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TED STEVENS CENTER FOR ARCTIC
SECURITY STUDIES MONTHLY BULLETIN



TSC Co-Hosts Arctic Week

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2026 Joint Service Academy Immersion

TSC Develops Future Leaders with Arctic Experience

Photos courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Taylor Peace, TSC Coast Guard Fellow

The Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies recently concluded its 2026 Joint Service Academy Arctic Immersion Program, providing a unique, hands-on learning experience for future military leaders. A subset of the TSC's broader Fellows, Intern, Scholars and Honoraria program, this initiative aims to deepen the understanding of the Department of War's role in Arctic security among emerging leaders.

For approximately six weeks, two cadets from the U.S. Air Force Academy, Cadets 1st Class Katherine Longuil and Gavin Dustin, and two from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Cadets 1st Class Dashiell Albright and Andrew Link stepped out of the classroom and into the Arctic operating environment.

Supported by the TSC's Research and Analysis Division and the School for Arctic Security Studies, the cadets embarked on a rigorous itinerary designed to highlight the unique challenges and solutions required for U.S. mission success in the region. Highlights included site visits with key local partners such as Alaska Command, the Port of Alaska, and Port Mackenzie, alongside Arctic immersion in remote and strategic locations in Nome and Utqiagvik.

During their immersion, the cadets also advanced critical research projects tailored to their service's specific needs. The USCGA cadets assessed capabilities and gaps in Arctic and sub-Arctic USCG supporting infrastructure, while the USAFA cadets analyzed historical and contemporary Chinese and Russian relationships in the Arctic and their impacts on U.S. security.

The experience left a lasting impression on the cadets, highlighting the critical human, operational, and infrastructural elements of the Last Frontier.

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All eyes are on Nome as they start the pier expansion project (sponsored by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). The success of this project will go a long ways supporting continued US presence in the Arctic as it will cut down on transit time for USCG vessels to resupply and return to the Arctic when compared to a Dutch Harbor resupply.



The Graphite One project currently depends on the Port of Nome expansion to be able to transport the Graphite to further processing locations within the U.S.. Cadets got to hear about the public + private connections that make our supply chains viable. Cadets learned how the project has grown since it's inception with response to economic and geostrategic forces.



2026 Joint Service Academy Immersion

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Randy "Church" Kee, TSC Director, U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral (Ret.) Matthew T. Bell, Jr, Dean of the School for Arctic Security Studies, and U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Taylor Peace, TSC Coast Guard Fellow, presented certificates to Cadet 1st Class Andrew Link and Cadet 1st Class Dashiel Albright after their successful completion of the 2026 Joint Service Academy Immersion Program, on July 17, 2026.

Continued from previous page

"During these past couple of weeks, we have learned a great deal," said Cadet 1st Class Albright. "We have learned about the challenges of operating in the arctic sphere, the lack of safety nets and redundancies in the state's infrastructure, the importance of subsistence to much of the local population, and the unique relationship of Alaska native groups with the state and federal government."

The human terrain and local resilience were equally impactful. "The remote visits to Nome and Utqiagvik allowed me to gain more understanding and respect for the cultures of different local groups in the villages," said Cadet 1st Class Link. "The people in Alaska are the most important as I learned their resilience and willingness to help people when challenges come, which is what I want to do for my future career."

Link added that seeing the environment firsthand was unforgettable: "I thoroughly enjoyed learning and listening to the indescribable stories about the lifestyles and history from the people."

The successful 2026 immersion underscores the TSC's commitment to tailoring educational opportunities that increase the skills, competency, and expertise of the next generation of U.S. and allied personnel.



Cadets gained first hand knowledge of the Arctic operating environment to support warfighters, including the unique mobility challenges in remote Arctic operating locations.





TSC Co-Hosts Arctic Week

Photos courtesy of the Homeland Defense Institute.

The Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies recently hosted an Arctic Security Primer in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The event kicked off the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) Arctic Week, a key component of the wider Homeland Defense Awareness Symposium (HDAS) hosted by the Homeland Defense Institute (HDI) and in partnership with the TSC, and Front Range Consortium.

As the strategic importance of the High North continues to grow, this condensed, high-impact educational primer provided joint warfighters and homeland defense practitioners with the foundational context necessary to enhance Arctic readiness.

"Defending our homeland begins with a comprehensive, shared understanding of the strategic realities in the high north," said David Kang, the Director of Training, Exercise, and Wargaming (J7) for NORAD and U.S. NORTHCOM. "I want to extend my sincere thanks to the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies for hosting the Arctic Security Primer during this year's Homeland Defense Awareness Symposium. By convening military practitioners, allies, and regional experts, the Center continues to build the vital educational foundation and collaborative networks required to ensure a secure, stable, and resilient Arctic region."

Delivered in partnership with HDI, the Arctic Security Primer is designed for military practitioners, government officials, and senior leaders. It focuses on enhancing Arctic literacy by translating the complex geophysical and geostrategic challenges of the High North into actionable operational knowledge. By examining strategic competition, evolving adversary capabilities, and the realities of extreme cold-weather operations, the curriculum institutionalizes the knowledge required to improve defense readiness and shape future investments in Arctic infrastructure.

The broader Homeland Defense Awareness Symposium strengthens Arctic defense by uniting bi-national stakeholders,



subject matter experts, and policymakers to exchange ideas, share best practices, and develop cohesive strategies. HDAS fosters solutions that ensure the security and stability of the High North remains a cornerstone of continental defense.

Kang highlighted that Arctic defense is fundamentally homeland defense, and the two are being integrated as they advance toward full operational readiness. This approach requires that the definition of Arctic security also incorporates human security. To enhance this security framework, there is a collective effort to develop pan-Arctic exercises and wargaming. This initiative emphasizes broad collaboration, extending beyond military commands to include the interagency, the industrial base, and the academic community, with each sector playing a distinct and crucial role in the collective defense strategy.

"Our collaboration with the Ted Stevens Center on the Arctic Security Primer represents a critical investment in the defense of North America," said Director Kang. "As the High North becomes increasingly accessible and strategically contested, securing our northern approaches requires more than just advanced capabilities—it demands deep, operational Arctic literacy. It ensures our warfighters possess the shared understanding necessary to enhance all-domain awareness, strengthen integrated deterrence, and build the interoperable partnerships required to anticipate and defeat threats long before they reach our shores."





TSC Previews 2026 Dialogue: Homeland Defense from America's Arctic

As global attention increasingly turns toward the Far North, the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies recently brought together top state leaders to discuss Alaska's critical role as a frontline of national security.

On July 20, the TSC broadcasted a virtual session titled "Homeland Defense from America's Arctic" live from its studios at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER). The webinar served as an exclusive preview of the highly anticipated 2026 Anchorage Security and Defense Dialogue, scheduled for October 27–29.

Hosted by TSC Director Kee, the webinar highlighted the Center's mission as the Department of War's newest regional center. Rooted in the legacy of Senator Ted Stevens, the Center is dedicated to building strong, strategic international networks among defense and security leaders.

A keystone of this collaborative effort is the TSC's National and Arctic Interest Chairs program, which brings functional expertise from government, industry, and the military into the Center's research and educational missions. The July 20 event featured two of the program's esteemed Chairs: Governor Mike Dunleavy, the TSC State of Alaska Arctic Interest Chair, and former Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell, the TSC Energy & Economics Arctic Interest Chair.

"These distinguished Alaskans share the Stevens Center's commitment to promote dialogue, education, research, and collaboration in Arctic security and defense," said Director Kee during his opening remarks. "Their support and their partnership brings Alaskans' perspectives to the national and international conversation on the growing strategic and security importance of the Arctic region."

During the conversation, Gov. Dunleavy painted a vivid picture of Alaska's geographic dominance, noting the unique geography has massive logistical implications—propelling Anchorage's international cargo airport to the busiest in the nation and the

third busiest globally.

"Alaska is at the forefront of the opportunities and challenges that will define the future of the Arctic," Gov. Dunleavy noted, adding that the state's location will increasingly become central to future policy and strategy.

Expanding on the state's strategic importance, Mr. Treadwell—who previously served as chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission—highlighted Alaska's physical assets, including vast training spaces, untapped energy, critical minerals, and proximity to space.

Today, Alaska continues to serve as the nation's "bulwark" against both traditional and emerging threats. Treadwell highlighted the state's critical infrastructure, pointing to the major ballistic missile defense site at Fort Greely and a sophisticated network of radars.

"Essentially that [Distant Early Warning] Line that was put in during the Cold War is getting to be more up to date with over-the-horizon radars," Treadwell explained, cementing Alaska's ongoing significance in protecting the homeland.

The full conversation served as a prelude to the 2026 Anchorage Security and Defense Dialogue this October. It is clear, as Gov. Dunleavy noted, that the Ted Stevens Center "possesses incredible expertise" as the region prepares for the future.

Coming Soon

ANCHORAGE SECURITY AND DEFENSE DIALOGUE

October 27-29, 2026
Anchorage, Alaska | By invite only

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High-Level Engagements: Bolstering Homeland Defense and Arctic Security

This week, the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies had the distinct privilege of hosting a series of pivotal engagements with key stakeholders in the U.S. Arctic mission. Central to these discussions was the Center’s ongoing contribution to bolstering the Nation’s homeland defense, enhancing deterrence capabilities, and helping expand the Defense Industrial Base.

The engagements featured insightful dialogues with Mr. Shannon Jenkins, U.S. Coast Guard Senior Arctic Policy Advisor; U.S. Coast Guard Captain Joel Carse, Commander of USCG Sector Western Alaska; and Thomas Emanuel Dans, Chairman of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission.

During his visit, Mr. Shannon Jenkins emphasized the critical need for strategic communications to remain tightly synchronized with National policy. A major point of discussion was the necessity for Arctic stakeholders to branch out beyond traditional circles and engage with atypical audiences to broaden the conversation. In response, staff shared the TSC’s proactive strategy of embedding center representatives within major component annual engagements to meet this need.

Mr. Jenkins highlighted the value of the TSC’s work, he praised the team, remarking, "You make our job easier with your impact."

Capt. Joel Carse brought a vital operational and educational perspective to the table. Having recently completed a TSC course, Capt. Carse complimented the curriculum, stating, "Your course completely redefined my understanding of the High North, thank you."

Recognizing the value of this education, Capt. Carse foresees integrating TSC courses into the standard onboarding process for his staff and is eager to share feedback from the Center with his colleagues.

Chairman Thomas Emanuel Dans highlighted the unprecedented national focus on the region, noting that the Arctic is currently seeing the largest investment in U.S. history. A self-proclaimed "big fan" of the TSC, Chairman Dans underscored that to the wider public, energy is the primary lens through which the Arctic is communicated.

However, he was quick to point out that Arctic research encompasses far more, bleeding directly into the National Defense Strategy, hard security, navigation, and commerce. With this increased national investment, security becomes absolutely paramount, making the protection of these assets and capabilities critical. Reaffirming the Center’s vital role, Chairman Dans stated, "The mission you do here is important."

These engagements underscore the growing recognition of the Ted Stevens Center’s impact on Arctic security, education, and strategic alignment within the Department. As national focus and investment in the high north continue to rise, the TSC remains at the forefront of preparing our leaders, forces, and families for the challenges and opportunities ahead.





TED STEVENS CENTER QUARTERLY AWARDS CEREMONY

Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies staff gathered this month to host our Quarterly Awards Ceremony—affectionately known as "ADAG-WA Day" (meaning "congratulations" in Alutiiq). Led by Director Randy "Church" Kee and Deputy Director Craig Fleener, the event celebrated milestones, welcomed new staff, bid farewell to departing teammates, and honored exceptional contributions to Arctic security and Department of War initiatives.

Significant Awardees & Accomplishments:

Douglas Hulsey, Alumni and Affiliates Relations Specialist, with the Strategic Engagement Division, was recognized with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency Director's Award for his outstanding civilian service from March 2024 to April 2025. Hulsey established and implemented the center's first comprehensive Alumni Program from the ground up, successfully engaging a community of approximately 2,200 members and creating an innovative Alumni Book Club.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Stephen Gagnon was awarded the Joint Service Commendation Medal for exceptionally meritorious service as an Arctic Military Fellow from August 2024 to July 2026. Lt. Col. Gagnon served as an instructor for the Arctic Contested Logistics Course, facilitated an alumni event on irregular warfare, and published two security-focused research articles.

Staff said goodbye to a plank-holder and critical member of our front office team, Terrence Shanigan. "I'm excited for the future and for what the horizon holds for the Ted Stevens Center, the regional center enterprise, the Department of War, and our Nation," said Terrence Shanigan, who will continue a life-long tradition of service in Sitka, Alaska.



ABOVE: Director Kee stands with (from left to right) U.S. Army Lt. Col. Stephen Gagnon, U.S. Army Fellow, Maria "Ria" Hanson, Policy Analyst, Dr. Kelsey Frazier, Associate Director of Research, and Analysis, and U.S. Air Force Maj. Chelsea Bailey, U.S. Air Force Fellow.

BELOW: Terrence Shanigan, Logistics Planner and Administrator.

STAFF UPDATES



Douglas "Nomad" Hulsey
Alumni Specialist
Strategic Engagement Division

Strategic Engagement Division

The Strategic Engagement Division (SED) convenes Arctic security practitioners and leaders to address some of the most pressing geostrategic and geophysical challenges in the region. SED embodies the collaborative ethos of the Center, facilitating opportunities for strategic dialogue among Allies and partner to reinforce the rules-based order and build a network of like-minded Arctic security practitioners.

TWICE THE CITIZEN

TSC welcomes staff member back to the High North

Douglas "Nomad" Hulsey is used to wearing two hats. After 17 years of Active Duty service—with roles ranging from a B-52 Instructor Weapons Systems Officer, Deputy Nuclear Operations Branch Chief, and Bomber Task Force Branch Chief at United States Air Forces in Europe - Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAF)—he stepped into his first civilian role in 2024 to stand up the Ted Stevens Center Alumni and Affiliates program in Anchorage, Alaska. However in 2025 he was called to duty temporarily back to Ramstein Air Base, where he pinned on the rank of Lt. Col. and continues serving as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee for HQ USAFE-AFAF. Now back at the TSC full-time as of June of 2026, he brings a unique, dual-status perspective to the team.

His drive to engage in Arctic issues was heavily shaped by his time leading USAFE-AFAF Bomber Task Force, where he was able to work closely with Norwegian and Swedish partners that left him with fresh perspectives on Arctic deterrence and allied interoperability. Seeing that collaboration firsthand sparked a deep interest in Arctic security and how "soft power" directly amplifies or enables military efforts. Returning from his recent deployment gave him a fresh look at the opportunities and problem sets we can collectively pursue as a joint and coalition force.

"Applying a fresh look at my time back in uniform has given me valuable insight into what I need most as a warfighter," Hulsey says. That ability to step in and out of both worlds helps ensure the TSC's mission

gives the Department of War exactly what it needs to address emerging threats and helps strengthen partnerships through an ever expanding network.

In his civilian capacity, he leads the TSC Alumni and Affiliates program, a network of over 3,000 Arctic-focused security practitioners. Strategically, the program keeps practitioners engaged with the center for ongoing education and research. Tactically, it's a tool that allows alumni to collaborate and maintain their readiness. Right now, he is focused on a webinar series that gets members talking directly with peers and subject matter experts while delivering important information on emerging topics. Up next, he is rolling out an alumni workshop, introducing "Arctic Awards" for the most engaged members, and partnering with the Research and Analysis Division to open up new publishing opportunities.

If you ask anyone in the B-52 community, they know him simply as "Nomad." The callsign is a throwback to his younger years, which he spent living in a tent, hiking and fishing his way from one spot to the next. Today, he's creating those same adventures for his 7-year-old son and 5-year-old daughter, who have recently taken up fishing and hiking during family trips across Austria, Germany, Alaska, and Iceland.

Whether in uniform or out, family has always been his foundation, shaping him as an officer, a coworker, and a person. He views the vast TSC network with that same mindset—as an extended family—and is eager to help them tackle whatever comes next in the Arctic and beyond.



UPCOMING COURSES

Understanding the Arctic Operating Environment Course (UAOEC)

26-01: August 3-14, 2026

UAOEC is a multi-day, 22-hour executive education course specifically oriented to support Arctic security and defense practitioners in better understanding the aspects of the dynamic operational environment in and across the Arctic region. This course examines the physical and geostrategic ramifications across the Arctic region. It also describes the impact of the operational environment on Arctic resources and its effects on the political balance in the Arctic.

Arctic Regional Security Orientation Course (ARSOC)

26-04: August 17-21, 2026

The five-day virtual course, which drew more than 150 people working across five different countries, focused on historical, environmental, commercial, geostrategic, and strategic issues concerning the Arctic region, in order to encourage discussion, intellectual curiosity, and critical thinking among security and defense practitioners.

Arctic Lawfare, Counter Lawfare, and Strategic Competition Course (ALCLSC)

26-01: September 1-3, 2026

The Arctic Lawfare, Counter Lawfare, and Strategic Competition (ALCLSC) course is a three-day, 12-hour executive education program designed for mid- to senior defense practitioners and legal professionals who advise, work, or are embedded in military planning at the tactical, operational, or strategic levels.

NATO in the North Course (N2C)

26-02: September 8-10, 2026

N2C is a three-day, 12-hour course that examines NATO's evolving role and presence in the Arctic region amid rapidly changing security dynamics. The curriculum analyzes how recent developments, including Russia's war against Ukraine, increased Chinese regional activity, and the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO, have fundamentally altered Arctic security considerations. The course explores how these changes affect NATO's core tasks of deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security, while examining the growing importance of resilience in Arctic operations.

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American Sovereignty & the Arctic

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This week, we explore America's Arctic through:

- The Big Picture: American Sovereignty & the Arctic
- Lat & Long: Defining the U.S. Arctic
- On the Hill: Arctic Security and Diplomacy Bill

If you operate in the defense or security space, this newsletter is built for you.

ASU offers forward-looking news recaps and analysis tailored for today's warfighters, policy and planning professionals, frontline DoW components, Arctic security practitioners, and government leaders.

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DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY NOTE

Dear and Distinguished Colleagues,

As July comes to a close, Alaska is in the midst of one of my most cherished traditions... the return of the sockeye salmon to the Kenai River. For many Alaskans, the red salmon run is a time to gather with family and friends, spend long days on the river, fill freezers for the winter, and reconnect with the rhythms that define life in the North. It is a reminder that in Alaska, our connection to the land and water shapes not only our communities, but also our resilience.

That same sense of attention and preparation has defined another busy month at the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies. We were honored to deliver our Arctic Security Primer during NORAD and U.S. Northern Command's Arctic Week in Colorado Springs. Bringing together military and civilian professionals responsible for defending North America, the primer reinforced the importance of a shared understanding of the Arctic's strategic environment and the operational

challenges that will define the region's future. We were also pleased to welcome another outstanding cohort of Service Academy cadets through our Joint Service Academy Immersion Program. These future leaders spent the month immersed in Arctic security issues while working alongside our faculty and staff. Their curiosity, professionalism, and commitment to service were evident throughout the program, and they leave with a deeper appreciation for the strategic importance of the Arctic and the partnerships required to secure it.

As summer continues and many of us take advantage of Alaska's endless daylight, I hope you are able to enjoy time with family, friends, and perhaps even a successful day on the river. Whether in the classroom, in the field, or around the dinner table sharing fresh salmon, these moments remind us why the Arctic is worth understanding, securing, and defending.

Thank you for your continued partnership and for all you do to strengthen Arctic security and defense. We look forward to sharing more of our work with you in the months ahead.



Very Respectfully,

Randy "Church" Kee,
Maj Gen, USAF (Ret.) Director
Ted Stevens Center
for Arctic Security Studies

DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY READING RECOMMENDATION

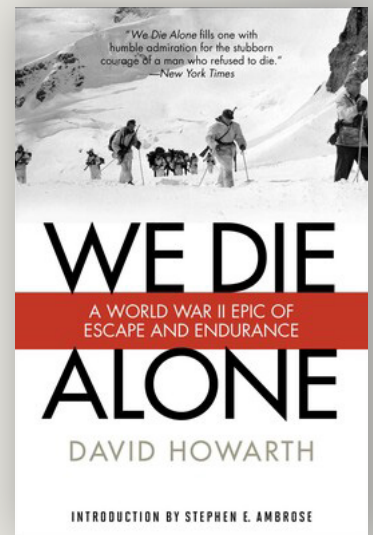
We Die Alone: A WWII Epic Of Escape And Endurance

David Howarth

We Die Alone recounts one of the most exciting escape stories to emerge from the challenges and miseries of World War II. In March 1943, a team of expatriate Norwegian commandos sailed from northern England for Nazi-occupied arctic Norway to organize and supply the Norwegian resistance. But they were betrayed and the Nazis ambushed them. Only one man survived--Jan Baalsrud. This is the incredible and gripping story of his escape.

Frostbitten and snowblind, pursued by the Nazis, he dragged himself on until he reached a small arctic village. He was near death, delirious, and a virtual cripple. But the villagers, at mortal risk to themselves, were determined to save him, and--through impossible feats--they did.

We Die Alone is an astonishing true story of heroism and endurance. Like Slavomir Rawicz's The Long Walk, it is also an unforgettable portrait of the determination of the human spirit.



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