



TRUE NORTH

Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies Monthly Activity Report

OCTOBER 2023

The Senior Advisor's Monthly Note



Distinguished Colleagues,

Greetings from 61+ Degrees North, 149+ Degrees West, the home of the U.S. Department of Defense's new and growing Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. The first year of the Center's existence has been nothing short of outstanding; TSC has successfully built a strong network of domestic and international security leaders who understand and appreciate the Arctic operating environment.

In the spirit of innovation and experimentation, I am deeply honored to introduce the TSC's newest product, True North, our monthly bulletin. True North will keep our network up to date on TSC activities in support of DoD's Arctic priorities, ranging from the geophysical to the geostrategic. We respectfully offer our sincerest thanks and appreciation for contributing to our growing network of Arctic-curious professionals.

Very best wishes and respectfully,
Church

Announcing the inaugural edition of our Journal of Arctic and Climate Security Studies

We're excited to share the inaugural edition of our Journal of Arctic and Climate Security Studies (JACSS)!

This journal is the Ted Stevens Center flagship publication on Arctic Security opportunities and challenges ranging from the geophysical to the geostrategic. JACSS will accelerate the development and fielding of game-changing research in and about the Arctic.

JACSS was established to bring timely, relevant, and innovative research to the Arctic region and this first edition embodies that vision. With pieces from senior leaders, practitioners, and academics, JACSS brings unique and valuable perspectives to the Arctic.



A special thanks to our colleagues at Air University Press for supporting the establishment of our flagship publication. Be sure to scan the QR code to read JACSS or visit us online.





Highlights from the Arctic Defense Attaché Field Seminar

Arctic Defense Attaché Field Seminar: The TSC Strategic Engagement Division launched the first-ever Arctic Defense Attaché Field Seminar for regional partners and allies from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. The four-day event took place in Alaska and was designed to provide security professionals a hands-on immersive experience into the geophysical and geostrategic challenges of the U.S. Arctic, while also learning from the Alaska Native community. By creating a shared understanding of the challenges in the Arctic, TSC continues to educate, engage, and empower security partners to build a strong network that promotes common values in the Arctic region. Special thanks to the staff at UIC Science and their assistance to help make this inaugural event a success.

TSC New Website Launch: This month the TSC launched a new website "framework". There are a number of new products that will be posted to this new format in the coming weeks, and dated information will be removed in the process. Be sure to visit the new website to stay up to date on the latest happenings at TSC.

European Security Seminar North (ESS-N): TSC and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies (GCMC) co-hosted 36 participants from 14 nations for a week-long seminar focused on the European High North, engaging in a dialogue on the challenges and opportunities for the region, while further proposing actionable recommendations to cooperatively tackle common challenges.

2023 Alaska Defense Forum: Last month, Ted Stevens Center Senior Advisor, Randy "Church" Kee, and Strategic Communications Specialist, Hannah Smith, spoke at the 2023 Alaska Defense Forum in Fairbanks, Alaska. The Forum brought together Department of Defense senior leaders, policy experts, state and local officials, and community members to address defense and security challenges from a regional perspective.

Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC): The School of Arctic and Climate Security Studies held a virtual session of ARSOC, Sept. 18-22. This course provided an informative and eye-opening educational experience to 132 participants as they explored the complexities of the U.S. Arctic, the North American Arctic, the North Atlantic Arctic, and the interplay of the world's eight Arctic nations. ARSOC is a critical foundational course that is offered to both U.S. and international partners to prepare civilian and military security practitioners to find purposeful solutions while enhancing global networks to ensure a stable, rules based order in Arctic.



Randy "Church" Kee, Senior Advisor, Arctic Security Affairs presents at ESS-N



Arrival of first resident Foreign Service Officer signals TSC's expanding international collaboration

In August TSC added its first resident State Department Foreign Service Officer, Joel Kopp, to its staff. Kopp also happens to be a native Alaskan and former commercial fisherman who was born and raised on the central Kenai Peninsula. He has also lived in Newhalen, Anchorage, and Valdez. He is joined by his wife Ginger and their youngest of three sons. They moved to Anchorage in August from their previous assignment at U.S. Embassy Monrovia in Liberia, West Africa. Kopp will serve as the Associate Director for National and Arctic Interest Chairs and will oversee the program. The Chairs program reflects the TSC's vision of greater international collaboration with Arctic allies, as well as closer coordination with the Department of State's growing Arctic diplomacy and programming efforts. Additionally, it will comprise a number of formal collaborations with military and civilian representatives from Arctic nation allies who will work at the TSC to research, educate, and engage across the spectrum of Arctic security issues.



17th Coast Guard District Commander's visit to TSC

TSC was honored to welcome U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. Megan Dean, Commander of the Seventeenth Coast Guard District, and her leadership team to the center in August. TSC members and leaders of Seventeenth District discussed the importance of interagency partnerships to understand and address Arctic and climate security challenges. This visit helped to further our nation's whole-of-government approach to Arctic security.



TSC welcomes U.S. Department of State's Senior Arctic Official, Erik Carlson

TSC welcomed Erik Carlson, the U.S. Department of State's Senior Arctic Official (SAO) to the Arctic Council, and his deputy Matt Kastrinsky to a dinner meeting on Sept. 18 during Carlson's first visit to Alaska. Carlson's trip was his first opportunity to engage with Alaska-based stakeholders and representatives of the Arctic Council. Former Lieutenant Governor and former U.S. Arctic Research Commission chair Mead Treadwell joined the meeting to express his strong support for the work of the SAO in the Arctic Council.



TSC welcomes first full-time faculty member

The School of Arctic and Climate Security Studies welcomed their first full-time assistant professor, Dr. Haliehana Stepetin. Dr. Stepetin was born and raised in her homelands in Akutan, Alaska, in Unangam Tanangin [Aleutian Islands]. She is an Assistant Professor at the School of Arctic and Climate Security Studies at TSC. Dr. Stepetin has a Ph.D. in Native American Studies with a designated emphasis in Studies in Performance and Practice from the University of California Davis, a Master of Arts in Cultural Studies from the University of Washington Bothell, and a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies - Russia track from the University of Alaska Anchorage. Her research forwards Unangax and Arctic Indigenous Peoples' sustainable food sovereignty and environmental practices as guidelines for navigating a changing climate.

TSC staff Arctic Field Orientation

TSC staff had the opportunity to enhance their awareness and understanding of U.S. Arctic by visiting Utqiagvik, Alaska in August. The team familiarized themselves with Iñupiat culture, while exploring the unique physical environment of the Arctic coast and tundra. The orientation helped staff understand the complexities and importance of operating in the Arctic region.



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UPCOMING EVENTS AND COURSES

Arctic Circle Assembly
Reykjavik, Iceland, Oct. 19-22

Alaska Federation of Natives Convention
Anchorage, Alaska, Oct. 19-21

Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC) 24-01
Virtual, Oct. 30 - Nov. 3

Martime Risk Symposium
SUNY Martime College
Bronx, New York, Nov. 14-16

Arctic Futures
Brussels, Belgium, Nov. 27-29

Arctic Shipping Summit
Montreal, Canada, Nov. 29-30

Canada Arctic Security Working Group
Yellowknife, Canada, Nov. 29-30

ARSOC - Executive Seminar and Arctic Climate Dilemma
Colorado Springs, Colorado, Dec. 5-8

Arctic Multi-Domain Law Course (AMLC) 24-01
Virtual, Dec. 12-14

North Atlantic/Arctic Crisis Response Workshop
New Hampshire University
Durham, New Hampshire, Dec. 12-13

Arctic Communications Research Workshop
New Hampshire University
Durham, New Hampshire, Dec. 14-15