(Defense Tech Connect 4 Mar 22)

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) commissioned the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to conduct a study exploring the convergence of electronic and cyber warfare. The TS/SCI-classified study has created a roadmap to meet the technological and acquisitional challenges that are currently faced in achieving dominance in the Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS).

"The focus of this study was mainly technology, essentially the vision for the convergence of electronic and cyber warfare," U.S. Navy Cmdr. Chad Bollmann, director of the university's Center for Cyber Warfare (CCW) said. "We identified many current gaps – including some doctrinal and authorities ones – and recommended areas for investment with approximate resource estimates, timelines and, most



importantly, how the gaps and proposed solutions interact. Having the best technology is the first step, but you also have to acquire, integrate and practice that technology if they're going to be effective."

The study was commissioned by ONR's Code 31 – Electronic Warfare [EW] section to guide technological investment by the Navy over the near to mid-term. The interdisciplinary research team involved worked closely with Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific (NWI-C-PAC)'s deep EW bench over the last year to complete the work.

"NPS is by nature joint and interdisciplinary," Bollmann said. "Our ability to combine both the deep academic expertise plus the military practitioners in uniform with diverse kinds of Fleet experience and Fleet connections really is why we were chosen to conduct this study."

Though the study reviewed a number of technologies and their platforms, siloing became a major focus of the research. It was noted that the two different disciplines – electronic and cyber warfare – have historically resulted in separate communities with different practices throughout the military.

"At some point, these [conceptual] models become obstacles and systems don't talk with each other," Bollmann said. "At the end of the day, these are distinctions our adversaries are not making."

One of the conclusions drawn by the study was that a key component in overcoming siloing is a concurrent realignment of acquisition processes to fully enable the convergence of EW and Cyber. Acquisition models currently in use are structured around unique programs which produce a capability for a specific user community. It is expected that a more modular approach would yield interoperable capabilities that could be integrated to achieve combined effects.

"Building to common Technical Reference Frameworks (TRFs) to produce highly integrable and interoperable capabilities would be a good beginning," Howard Pace, Professor of the Practice of Acquisition Management in NPS' Department of Defense Management, said. "TRFs are not new and are widely used in commercial software production. This is a good model to follow since most EW and Cyber capabilities are software-intensive. Converging EW and cyber capabilities will require a culture shift away from doing what we have always done in the past, of saying that it is too much risk or that it isn't specifically for my customer. In an era of Great Power Competition, I do not think we can afford that."

[Classified Naval Postgraduate School Study Explores Convergence of Electronic and Cyber Warfare – Defense TechConnect](#)

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STUDENTS:

Killing with a Borrowed Knife: Exploring Chinese Influence in Hollywood

(Small Wars Journal 1 Mar 22) ... Morgan A. Martin and Clinton J. Williamson

Introduction

In 2017, Mr. Darren Tromblay wrote *No More Fun and Games: How China's Acquisition of US Media Entities Threatens America's National Security* for *Small Wars Journal*. In his article, Mr. Tromblay posits that Chinese investments in American theater chains and film studios create pathways for the People's Republic of China (PRC) to "achieve its political objectives... with a minimum of saber-rattling". In the ensuing four years, the PRC has expanded its de facto control over the American film industry through investments, economic coercion, and acquisitions. Overall, Mr. Tromblay's assessment was correct; this article explores involvement in the entertainment industry, and finds that China has the placement and access to shape public perceptions. An examination of film as propaganda in general, the scope of Chinese interests in Hollywood, and CCP's use of propaganda films will demonstrate that the PRC's creeping influence has become a grave security threat indeed.



Films as Influence

But first—why popular films? For a start, as a means of influence, it is very effective. The coordinator for the US government’s WWII-era domestic propaganda efforts, Elmer Davis, had this to say about it: “The easiest way to inject a propaganda idea into most people’s minds is to let it go through the medium of an entertainment picture when they do not realize that they are being propagandized.” This has since been corroborated by independent research: audiences are more open to persuasion when they’re unaware that entertainment’s message is political. The same core message disseminated through different films over time is likely to be effective; repetition and consistency are cornerstones of effective propaganda campaigns.

As of 2021 the PRC is poised to call the shots on what does and does not make it off the cutting room floor and into American theaters. Chinese companies have been becoming increasingly involved in Hollywood since the PRC’s entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001. They have made direct investments in three of the five major Hollywood film studios (Sony, Warner, and Universal) and are able to exercise economic leverage over four (Sony, Warner, Universal, and Disney). A Chinese-owned company, Dalian Wanda, purchased both Legendary Pictures and the AMC Theater chain in the mid-2010s; with more than 8,000 screens in over 600 locations nationwide, AMC is the single largest theater chain in the US.

Some may question if these investments and acquisitions should be cause for alarm. Foreign companies invest in the United States quite frequently, and vice versa—this is part and parcel of the global economy. The situation with China’s involvement in the entertainment industry is different for three reasons. First, China has a well-developed information warfare doctrine that calls for using various media to influence foreign audiences to further the PRC’s geopolitical goals. Second, the PRC’s 2017 National Intelligence Law mandates that any Chinese organization, company, or citizen cooperate with the government to provide assistance with any “national intelligence work.” Finally, the Chinese government has mandated that all “private” business firms will have Chinese Communist Party (CCP) representation in leadership positions to ensure that companies are literally toeing the party line. Investment provides access and placement for members of Chinese firms in film studios; access and placement provides opportunities to insert messaging or prevent non-flattering portrayals of China from making the final cut.

Furthermore, the CCP has known the value of propaganda since before WWII. As a military commander, Mao Zedong said that his guerrilla leaders should spend more time in “propaganda work” than actually fighting, “for their most important job is to win over the people.” The CCP later formalized Mao’s viewpoint during the 1942 Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art, during which they declared that all art should serve political objectives. In line with Vladimir Lenin three decades prior, the CCP declared that cinema was the most essential art form for instigating social revolutions. . In the following decades, strict controls on financing, creation, and distribution meant that only CCP-approved propaganda films could be screened in the PRC.

Influence in Action

Skeptics counter that China’s investments in the entertainment industry are purely for economic reasons, and that the PRC has no interest in controlling narratives. Consider this, however: while American directors, producers, and actors once leveraged Hollywood as a platform to spread pro-American messages, call out injustices, and foment social change, they now avoid topics that are sensitive to the PRC, a country in which injustices abound and movements for social change are crushed. The PRC has numerous examples of this, not least of which are the Tiananmen Square Massacre or the ongoing Uighur Genocide. There has clearly been a shift in who Hollywood is willing to take to task. Disney, in particular, faced a steep uphill battle to get into the China market because of a 1997 film that depicted the life of the Dalai Lama; they have since tread carefully on China issues. Numerous actors and musicians have been banned from China or otherwise blacklisted for voicing their support for Tibet: Richard Gere, Lady Gaga, Jon Bon Jovi, and Bjork are perhaps the most notable. Awkward apologies are often required to get back in the CCP’s good graces, as was recently seen with John Cena. In an effort to appease CCP censors and maintain access to the lucrative Chinese market, production companies have willingly



changed the ethnicities of characters (the Ancient One in Dr. Strange and North Koreans in the Red Dawn reboot), worked directly with CCP censors to make sure films passed their scrutiny (Disney's 2020 production of Mulan), or completely erased references to Taiwan (Maverick's jacket patches in Top Gun: Maverick).

Conclusion

Like Russian influence in the 2016 Presidential election, it is unclear how effective China's efforts have been. Unlike Russia, however, Chinese companies have spent billions of dollars to gain access to American institutions to be able to influence American audiences. While the news and findings of Russia's influence operations held the nation's attention for the better part of four years, the latter barely makes the news. Mr. Tromblay's assessment was correct: it's time for decision makers throughout the US government to recognize the threat that China's infiltration of the entertainment industry represents.

Morgan A. Martin

Morgan A. Martin is a Psychological Operations Officer and has operational experience in the Caribbean and Afghanistan. He graduated with a BA from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and is currently working towards a Masters at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

Clinton J. Williamson

Clinton J. Williamson is a Civil Affairs Officer and has served in the United States Army for more than 15 years with deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Central America. He graduated with a BA from the University of Florida and is currently working towards his Masters in Defense Analysis at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

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The Menneken Award for Highly Meritorious Research, won by Zhang, recognizes a junior NPS faculty member who has exhibited outstanding research achievement in science, engineering or technology. Zhang's research involves the development of power electronics and energy conversion systems for the Navy's most advanced shipboard applications. He has been issued 35 U.S. patents with three pending patent applications, published 22 papers in top IEEE journals, and presented 22 papers at leading international conferences.

"It's a great honor and also kind of a surprise," said Zhang. "My mentoring team really gave me a lot of support and encouragement. They told me that based on what we have achieved, maybe I can submit a package and I might just win it."

Zhang currently leads a \$3 million NASA project devoted to solid-state circuit breaker technology that is directly applicable to the Navy's future fleet medium voltage DC power system, as well as a National Science Foundation project to develop a modular, multi-level rectifier.



The Menneken Award for Significant and Sustained Contributions, presented to Romano, is given to a senior faculty member whose work represents a sustained impact on the effectiveness of the U.S. Navy and DOD.

Romano has been a staple at NPS since joining the faculty in 2004. He is a member of NPS' Space Systems Academic Group (SSAG), is a founding director of the university's Spacecraft Robotics Laboratory and serves as a lead for NPS on NASA's Astrobatix Project.

He is also a rare two-time winner of the Menneken, receiving the award for Highly Meritorious Research as a junior faculty member 15 years ago.

"It's a very meaningful achievement for me," said Romano. "Especially considering that at the beginning of my career in 2006, I won the junior Menneken Award. The first one was a very important push for my career and a great energizing event, and now winning the senior one kind of ties my career back and it comes full circle."

Romano's award-winning research has focused on the areas of spacecraft proximity maneuvering and orbital robotics, which are of critical importance with direct applications to defense activities in space.

The Astrobatix project aims at developing and testing new dynamic models, and guidance and control algorithms for the maneuvering of autonomous robotic spacecraft. The project utilizes NASA's "Astrobee" free-flying robotic vehicle inside the International Space Station, with the ultimate goal of developing autonomous robotic assistants for future NASA astronauts.

The Astrobatix Engineering and Operations team lead, Dr. Jennifer Hudson, SSAG Research Associate Professor, has worked very closely with Romano for the last few years, and says he is very deserving of the award.

"He's great," Hudson said. "He's really well respected within the international research community and has mentored a lot of students who have gone on to have pretty impressive careers in their own right. He's been a great mentor for a lot of people, and sort of spread his influence throughout the research community."

Romano attributes his success to those that have helped him along the way and says that he could not have replicated his achievements anywhere else in the world.

"I sincerely think that NPS is a unique environment," he said. "And what I have achieved, the way I have achieved it, would have not been possible elsewhere because of the professionalism and the self-motivation of our students."

Established in 1988, the Carl E. and Jessie W. Menneken Awards for Excellence in Scientific Research are sponsored by the Naval Postgraduate School Foundation. The Menneken Endowment is used to provide annual awards to faculty, recognizing highly meritorious research with identifiable impact on the Navy and DOD technology.

[Annual Menneken Awards Honor NPS Faculty for Research Achievements - Naval Postgraduate School](#)

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If Putin Stumbles, Will Erdogan Recalibrate?

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As Russia launched its assault on Ukraine, significant voices within Turkey's nationalist and pro-government commentariat seemed to revel in the West's weakness. Many sympathized with Ukraine's plight, but this was outweighed by their sense of vindication and schadenfreude. The fact that neither the United States nor NATO stood prepared to defend Kyiv was touted as evidence of the West's moral and political weakness. "The question of 'who is wrong,'" one pro-government commentator wrote, "is futile." What mattered most was that those countries who "used Ukraine for a proxy war are busy today



moving their embassies while glancing to their rear.” For Turkey, the West’s unwillingness to confront Moscow validated Ankara’s effort at balancing between the United States and Russia. The likelihood of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s success, several observers suggested, pointed to a new multipolar world order, one that potentially tilted in Turkey’s favor. Putin, as one prominent commentator put it, now commands the initiative: “For this reason, the world is looking at what Putin has done and will do, rather than the U.S. and E.U. leaders.”

Statements such as these add weight to Selim Koru’s dark prediction:

If President Vladimir Putin wins a major military victory against Ukraine, and is able to weather the economic and diplomatic consequences, it will only accelerate Turkey’s move into a post-NATO stance. The failure of NATO to stop Moscow’s irredentism will confirm Ankara’s beliefs about the waning relevance of the alliance and fuel its hopes for a new era in geopolitics.

But what if Putin does not succeed? With the war in Ukraine now approaching its second week, any potential Russian victory appears increasingly Pyrrhic. Russian territorial gains have proven slow in the face of Kyiv’s defiance. Images of the fighting have generated a groundswell of popular indignation in Europe and the United States, leading to bold demonstrations of resolve and unanimity. Against this backdrop, European states have committed themselves to a host of earnest policies aimed at thwarting further Russian aggression. Such steps have gone beyond efforts at bankrupting the Russian economy. It now seems highly likely that the war in Ukraine has girded European commitment to NATO despite the potential risks of escalation and economic hardship.

It is too early to say how the war will end. However, it is possible to identify several important factors that will continue to influence Turkey’s behavior in the event of Putin’s defeat. One clear factor is Turkey’s security interests, which likely will compel Ankara to continue to appeal to NATO for support for at least the foreseeable future. On the ideological front, President Recep Erdogan’s convictions have proven malleable in the past, but his skepticism of the West is likely to endure. Yet all this may prove secondary to something far more pressing: the political needs of Erdogan himself. With his re-election plans hanging in the balance, it is likely that Turkey’s president will choose whatever path he believes can keep him in power.

Jets, Missiles, and Training

Regardless of the outcome in Ukraine, Turkey’s armed forces will continue to struggle with severe challenges in the realms of development and maintenance. The air force, for example, contends with a fleet of aging aircraft that is now entering its final years of service. Industry experts speculate that it will be a long while before Ankara succeeds in fielding a series of indigenously produced fighters that can replace them. This means Turkey would have to continue to rely on U.S. and European suppliers to retrofit and maintain its current aircraft. One potential alternative Ankara has entertained is buying Russian-made jets, including the advanced SU-57. Some Turkish security commentators, however, have repeatedly questioned whether the purchase of Russian fighters represented a workable solution. In addition to incurring the ire of Turkey’s NATO allies, such an acquisition would have to contend with issues of training, technology transfer, and integration into the Turkish air force. With Russia on the cusp of becoming an international pariah, the acquisition of any Russian aircraft will get even more complicated.

The plight of Turkey’s air force underscores the broader predicament Turkey’s military finds itself in. Despite the spectacular growth of its defense industry, Ankara remains dependent upon its traditional partners in Europe and North America to advance the domestic development of its armed forces. This dependency is not limited to the maintenance and modernization of military hardware. Turkey is a consistent participant in NATO exercises and planning. According to one internal poll, Turkish officers voiced overwhelming agreement that the alliance contributed positively to the military’s readiness and institutional development. Such sentiments did not forestall Ankara’s decision to purchase the S-400 anti-aircraft system from Russia in 2017 — which prompted U.S. and European sanctions on Turkey’s defense industry and did much to comprise Ankara’s standing among its NATO’s allies. Turkish officials, however, have long maintained that Turkish defense cooperation with Russia does not undermine its



place in the alliance. More recently, Turkish commentators have suggested that such relations are an asset in light of the current crisis. According to editors at Turkish state television: “Moscow relies on the sincerity of NATO member Turkey, which does not back down on the S-400 issue. Kyiv, on the other hand, appreciates the efforts of Turkey, which supports it on the Crimea issue.”

Depending upon the damage Russia incurs as a result of its war in Ukraine, it is possible Ankara may rethink its defense acquisitions from Moscow. What it will not change is the country’s defense needs. In the short term, one may not immediately see the emergence of a “post-NATO” Turkey. Superficially at least, Ankara will likely continue to speak of its desire to revitalize its defense ties with Washington and Brussels. Central to such an effort would be the lifting of the arms embargoes that currently hobble the country’s defense industry. Whether such overtures will succeed is anyone’s guess. Even if Ankara persuaded the United States and Europe to lift their embargoes, Turkey would continue in its quest to develop a native defense industry that can stand on its own two feet. The restoration of defense ties between Turkey and its NATO allies ultimately may simply slow, rather than blunt, the trajectory of Ankara’s “post-NATO” ambitions.

The Question of Ideology

Erdogan’s pursuit of a strong domestic defense sector is intimately linked to his broader vision of Turkey’s place in the world. Amassing a military that is immune to foreign embargoes is central to his desire to forge a foreign policy at odds with the present global order. As Koru points out, Turkish right-wing politics exercise a great deal of influence over his view of contemporary world affairs. It should be said, however, that Erdogan has tended to be rather promiscuous in drawing upon different strains of Turkish nationalism and conservatism. At various times, and in various settings, he has invoked ideological goals deriving from separate, and to some degree conflicting, right-wing movements. While regularly affirming Turkey’s place in NATO, Erdogan’s administration has spoken of Turkey as the leader of the Islamic world and the custodian of the old Ottoman order. He regularly denounces the tyranny of Western imperialism, while promoting the emergence of a Eurasian consensus in conjunction with China and Russia. In both word and deed, his views on regional politics often betray signs of irredentism. Erdogan’s revisionist tendencies are best exemplified by his support for the creation a large “Blue Homeland” in the eastern Mediterranean. If he was to have his way, Greek sovereignty over its islands and waterways would be all but nullified.

And yet one may also say that Erdogan is no slave to ideology. Throughout his two decades in office, he has demonstrated a fair amount of dexterity when it comes to charting the country’s foreign policy. By 2015, he had all but abandoned Turkey’s commitment to a “zero problems” approach toward bilateral relations with the country’s neighbors. Thereafter, he cultivated a reputation for confrontation and forcefulness in his dealings with Iraq, Cyprus, Syria, Armenia, and the European Union. More recently, Turkey’s relative isolation has compelled Erdogan to reverse himself in the hopes of soothing relations with regional competitors like the United Arab Emirates and Israel. Ankara’s dealings with Russia exemplify some of the more extreme shifts in the country’s international relations. In the early stages of Syria’s civil war, Erdogan and his supporters drew a harsh line against Russia and its support for Bashar al-Assad’s murderous regime. Ironically, the shutdown of a Russian jet in November 2015 led to a dramatic entente between the two countries, leading to unprecedented levels of cooperation. Since then, both Ankara and Moscow have found ways to cooperate on matters of mutual interest while compartmentalizing their respective differences. At the moment, the crisis in Ukraine has tested but not broken this pattern of behavior.

If Putin’s fortunes fail him, it is difficult to say how Turkey’s foreign policy establishment may react. In recent years, Erdogan has enjoyed the support of a broad chorus of right-wing supporters for his policies. Many of these figures have argued that the West’s real goal in backing Ukrainian forces is to undermine Turkey by forcing a conflict upon Russia. For Turkey’s right wing, what is at stake is not Europe’s future but Turkey’s sovereignty and destiny as an ascending power. As of yet, Erdogan has offered little indication as to how he sees the country’s path forward in light of Russia’s difficulties on the battlefield. His silence, in some respects, reflects deeper tensions.



Ukraine and Erdogan's Moment of Reckoning

At the moment hostilities erupted in Ukraine, Erdogan was not to be found in Ankara. As Koru notes, he was instead in West Africa, completing a regional tour meant to highlight Turkish investment on the continent and hint at a future in which Turkey is a global leader. But there is another side to this visit: the presidential elections in 2023. It appears Erdogan will face the fight of his political life. National polling suggests that his Justice and Development Party has lost considerable support over the last year. A number of factors play into the Erdogan's waning fortunes: the country's haphazard response to COVID, charges of corruption and nepotism, and, above all, a flailing economy. In travelling to Africa, Erdogan also sought to burnish his credentials as a statesman and promote Turkish investment and trade. Given the state of affairs in Ukraine, it is likely that no voter in 2023 will remember this particular excursion when they head to the ballot box.

Handicapping Erdogan's political prospects at home is always a tricky proposition. He has lost parliamentary elections in the recent past. In 2019, he failed to install two handpicked candidates running for mayor in Ankara and Istanbul. The election of 2023 will likely be different. As an event coinciding with the centennial of the founding of the Turkish Republic, both his presidency and his historical legacy are on the line. Should he lose, he faces recrimination and unemployment. His personal wealth, as well as the fortunes of his family and allies, would also be in jeopardy. As a result, the war in Ukraine is now intimately intertwined with what Erdogan may quite literally see as a life-or-death struggle. Even his most vocal supporters are aware that the war, irrespective of how it ends, will likely hurt Turkey's economy. The country relies heavily on Russia for its energy needs and is closely linked in matters of trade and tourism. Russian energy giant Rosatom, for example, is currently putting the finishing touches on the country's premier nuclear powerplant. Should the Russian economy truly collapse, much of Turkey's economy will suffer along with it.

As a result, any change in Turkish policy will likely reflect the desires of Erdogan himself. Over the course of his two-decade rule, Erdogan has created a highly personalized state in which he, and his individual interests, reign supreme. Institutional forces capable of shaping his behavior — such as the military, the bureaucracy, and civil society — now exercise minimal authority. To guess how Erdogan, as a man, deals with the repercussions of a defeated Russia is nothing less than a crapshoot. Speculatively, his personal rapport with Putin may be of consequence. In the past, Erdogan's relationship with Russia's president has been described as congenial and close. He is known to stage frequent calls with Putin over matters vital to Turkey's interest. Conversely, U.S. President Joe Biden has seen and spoken little with Erdogan since taking office. It is likely that Erdogan will be closely monitoring the destructive effect U.S. and European sanctions have on the Russian economy. In the past, observers argued that the threat of E.U. sanctions helped deter Turkey from escalating its aggressive behavior toward Greece in the summer of 2020. It is possible that he will see Putin's survival or fall as a harbinger of his own future.

Could other factors shape Turkey's foreign policy in the wake of a Russian defeat? One might be the growing influence of China. Though Ankara's foreign policy establishment has contemplated the development of stronger ties with Beijing, there is little evidence that suggests a more robust Turkish-Chinese relationship looms immediately over the horizon. Should Turkey's ties with Moscow take a turn for the worse, however, this may help push Erdogan and Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Xi to coordinate more closely. Both Ankara and Beijing are convinced that the West is in a state of terminal decline. Even if Europe and the United States thwart Putin's plans in Ukraine, this belief may endure. If Putin stumbles, Erdogan might simply seek out new partners to help him realize Turkey's "post-NATO" future.

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[If Putin Stumbles, Will Erdogan Recalibrate? - War on the Rocks](#)



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Can The Iowa-Class Battleships Be Reactivated?

(Rebellion Research 4 Mar 22)

Can the Iowa-class battleships be reactivated? The U.S. Navy retained the four Iowa-class battleships long after other nations abandoned their heavy fleets in favor of rapid aircraft carriers and discrete submarines.

All four Iowa-class battleships received modernization enhancements, upon their eventual reactivation at the direction of the United States Congress in 1981. Furthermore, armed with missiles during the 1980s, the battleships were key members of the 600-ship Navy initiative. They received modern weapons including:

Eight new armored box launchers for Tomahawk cruise missiles and four quadruple canister launchers for 16 anti-ship Harpoon Missiles.

During the Iraq War, the ships were highly effective in shelling the Iraqi Army with impressive accuracy. Of course, they were nowhere near the striking range of a carrier's air fleet or long-range missiles.

The USS Iowa in Los Angeles, the USS Wisconsin in Norfolk, the USS New Jersey in Philadelphia & the USS Missouri in Hawaii.

None of these ships have turned their engines on since 1992. Rather, they receive electrical power from the mainland.

We spoke with The **Naval Postgraduate School's** Professor of Practice & former Deputy Director of the US Navy's Sixth Fleet Jeff Kline on the issue. Professor Kline sees the issue from an efficiency standpoint.

"There is little doubt the Iowa class battleships are impressive war machines and are designed with more 'staying power' than any other in naval history. However, in today's age of robotics warfare, if I had the choice of employing the 1500 sailors required to man an Iowa or to man 100 missile boats. I'd buy the boats. It is no longer about the ships. But about the missiles and the resilience of the whole fleet to deliver them."

We also posed the question to the USS New Jersey's curator Ryan Szimanski who added:

"The Iowa-class battleships still have life left in them but their age and the manufacture dates of the equipment on board make them a maintenance and manpower nightmare. Nothing is automated and sailors would have to be completely retrained on the ship's older style equipment. If you think about changing all of that over to more modern stuff why spend the money on an old ship when you could buy a new one."

USS New Jersey's Curator Ryan Szimanski on her history!

But how much life is left in these ships? Especially with state of the art missile technology replacing these primitive cannons .

When you look at the B-52, possibly a lot!

We can look at the Air Force where the B-52 represents a major part of their bomber-strike capability.

The B-52's design began in 1946 and 76 years later they are still employed for military purposes on a daily basis.

We asked Jeremy Knopp, Technical Director at the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, about bringing back the Iowa's and he felt it was possible, especially when looking at the B-52. Knopp was "astonished to learn that his predecessors in Nondestructive Evaluation research at AFRL were already talking about extending the service life of the B-52 in the mid-1970's before he was even born".

While many argue for missiles to replace the 16-inch guns in order for the Navy to present a domineering show of force, the destruction that a 16-inch shell unleashes is still frightening.

With a range of up to 24 miles, the shells fired weigh from 1,900 to 2,700 lbs with a maximum speed of 2,690 feet per second. Unfortunately, the cost of fuel and 1,500 sailors make any reactivation simply a pipe dream with today's military technology and efficiency.

Of course, when you compare the 16 inch gun with a P-700 Granit cruise missile onboard a Russian Kirov-class with 388 miles of range at Mach 2.5 well that's that.

USS Missouri's Curator Meghan Rathbun on Missouri's History!

There is also the issue of cost. Replacing the big guns is very expensive. USS Iowa's Curator Dave Way told us the US Navy would focus on:

"Removing the 16-inch guns and replacing them with missile tubes inside the protection of the thick armored guns' barbets."

But, the problem is that:

"To remove and replace these ship's propulsion plants means removing and replacing her armor belt which would be too costly. Each of the Iowas' armor plates around her hull are bolted into place."

But from a Naval tactics standpoint, is there any value for the battleship in the next few decades?

How good was the USS Iowa at AA Engagements?

We found a retired Submarine Officer and tactical strategist who just wrote to us the following:

"It appeals to me out of pure nostalgia and because it would be an awesome beast of a warship. That said, it would be a case of too many eggs in one basket. In a world of finite resources, I'd rather have more subs/destroyers/corvettes than just a few big capital ships.

Everything needs to revolve around how we'd deter / fight in East and South Asia.

Can USS Iowa be reactivated?

Supporting Marines in littorals, taking key chokepoints, harassing / crippling Chinese forces and supply lines, etc.

I worry that defense spending will get crimped due to the profligate spending elsewhere in the years ahead. So we need to be smart about getting as much bang for your buck for what we do spend.

All else equal, I'm going to overweight submarines.

We retain a large tech advantage here and can cripple China's Navy and shipping quickly. So long as we have sufficient boats to handle it. In a shooting war, we probably lose 6-10 subs to the bottom. But that's the cost to totally gut their Navy and leave them landlocked and cut off from maritime supply"

[Can the Iowa-class battleships be reactivated? - Rebellion Research](#)

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Why India Must Not Remain Silent on Ukraine

(National Interest 4 Mar 22) ... S. Paul Kapur

India cannot change Russia's course in Ukraine. But it can end its acquiescence in Russian aggression.

While the world has condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, India has remained largely silent. Indian leaders have encouraged peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis and agreed to send Ukraine humanitarian aid after urgent appeals from Kyiv. But India has refused directly to criticize the Russian attack, abstaining from resolutions condemning Russia in both the United Nations Security Council and the UN General Assembly. Although rooted in realpolitik concerns, India's reaction to Russia's aggression has, on balance, damaged its strategic interests. Consequently, India should change course and publicly state its opposition to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.



India's refusal to disavow the Russian invasion is grounded in several strategic calculations. India enjoyed close diplomatic and security relations with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Today, it continues to rely heavily on Russian military equipment, which accounts for approximately 70 percent of its inventory. If Russia were to cut off military supplies in response to Indian criticism, it could notably weaken India—an especially dangerous consequence given India's ongoing standoff with China along its disputed northern border.

India's growing arms trade with the United States could make up some of the potentially lost military supplies from Russia. But given the scope of India's dependence on Russia, the United States would not be able to replace it quickly. Also, India does not wholly trust the United States, which has previously refused to sell India important weapons, including air and missile-defense systems, which Russia has gladly supplied.

Finally, India is most concerned with strategic developments in its immediate vicinity, where a revisionist China actively seeks to redraw the Sino-Indian border. The Ukraine crisis, however serious, is far off, and it is not of India's making. India is hesitant to insert itself into such disputes, particularly when faced with urgent security challenges at home.

These are serious concerns, and India cannot take them lightly. Nonetheless, refusal to criticize Russia does India more harm than good. An Indian condemnation of Russia's attack would not change Russian behavior. But India's unwillingness to condemn the invasion gives Russia de facto support, reducing its diplomatic isolation and facilitating its aggression. Russian aggression has three significant costs for India.

First, Russian aggression makes a Chinese attack on India more likely to occur and succeed. Russia's invasion of Ukraine denies the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity that undergird the nation-state system and protect weak states from predation. If Russia successfully defeats Ukraine, it will embolden an attentive China to similarly vindicate its revisionist claims against India. And, having quietly watched Ukraine being overrun, India will lose standing to criticize Chinese actions or to ask for help in resisting them.

Second, the Russian invasion of Ukraine threatens to undermine India's strategic partnership with the United States. Distracted by the crisis, the United States may divert attention and resources from the Indo-Pacific to Europe. India needs the United States to remain focused on the Indo-Pacific because it cannot resist a rising China alone. This fact has underlain India's willingness to partner closely with the United States, despite a longstanding Indian preference for strategic autonomy. India must do what it can to keep the United States engaged in the Indo-Pacific region. War in Ukraine will have the opposite effect.

In addition, perceived Indian indifference to Russian aggression in Ukraine undercuts India's normative appeal as a U.S. partner. U.S.-India cooperation is predicated primarily on the strategic need to balance Chinese power. Nonetheless, values are an important component of the relationship. Indeed, a shared liberal vision for the Indo-Pacific region is a major reason for the two countries to balance China in the first place. India's refusal to condemn Russian aggression won't undo the strategic logic of U.S.-India cooperation. But it makes India less attractive and strengthens the hand of skeptics in the United States, who believe that India will never be a reliable partner. As the invasion becomes increasingly brutal, with Russia now deliberately attacking Ukrainian civilian targets, these criticisms are amplified and more relevant.

Third, conflict in Ukraine can bring China and Russia together. An increasingly isolated Russia may have little choice but to seek Chinese support. And perhaps in anticipation of the day when it asks Russia to return the favor, China may provide assistance. The two countries' recent thirty-year agreement to supply China with Russian gas through a new pipeline is a case in point. Sino-Russian cooperation could make China even more dangerous to India than it already is while also pressing Russia to be less aligned with India than it has traditionally been.

India cannot change Russia's course in Ukraine. But it can end its acquiescence in Russian aggression. Indian participation in a full-throated condemnation in the United Nations was perhaps too much to ask, but other options exist. Even a relatively quiet public expression of disapproval, in a less symbolic setting, would be a significant step forward. It would still contribute to Russia's isolation and put India on the right side of the Ukraine conflict.



Over the longer term, India should limit Russian leverage over its foreign policy by reducing its dependence on Russian military supplies. Numerous partners would be ready to help make up the difference, including the United States, Israel, and European states. India might resist this shift after decades of working closely with the Russians. But the Ukraine crisis makes clear that even a self-interested India may find such fundamental change to be its best option.

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Give Purpose First: Using Self Determination Theory as a Tool for SOF Retention

(Small Wars Journal 4 Mar 22) ... Wes Dyson, Kyle Martin and Shannon C. Houck

United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) is losing special operators via voluntary separation at an alarming rate, with some organizations manned at less than 50% of desired levels after key retention milestones such as O-3 to O-4. This is unsurprising in many ways; civilian life offers more time for family, new (and often less taxing) career opportunities, more money, and greater autonomy. While some attrition is inevitable, losing experienced operators is costly for USSOCOM. The specialized skills that operators acquire and develop during their careers require significant time and monetary investments. More critically, losing these high-value, experienced warfighters imposes costs on overall force readiness.

So, how does USSOCOM attract and retain warfighters among its ranks long-term? Prior research suggests financial incentives as the simple answer. The authors agree with the research that recommends increased compensation for special operations personnel, but a significant body of psychological research suggests that money alone is an incomplete solution. This article focuses on an empirically-supported framework within psychological literature that can inform ways to improve the military talent management system, and ultimately address the SOF recruitment and retention problem via the psychological concept of self-determination theory (SDT).

Motivating SOF to Stay: The Self-Determination Theory Framework

Self-determination theory (SDT) divides motivation into autonomous (intrinsic) versus controlled (extrinsic) incentives. Whereas extrinsic motivation drives behavior through gaining rewards or avoiding punishment, intrinsic motivation involves behavior that is its own reward – doing something because it is internally satisfying and aligns with personal goals and values. Research suggests multiple positive effects of pursuing ventures that are intrinsically motivated through SDT. Referencing these factors while analyzing SOCOM's organizational culture and talent management initiatives will aid in individual fulfillment, unit effectiveness, and ultimately retention.

SDT focuses on three universal components of intrinsic motivation: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy is to act volitionally, with a sense of choice. Competence is the need to demonstrate existing capabilities or a clear advancement in pursuit of mastery. Relatedness is the connection to people and the network in your chosen career. Notably, the creators of SDT, Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, stress that autonomy is not independence; independence is at odds with the three psychological humans' needs. So while this suggests optimally motivating SOF operators should involve a personal choice, it does not encourage completely independent pursuits. Ackerman provides a useful visual depicting the SDT's basic needs below.

Operators Need Better Motivation, Not More

Dozens of experiments and decades of field studies demonstrate that “autonomous motivation has been associated with greater persistence; more positive affect; enhanced performance, especially on heuristic activities; and greater psychological well-being.” Organizations outside of the DoD routinely



incorporate SDT principles, with great success. For example, Google’s efforts to encourage autonomous motivation ultimately improved employee satisfaction, retention, proficiency, organizational innovation, and overall effectiveness.

What does this mean for SOF? Given its principle of “humans are more important than hardware,” SOCOM should develop a personnel management system that can satisfy the three characteristics of SDT. Understandably, all three factors cannot be maximized in every assignment; the needs of the services will always be priority. However, ultimately the services require dedicated and motivated warfighters, resistant to the lures of early retirement by a civilian market that is all too eager to benefit from SOCOM’s rigorous selection and training. Investing in new, empirically-supported motivational frameworks is not at odds with the military’s objectives. Today’s challenges require the recruitment and retention of exceptionally talented personnel. Further, rapid technological and doctrinal innovations require equally agile and innovative personnel to lead their development and implementation. A primary focus on the people is required in the contemporary arena that commands nuanced and politically sensitive missions. Among the changes required by a strategic shift to Great Power Competition is the management of the force’s personnel. To make changes, we must understand the current system and how can it be improved by incorporating SDT.

Out with the Old: Impersonal Assessments

All the services use a similar standard evaluation form, and while it is an effective tool to communicate performance and promotion potential, it often promotes those who want to stay in instead of the top talent. An often-heard phrase is “not wanting to waste a top rating on a guy who is getting out.” The evaluation tool can then become a self-fulfilling prophecy, and thus skew an organization’s ability to determine the level of talent lost. The Army Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) seemingly concurs with these limitations and are pushing for an adoption of a “culture of assessments” to obtain a more accurate determination of talent. Major General (MG) McGee, director of the TMTF says, “we don’t know whether we’re retaining talent or not because we don’t know what we want to measure.” Simply put, and to reiterate MG McGee, we know we have a retention problem; we don’t know if we have a talent retention problem because we do not know who our talent is.

In with the New: SDT-Informed Evaluation System

With a primary objective of investing in autonomous motivation, various services are taking steps to remove barriers to autonomy and better place talent. Progress is slow in such large organizations. For instance, the Army Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) spearheaded a new placement system that seeks to both match Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors and Preferences (KSB-Ps) and instill more autonomy into job selection by introducing the Army Talent Alignment Process (ATAP). Under this system, specifically in the use of the Assignment Interactive Module (AIM 2.0), the Army created a “Monster.com-style” marketplace where all available jobs are listed. From there, Officers can screen the available jobs, rank preferences, and apply/interview with the gaining unit to best explain why they would fit the job. Within this process is a more robust resume document that highlights non-traditional skillsets that benefit the unit, and otherwise would not be readily available in the old system. Afterwards, both the Officer and the gaining unit rank order their preferences, hoping for a “1-to-1” match. This marketplace offers a framework in which more data can eventually be utilized, such as psychological evaluations and peer reviews¹. Yet this initiative is currently only specific to the Army.

The promising news is that there are untapped resources that can be allocated to these efforts, and SOCOM should lead the way in innovating new talent management products for the larger services. Specifically, SOCOM assessment, selection, and training pipelines should use its massive amount of observational data to develop personalized “Talent Profiles” that better place and develop its people.

US SOF organizations are staffed with professionals such as operational psychologists, strength and conditioning coaches, cognitive performance coaches, nutritionists, and physical therapists. Both in their training pipelines and at their units, SOF elements have the tools and funding necessary to develop a qualitative continuous evaluation of their people through the data they already collect during years of



training. During their assessment and follow-on training pipelines, a host of psychological, academic, and performance evaluations create a mountain of data on each individual operator. Most organizations would jump at the opportunity to have this amount of data on their employees. After a student graduates their training course, this data (frequently over 100 pages) is often archived and never used again; most SOF officers previously endured 12 years until another holistic evaluation for O-5 Command. SDT offers SOF Commanders a framework for how to utilize this data beyond the initial training pipeline.

SOCOM should leverage this information into an understanding of the force at the individual level. SOCOM could easily conduct billet assignments and mentorship programs within the SDT framework that is personalized and matched to the individual operator. By utilizing already-collected data to more deeply understand who its personnel are, SOCOM units can then enact agile talent management solutions that put its operators in the most suitable billets, and on the right teams. This effort would maximize the individual operator's relatedness and competence by placing them in a billet/team that suits their unique talents, and connecting them to a community of similar mentors who can help develop their observed strengths and weaknesses.

Happy operators make for unhappy adversaries. SOF personnel are poised to take the next step in military talent management. It's time to continue moving forward as an organization.

Shannon C. Houck

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A Russian Oil and Gas Embargo Is in the Cards. And Analysts Warn It Will Have Huge Consequences

(NBC New York 3 Mar 22) ... Sam Meredith

Western sanctions imposed on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine have so far been carefully constructed to avoid directly hitting the country's energy exports.

The U.S. has said that sanctions on Russia's oil and gas flows are "certainly on the table," but that going after exports now could be counterproductive in terms of raising global energy prices.

"If Russia continues to wage this war ... it is only a matter of time before we're talking about full secondary sanctions on energy exports," Helima Croft, head of global commodities strategy at RBC, said.

It may only be a matter of time before the U.S. and Western allies impose full sanctions on Russia's energy exports, analysts say, warning that such a move would have seismic repercussions for oil and gas markets and the world economy.

It comes as Russia's onslaught on key Ukrainian cities enters its second week, with fighting raging in the north, east and south of the country.



Western sanctions imposed on Russia over the invasion have so far been carefully constructed to avoid directly hitting the country's energy exports, although there are already signs the measures are inadvertently prompting banks and traders to shun Russian crude.

Russia is the world's third-largest oil producer, behind the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, and the world's largest exporter of crude to global markets. It is also a major producer and exporter of natural gas.

The U.S. has said that sanctions on Russia's oil and gas flows are "certainly on the table," but that going after exports now could be counterproductive in terms of raising global energy prices.

Money Report

Nonetheless, there have been calls for Western governments to ratchet up measures targeting Russia's economy and Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba has called on foreign governments to impose a "full embargo" on Russian oil and gas.

John Kilduff, partner at Again Capital, said the market is already starting to believe that Russia's oil exports will be sanctioned.

"Oil from Russia will be foreclosed from the global market here at some point and we are already seeing commercial activity reduced, particularly as it relates to Russia exports via maritime assets and that is already hitting the market," Kilduff told CNBC's "Closing Bell" on Tuesday.

"These are barrels that we cannot make up, so that's why this market is on tenterhooks," he added.

Oil prices have surged to multiyear highs in recent weeks, with mounting supply disruptions pushing international benchmark Brent crude toward \$120 a barrel.

Brent futures traded 1.6% higher to \$114.72 on Thursday morning in London, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 2.2% to \$113.06.

Unknown territory

The U.S. and European Union have publicly sought to ringfence Russia's energy sector, wary of the potential damage for domestic consumers and the prospect of Moscow curtailing exports as a retaliatory measure.

For months, escalating Russia-Ukraine tensions have resulted in a sense of deepening concern about the potential for a full supply disruption to the EU — which receives roughly 40% of its gas via Russian pipelines, several of which run through Ukraine.

The prospect of cutting off the supply of Russian gas could have profound public health and economic consequences, especially given that it is currently winter and governments are already battling the coronavirus pandemic.

Brenda Shaffer at the **Naval Postgraduate School**, senior advisor for energy at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies think tank, told CNBC via telephone that the prospect of removing Russian energy exports from the market would likely result in "a tremendous jolt" to global oil prices and the world economy.

"We're in unknown territory if you pull 13% to 15% of global oil out of the pool. Sanctions on Iran and Venezuela, it's not even comparable to what that could do to the global oil market if you actually pulled away most of Russian production," Shaffer said.

The impact of Western oil majors pulling the plug on Russia is also likely to have "huge" economic ramifications, Shaffer said, citing a flurry of announcements from the likes of Exxon Mobil, Shell and BP in recent days.

"People are really cheering this as a feel-good moment but it's actually going to be a huge, huge shock to the state of these companies and to the stock market in general," Shaffer said.

Sense of confusion

To many market participants, there is a sense of confusion over the likelihood of Russian energy sanctions in the coming weeks.

"If Russia continues to wage this war with this much ferocity [and] with this many civilian casualties, it is only a matter of time before we're talking about full secondary sanctions on energy exports, like we



saw with Iran. So, I think the market is just very, very concerned," Helima Croft, head of global commodities strategy at RBC, told CNBC's "Closing Bell" on Tuesday.

"If we do get full energy sanctions, we will then have to look at another SPR release. But more importantly, there's going to be a lot of pressure on the OPEC producers that are sitting on spare capacity to release more barrels onto the market," Croft said.

On Wednesday, members of the International Energy Agency agreed to release 60 million barrels of oil reserves, in an attempt to offset energy market disruptions caused by the sanctions against Russia. The U.S. has said 30 million of this total will come from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

OPEC and non-OPEC partners — an influential energy alliance known as OPEC+ — on Wednesday agreed to stick to their plan of a modest output rise in April. The group defied calls for more crude even as oil prices rally on supply disruption fears.

It is thought de facto OPEC leader Saudi Arabia, alongside the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, may be among the few members of the alliance with enough spare capacity to ramp up production.

'Toxic asset'

Croft said that even in the absence of sanctions targeting Russia's energy exports, there is a "self-sanctioning phenomenon" underway given that Moscow is being viewed as a "toxic asset."

Analysts at risk consultancy Eurasia Group have noted that Russia's commodity trading is drying up as international banks and traders refuse to do deals with their Russian counterparts as they digest the impact of sanctions. This was likely to propel oil prices even higher, the analysts added.

"While the U.S. and EU governments are attempting to ringfence the energy sector from sanctions so far, absent further clarification regarding carveouts, widespread risk aversion is likely to persist," the analysts said in a note published Monday.

"There also remains a risk that energy will be targeted directly if fighting escalates, or that Russia will curtail some oil exports as a retaliatory measure," they said. "As the main supplier of fossil fuels to the EU, Russia retains leverage."

[A Russian Oil and Gas Embargo Is in the Cards. And Analysts Warn It Will Have Huge Consequences – NBC New York](#)

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ALUMNI:

Manuel Morales Named Miami Police Chief Full-Time

(Local 10 28 Feb 22)

Manuel Morales has been with the Miami Police Department since 1994 and was named interim chief after Art Acevedo was removed in October.

MIAMI – Manuel Morales, the Miami police veteran who has served as interim chief since Art Acevedo's ouster last year, has been appointed to the permanent job.

"After further evaluating Chief Morales' performance during the first 100 days, I am extremely confident that he is eminently qualified, respected and admired by many and will continue to do a great job as Chief for the Police Department," City Manager Art Noriega said in making the announcement Monday afternoon. "Furthermore, this decision will ensure stability at the leadership level of the city's police department."

Morales joined the Miami Police Department in 1994 and previously served as commander, major and assistant chief in charge of the administrative and field operations divisions.

He was sworn in as interim chief in October after the city commission accepted Noriega's recommendation to remove Acevedo, the chief hired from Houston with great fanfare.

Morales was among those who testified against Acevedo in the commission meeting that sealed Acevedo's fate.



“It’s a litany of things, but it perhaps boils down to the systematical or systematic demoralization of the police department that has been a result of his leadership style,” Morales said during that Oct. 14 meeting.

On Monday, Morales released a statement that read:

“I am incredibly honored and humbled to be selected as Chief of the Miami Police Department. I would like to thank our City Manager, Art Noriega, for having the confidence in my ability to guide our department into the next chapter, I am grateful to Mayor Suarez and all the City Commissioners for their support not only of me, but more importantly their support for all the men and women of the Miami Police that work hard every day to make Miami safer for all.

“I could not have achieved this dream without the unwavering support of my wife Yvette, my mother Marta, and my sons Manny, Matt, Eddie, and AJ. Their encouragement during the past 28 years at the Miami PD has been priceless and are testament of the individual I am today. To all the heroes of the Miami PD, I want to thank you for your steadfast commitment to our community policing principles, your daily sacrifices do not go unnoticed nor unappreciated. To our community, I pledge to hold the sanctity of human life at the center of all we do at the Miami Police Department.”

According to a city news release, Morales holds a bachelor’s degree in organizational leadership from St. Thomas University and a Master’s degree with distinction in security studies from the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the **Naval Postgraduate School**.

[Manuel Morales named Miami police chief full-time \(local10.com\)](#)

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Nuclear South Asia: Three Years After the February 2019 Kashmir Crisis

(South Asian Voices 28 Feb 22) ... Brig. Imran Hassan

In the months following the February 2019 crisis between India and Pakistan, reports emerged that India had deployed its naval assets—including the nuclear powered submarine the INS Chakra and the nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) the INS Arihant—during the crisis. As resurfaced in a recent SIPRI report, India’s deployment of an SSBN, particularly in the midst of a crisis, has been seen in Pakistan as a move towards preemption. This assessment was reinforced by the Indian Army Chief statement in March 2020 that: “Balakot demonstrated that if you play the escalatory game with skill, military ascendancy can be established in short cycles of conflict that do not necessarily lead to war.”

For Pakistan, the lessons from 2019 represent a dangerous move towards limited war below the nuclear threshold. The crisis should by no means be upheld as an example of successful maneuvering as claimed by New Delhi—and policymakers should be careful to assume that any future escalatory games and attempts to achieve escalation dominance will remain within perceived limits. As even a limited nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan would have devastating global consequences, drawing the wrong conclusions from the crisis could prove to be perilous.

Limited War, Escalation Dominance, and Crisis Risks in South Asia

In a 2004 joint statement, India and Pakistan duly acknowledged that the overt nuclearization of South Asia has augmented stability, however, strategies for limited war continue to foster volatility. The idea of “limited war” is generally used to distinguish a conflict from “total war,” or imply a level of constraint in the political objective of a conflict, which determines its limited geographic scope and/or military means. The term was developed in the context of U.S.-Soviet competition in the Cold War, and many have since pointed to the high-levels of risks of limited conflict between two nuclear-armed states. As Henry Kissinger contended: “no war in the nuclear age can ever be completely free of the specter of nuclear weapons.”

For Pakistan, the lessons from 2019 represent a dangerous move towards limited war below the nuclear threshold. The crisis should by no means be upheld as an example of successful maneuvering as



claimed by New Delhi—and policymakers should be careful to assume that any future escalatory games and attempts to achieve escalation dominance will remain within perceived limits.

The construct of limited war between India and Pakistan is concentrated on the unresolved Kashmir dispute. India accuses Pakistan of supporting militant groups in Kashmir and developed a limited war doctrine—commonly known as the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD)—meant to launch limited conventional attacks while remaining below Pakistan’s perceived nuclear threshold. The CSD was finally formally acknowledged by the former Indian Army Chief in January 2017 when he noted that: “Weaknesses can only be overcome if you accept the strategy...if you don’t accept the strategy, then you will let your weaknesses [limit you].” Pakistan in contrast views Kashmiris as fighting for freedom and self-determination in what it stresses in the recently released National Security Policy is “Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.” The complexity of these dynamics makes “unresolved Kashmir” a nuclear flash point in South Asia.

Limited war strategies are also linked with escalation dominance, defined by the U.S. Air Force as creating an environment that raises the “cost of defiance” for the adversary and denies the opportunity to counter-escalate. While escalation has often been neatly conceptualized as a ladder—most notably in Herman Kahn’s pivotal work “On Escalation,” this metaphor has been increasingly brought into question. High-stakes and limited options can create a situation where desperate measures may be used beyond conceivable expectations. In South Asia, the challenges of escalation dominance are twofold. First, with a range of response options that could easily be misread by actors in a conflict, the crisis could escalate in multifarious directions without following the classic pattern of rungs on a ladder. Second, escalation is often more akin to falling than climbing a ladder—it is easy to escalate but hard to de-escalate.

The South Asian landscape has become more complex owing to a strategic culture based on rhetoric and warmongering behaviors. In the aftermath of the 2019 Kashmir crisis, Indian Prime Minister Modi boasted publicly of India possessing the “mother of all bombs.” Reports emerged later that Modi has also considered missile strikes after Pakistan captured an Indian pilot during an aerial dogfight. Even if such strikes had been with conventional missiles they could have easily been seen by Pakistan as a preemptive action or a nuclear strike. Had it not been restraint and responsible behavior on the part of Islamabad shown through the release of the captured pilot, escalation could have taken a different trajectory.

Crisis Lessons

While the February 2019 Kashmir crisis showed the risks of escalation, for Pakistan the crisis also reinforced the credibility of its deterrent which was seen as keeping India from expanding the crisis beyond an unsuccessful aerial strike driven by political incentives. Pakistan’s Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) successfully plugs the gaps that New Delhi seeks to exploit in nuclear environment. FSD reinforces deterrence at all tiers of strategic, operational, and tactical levels and it is these response options, which aim to deter India at all levels, that bring the international community, including the United States into South Asia to de-escalate and avert wider conflagration. From Islamabad’s perspective, it was a measured and calibrated response on its part that helped diffuse further escalation. However, had the Indian Air Force strike resulted in civilian casualties then there were all the chances of moving up the escalation ladder. The crisis therefore emphasizes that any limited war is flawed under the nuclear overhang. Pakistan sees strategic stability as a desired end result for durable peace in the region and remains open to consider risk reduction and confidence building measures which can avert instabilities.

The Kashmir crisis of 2019 further highlighted the need to implement measures that will help de-escalate tensions in the future; however there has been little progress in this regard. Since the crisis, India and Pakistan relations have shown little signs of improvement. The Kashmir issue remains the primary bone of contention between Islamabad and New Delhi, and the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir’s special status under Article 370 and 35A has only raised tensions. This has been further exacerbated the international community placing this issue on the backburner, instead stressing it as a bilateral issue to be resolved between India and Pakistan. Pakistan has continued to emphasize human rights violations in Kashmir and maintains the stance that durable peace is contingent on resolving the Kashmir dispute.



From Islamabad's perspective, it was a measured and calibrated response on its part that helped diffuse further escalation. However, had the Indian Air Force strike resulted in civilian casualties then there were all the chances of moving up the escalation ladder.

There is a high risk of miscalculation in any future crisis in South Asia—this could be through situational fog, misunderstanding adversarial intentions, inadequate intelligence on combat strength, unexpected conventional attacks along frontiers, or acting for domestic political aims. The use of warmongering rhetoric by senior leadership of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) coupled with moves like the deployment of frontline naval assets, such as the INS Arihant armed with ballistic and potentially nuclear missiles, brings more complexity to already unstable environment. Such actions could supplement preemptive first-strike temptations. Restraint and responsible behavior should be the key rather than pursuing risky and aggressive strategies like Cold Start, proactive operations, or so-called surgical strikes. India taking the lesson from the Balakot crisis that limited war is effective and escalation is controllable would be a dangerous conclusion. Further, while these risky operations may have supported electoral gains domestically for Modi's more nationalist BJP, the mischaracterization of the Balakot airstrike—such as unfounded claims of shooting down an F-16 and destroying an alleged terrorist camp in Balakot—hurt India's image and credibility abroad.

Deterrence stability is the most viable alternative to avert war in the absence of arms control or confidence building measures. Assured second-strike capabilities could have better chances to help assuage concerns about preemptive actions. However, high arms acquisition levels amidst growing a great power competition, expansion and modernization of arms and delivery vehicles, and emerging technologies continue to weaken the regional security environment. These changing dynamics paired with drawing the wrong conclusions from 2019 crisis and Pakistan's rising concerns of India moving towards preemption, set South Asia on a dangerous pathway in any future crisis.

Brigadier Imran Hassan is Director at Arms Control and Disarmament Affairs, Strategic Plans Division, Pakistan. He is a graduate of Command and Staff College, Quetta; Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and the **Naval Postgraduate School**, Monterey. He also holds an MPhil in Strategic Studies from National Defence University. He is former visiting research fellow for South Asia (Strategic Affairs) at International Institute of Strategic Studies, London. The views expressed by the author are his own.

Editor's Note: This article is part of a four-part series featuring reflections from senior analysts and policymakers in the United States, India, Pakistan, and China on the lessons learned from the 2019 Pulwama/Balakot Crisis. Read the full series here.

[Nuclear South Asia: Three Years After the February 2019 Kashmir Crisis – South Asian Voices](#)

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Former NASA Astronaut Winston Scott Inspires in EFSC Event

(Eastern Florida 1 Mar 22)

(Space Coast Daily 4 Mar 22)

Winston Scott shared his inspirational journey from the segregated schools of his youth in Miami to high-flying NASA astronaut and Naval aviator in a presentation that wowed the crowd watching the Simpkins Speaker Series event Tuesday on campus at Eastern Florida State College and online.

Scott took those watching on a multi-media tour of his U.S. Navy and NASA careers, which included serving as mission specialist on two shuttle missions in 1996 and 1997, during which he performed three challenging spacewalks that totaled almost 20 hours outside the orbiter.

"You can't go into this business of flying military planes and flying in space if you doubt yourself. You've got to have the confidence that you can handle whatever comes and that you can handle it well," said Scott.

The event was held at the Melbourne campus Student Union and livestreamed via YouTube to other EFSC campuses and the public.



Scott shared what it was like growing up in the segregated section of Miami's Coconut Grove where he attended segregated schools through 9th grade, wrapping each recollection in a lesson about overcoming obstacles.

"The shop class at the all-Black school had no equipment to build anything. Not having equal equipment was an obstacle, but our excellent teachers made up for it," said Scott as he described how his 5th grade teacher taught the class to calculate the speed of a light-year, the distance light travels in a year.

"Obstacles are going to come to everybody. Young people who are listening, you are going to have obstacles, that is part of life. The key is how you address those obstacles — you don't give up and you push forward."

Scott was among the first group of Black students to integrate Florida State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in music education before getting his Master's Degree in aeronautical engineering from the United States **Naval Postgraduate School**.

After leaving NASA, Scott served as Vice President of Student Affairs at FSU and Executive Director of the Florida Space Authority. He retired from his position as Senior Advisor to the President for External Relations at Florida Institute of Technology in April 2021 and currently serves as Faculty Emeritus and is also on the Eastern Florida State College Board of Trustees.

Scott's 1997 shuttle mission included the late Gen. Leonid Kadenyuk, the first astronaut of independent Ukraine, who was pictured in a crew photo Scott shared in his presentation.

"I point that out because we are flying in space together. The folks on the International Space Station, the Russians are up there, Americans are up there and all of that is going along harmoniously while we have the turmoil going on down here," said Scott.

He described the joys and hard work involved in his astronaut career and shared his most vibrant memory from the experience.

"There are no words to describe what the Earth looks like from space. Photos do not do it justice," he said. "It's colorful from space, even the desert that just looks brown on Earth. From space, the planet is calm and peaceful. If you turn on the news all you see is turmoil, but from up there it's peaceful and you see no boundaries. Because it's so small and fragile you'd like to see us do a better job taking care of our planet."

The spring Simpkins Series speech included awarding two EFSC students with \$1,000 Bernie W. Simpkins Scholarships for excellence in the classroom and their endeavors as young entrepreneurs.

Recipient Jonathan Honeycutt plans to graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in Organizational Management from EFSC and continue his entertainment industry entrepreneurship, which includes performing as a singer, drummer and guitarist plus organizing music at corporate events as the owner of Hot Pink Music.

"The lifestyle of a business owner is not for the faint of heart," wrote Honeycutt in his winning essay. "While I have worked more traditional '9-5' jobs in the past, I have found entrepreneurship to be much more rewarding, both in my personal life and by financial means."

Royalyn Darbry is pursuing an Associate in Arts degree at EFSC while also starting a clothing line that aims to give back to the community by teaching others how to dress for success in the workplace at an affordable price.

"I want to encourage young men that they are able to do great things in life with not only the correct wardrobe but also teach them the fundamentals of working," wrote Darbry in her scholarship essay.

The Simpkins Speaker Series and endowed scholarships are named after the late Bernard Simpkins, a highly successful entrepreneur and Brevard County business leader who established the sessions that have brought some of the nation's top business innovators to EFSC.

[Eastern Florida State College | Former NASA Astronaut Winston Scott Inspires in EFSC Event](#)
[WATCH: Former NASA Astronaut, Naval Aviator Winston Scott Inspires at Eastern Florida State Event - Space Coast Daily](#)

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Etsy Store Making a Difference Financially for Omaha Couple

(Lincoln Journal Star 5 Mar 22) ... Marjie Ducey

Adam and Ana Herring hoped for a sale a day when they first opened their Etsy shop, Fabberforge, last May.

Just enough to finance dinner out every few weeks after expenses, Ana said.

But their signs, gadgets and just about anything else you can custom order have caught on. An item to measure spaghetti was recently featured in a BuzzFeed article titled “31 problem-solving products you’ll kick yourself for not owning before now.”

“It’s doing really well,” Ana said. “We make enough that I don’t struggle to pay my bills at the end of the month.”

That’s huge for the family of five. Adam is a disabled U.S. Navy veteran, and money had been tight.

That was until they combined Adam’s passion for robotics and then 3D printers with Ana’s Etsy shop, which she had created a few years ago to sell her crochet creations.

Friends encouraged them to take the big step after seeing the items they were producing on 17 3D printers tucked away in their northwest Omaha basement.

“We have like a little souvenir store. Our biggest seller is personalized office signs,” Ana said. “We make some fun things.”

Customers will also ask for signs from old TV shows, such as “Full House” or “The Office.” The couple construct things for the home and kitchen, such as the spaghetti measurer. A planter for succulents looks like a Roman villa.

They don’t have to come up with all of their ideas on their own. A website, thingiverse.com, is a good source. A friend and neighbor suggested a coronavirus Christmas ornament that became their top seller last year.

“It put our store on the map,” Ana said.

3D printing is not a quick process. One of their Roman villa planters, which are less than 6 inches in diameter, can take from 10 to 20 hours to print. The spaghetti measurer, which comes in different colors, takes five hours.

Some of the products in their store have a video with the listing so you can see how it’s made.

Ana, a native of Brazil who became a U.S. citizen last year, manages the store. She learned how to operate the 3D printers, with Adam pitching in if there are problems with the machines that he put together himself.

Adam, who is from York, Pennsylvania, contracted meningoencephalitis in 2007 while attending the Naval Academy. Only 22, he was in a coma for a month and nearly died. He went on to earn his master’s at the **Naval Postgraduate School** in 2012, studying space systems engineering.

The Navy moved them to Omaha in 2015, where it was discovered that Adam had also suffered a minor stroke in 2007. Psoriasis flareups can make it impossible for him to use his hands.

When Adam retired from the Navy that same year, the couple decided to stay in Omaha. The Veterans Administration has been great to work with, they say, and they feel comfortable here.

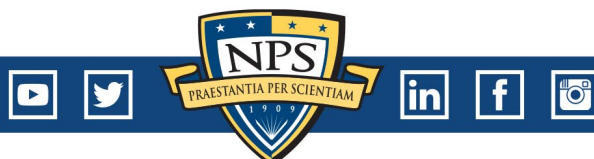
“We saw Omaha was a great place to live,” Ana said. “It’s very family oriented.”

With its reasonably priced items, the business isn’t designed to make huge profits. It’s all about providing security for children Gabriel, 10; Charlotte, 6; and Oliver, 8 months.

“It was really a struggle to pay our mortgage and pay the average bills,” Ana said. “If the car broke, we would have to put it on the credit card. The store gave us some room to breathe.”

[Etsy store making a difference financially for Omaha couple | Nebraska News | journalstar.com](#)

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COMMUNITY:

Presidio of Monterey Hike Brings Community Together for ‘Fitness, Fun, Friendship and Food’

(Army.mil 1 Mar 22) ... Winifred Brown

The Hot Chocolate Hike at the Presidio of Monterey on Feb. 26 highlighted how the installation’s Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation supports the well-being of the community.

“It’s all about fitness, fun, friendship and food,” said Nicole Dansby, hike organizer and manager of the directorate’s Price Fitness Center. “We’re getting our families and our service members out there. They’re going to go on a nice 2.1-mile hike, come back and enjoy some nice hot chocolate and s’mores and just relax.”

The support didn’t stop there, however. Personnel set up games for participants to play on Price Field and staffed informational booths to let people know about FMWR’s Army Community Service, Child and Youth Services, Youth Sports and more. Meanwhile, volunteers from Better Opportunities for Single Service Members, which also falls under the directorate, sold refreshments and directed hikers on the course.

Col. Varman Chhoeung, commander of U.S. Army Garrison Presidio of Monterey, kicked off the hike by informing participants of FMWR initiatives and encouraged everyone to visit the ACS table to learn more about donating to Army Emergency Relief, a nonprofit that has helped Soldiers with financial emergencies and more since 1942.

“When you think of DFMWR you think of the gym and you think of Outdoor Rec, but there’s a lot more to what the MWR team does,” Chhoeung said.

About 100 hikers registered for the free hike, which included two 2.1-mile routes through the Huckleberry Hill Nature Preserve. One route was a steeper challenge course, and the other was an easier family route. The preserve is normally only open through the City of Monterey’s Veterans Park, but installation officials opened a gate on the installation to provide access from PoM.

Hikers included a mix of service members from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center on PoM and the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey, family members and civilian personnel. Chhoeung and Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Traylor, USAG PoM senior enlisted advisor, hiked the course together, as did Lt. Col. Matthew Upperman, commander of the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Lourdes Barragan, the battalion’s senior enlisted advisor.

Organizers started groups of hikers in waves to reduce congestion on the trails, and the first wave consisted of a group of eight language students from the Army, Navy and Air Force.

One of them, Seaman Apprentice Riley Ridep, assigned to the Navy’s Information Warfare Training Command, said many in the group decided to participate after hearing about it through a BOSS representative.

Ridep said he loves hiking and especially enjoyed hiking in the nature preserve, partially because it reminded him of home in Virginia. “It’s pretty similar to the Appalachian Mountains,” he said.

In another group, Spc. Nafisa Kabir, assigned to the 229th MI Bn., completed the challenge route with her husband, friends, and 3-month-old cat Princess Fiona, who rode in a special see-through backpack with large holes for ventilation.

“The hot chocolate enticed me for sure,” Kabir said. “My friends are here, my husband’s here, so it’s a fun outing. It was steeper than I expected it to be, but it’s fun and the weather is really nice today too.”

Seaman Joel Anderson, BOSS president at PoM, said about 15 BOSS volunteers helped with concessions and directing hikers on the course. They brought the organization’s fire pit to the concession stand to make sure the marshmallows for the s’mores were fire-roasted and fresh, he said.

The concession stand proceeds supported the BOSS program, Anderson said, and he appreciated all the organization’s hardworking volunteers.

[Presidio of Monterey hike brings community together for ‘fitness, fun, friendship and food’ | Article | The United States Army](#)



Monterey Service Members Earn German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency

(Army.mil 2 Mar 22) ... Winifred Brown

Thanks to members of the German Armed Forces studying in Monterey, 182 members of the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy have received the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency.

“We wanted to make sure that we had something that would bring everybody together,” said Air Force Master Sgt. Shaun Henderson, assigned to the 314th Training Squadron at the Presidio of Monterey and an organizer of the testing. “The four services worked together to make this happen, including the German cadre.”

Not only did some German service members take advantage of the opportunity to test for the badge themselves, four also earned “expert” on the Army pistol qualification as well. As a whole, the testing improved readiness for two countries and four branches of the U.S. military.

Testing took place over the course of three months in and around Monterey and included a ruck march, pistol qualification, physical fitness test and swim test. In addition, service members had to show they received first aid and Mission Oriented Protective Posture, or “MOPP,” gear training and are proficient. Depending on how well they did in each event, those who passed could earn bronze, silver or gold medals.

Most of those who earned the badge are students at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at the Presidio of Monterey and the **Naval Postgraduate School** in Monterey. Service members from all branches of the military attend the schools and serve at the installations.

Henderson and other U.S. service members organized the testing alongside members of the German Armed Forces studying at NPS. German Armed Forces Maj. Benjamin Polzin was one of them, and he served as the main German liaison for the testing and certified that organizers conducted the testing correctly.

Polzin said that for German Armed Forces members, testing for the badge is not required (the military requires some portions of it but not all), but many German service members make it a yearly event and are used to it.

“If you do it yearly, you can have a five-year badge, a 10-year badge, a 25-year badge,” Polzin said. “There are actually some soldiers in the German Armed Forces who have a 25-year badge. That’s really impressive.”

For the U.S. service members who tested, it was a purely a personal challenge.

Airman 1st Class Trevor O’Reilly, who helped with the testing and received the silver medal, said the spirit of camaraderie throughout the testing helped him succeed.

For example, O’Reilly said he had never had to swim for a physical training test before, and having to swim in full uniform and then take it off in the pool was difficult.

“The German cadre members were very helpful with everything they did,” O’Reilly said. “They were able to cheer on from the side of the pool, as well as everyone else who was competing. It was really helpful.”

O’Reilly said he plans to participate again next year and encourages others to test as well. “I’m definitely doing it again,” he said. “It’s going to be a lot of fun.”

While organizers had hoped to hold an awards ceremony, Henderson said he learned Feb. 28 it was not possible to hold one this year. However, organizers are uploading the record to the service members’ corresponding service and members of the Army and Air Force will be able to wear the medal on their Class A uniforms. The Marine Corps and Navy do not allow members to wear the badge.

Henderson said he is grateful for all the help he received.

“A big thank you to the German cadre because we could not do this without any of them,” Henderson said, “and another big thank you to all the service representatives for making sure that all their folks were squared away.”

In addition, some service members attended events to provide motivation and help with events.

One of them was Staff Sgt. Anthony Tierney, assigned to the 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, who cheered on service members during the physical fitness test.

Tierney said he has always believed that service members must be fit and adhere to standards, so he wanted to help his Soldiers find the motivation within themselves to do well.

“Motivation comes from yourself,” Tierney said. “It’s all discipline. It’s all about finding a reason as to why you do the things you do, and being in the military, the mind is primary, fitness is secondary, and everything else comes after. It all falls into place.”

Henderson, who spearheaded the event because he enjoyed earning the badge in 2018 while stationed in Hawaii, said he wanted to remind service members they are in the military and there is more to life than studying.

Service members had to have high enough grades to participate, and all the testing took place outside of the school day so it wouldn’t interfere with classroom time, Henderson said. Also, since organizers spread events out over several weeks, service members had time to organize their schedules accordingly.

“We should never miss an opportunity to motivate our people, because if they feel like there is more out there for them, they’re going to work harder in the classroom naturally,” Henderson said.

[Monterey service members earn German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency | Article | The United States Army](#)

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