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COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Anticipating Terrorist Technology Adoption to Secure the Homeland (ATTASH)

PI: Gary Ackerman (SUNY University at Albany)



This project will develop a sustainable capability to identify problematic emerging technologies within DHS component mission areas, prioritize the actor-related threats involving these technologies, and locate opportunities for interdiction and prevention before these emerging technologies cause harm to the homeland.

Building Capacity in Homeland Security-Focused Business Analysis Application

PI: Erin Bass (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project will leverage the business school curriculum to develop student-centered projects that address real-time, real-world challenges for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) end users. Students will engage with DHS end users in project-based courses in the MBA and Data Analytics programs in addition to a Homeland Security-Focused Business Analytics Graduate Certificate to work on DHS end-user challenges as part of the course curriculum.

Psychological Trauma in Terrorism Research

PI: Matthew Crayne (SUNY University at Albany)



This project will combine traditional industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology methods with emerging research on moral injury and other psychosocial hazards to examine the manifestation and consequences of trauma in those who study terrorism and targeted violence.

How Organizational Dynamics in a Multi-Actor Environment Shape Terrorist Threats and CT Responses

PI: Martha Crenshaw (Stanford University), Kaitlyn Robinson (Rice University)



This project will explain how the characteristics of adversarial organizations and their interactions with each other affect the level of threat they pose. The project's premise is that organizational characteristics, such as leadership, as well as inter-relationships among organizations help shape behavior.



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Building Capacity at Minority Serving Institutions

PIs: Eric Frost (San Diego State University), Lance Larson (San Diego State University)



This project focuses on educating the future national security workforce through the San Diego State University (SDSU) Graduate Program in Homeland Security. For this next year as part of NCITE, the project will continue teaching graduate students and offering them opportunities to work with the local Homeland Security Enterprise (HSE) in San Diego-Imperial Counties.

Examining the Functional Relationship between Violent Extremist Ideologies and Conspiracy Theories

PI: Paul Gill (University College London)



This project will explore the normalization of conspiracy theories in the United States. Researchers will conduct prospective-longitudinal online surveys, analyzing conspiracy rhetoric on extremist and mainstream social media platforms, working to understand whether violent extremist rhetoric becomes more frequent around the 2024 presidential election.

Non-Terrorism Charges for Terrorism Investigations

PI: Seamus Hughes (University of Nebraska at Omaha – July 2023)



This project seeks to better understand the variety of ways the U.S. justice system uses non-terrorism charges to prosecute ideologically motivated violent extremism. It will highlight how prosecutorial decisions have policy and resource ramifications in terms of length of sentencing, public perception of the size and scope of domestic terrorism, and allocation of staffing for intelligence and law enforcement.

How Organizational Psychology Can Contribute to a Deeper Understanding of the Evolving DVE Landscape

PI: Sam Hunter (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



The project will help understand extremist organizations in the United States from an industrial and organizational psychology perspective. Constructs such as leadership, command and control, communication, and norms for group membership will be examined in the context of the current domestic violent extremist landscape to shape a new taxonomy of what it means to be an “organization” today.



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Understanding Malevolent Creativity and Malign Application of Emerging Technology: How AI, the Metaverse, and Gaming Intersect

PI: Sam Hunter (University of Nebraska at Omaha), Joel Elson (University of Nebraska at Omaha), Scarlett Miller (Pennsylvania State University)



This research project has three goals: 1. Identify key themes and trends around the emergence of AI as a tool, with a focus on how the tool may be applied for malevolently creative, malign use. 2. Identify the intersection of emergent digital technology with a focus on how AI may be used to increase and amplify trends in the extended reality or mixed reality (i.e., metaverse) environments. 3. Understand how these tools impact malevolent ideation.

Ideological Influence and Radicalization in Online Microblog Platforms

PI: Matthew Jensen (University of Oklahoma)



This project examines messaging strategies on publicly accessible microblog platforms (e.g., Twitter, online forum) used by extremist ideological groups. The objective is to provide DHS decision-makers and associated partners with insights about processes ideological groups use to recruit members, harness social identities, mobilize communication around issues, increase commitment to extremism, and incite violent action.

International Academic Partnerships for Science and Security

PIs: Gina Ligon (University of Nebraska at Omaha), Stacey Conchie (Lancaster University), Kayla Walters (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project will create an International Hub of Knowledge Exchange that will enhance collaboration among the Five Country Research and Development (5RD) Centers of Research Excellence. The project will begin with an international meeting held in London, where goals will be set for the following three years.

The Needs of the Counterterrorism Workforce and the Utility of Existing Datasets

PI: Michael Logan (Kennesaw State University)



This project will draw from academic literature and information collected from counterterrorism (CT) analysts to identify the most up-to-date datasets that DHS can provide its CT workforce.



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Threat Assessment and Management Teamwork: Collaborative Capabilities, Barriers, and Resourcing Needs

PI: Tin Nguyen (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project will inform DHS about the tools, people, and processes for collaboration among multi-agency teams – specifically, those engaged in threat assessment and management. Comparing Threat Assessment and Management Teams that are solving novel vs. predictable threats across contexts, this team will develop a framework for what is needed for novel vs. established problem sets in these teams for effective collaboration.

Understanding the Link between the Recruitment and Operational Behavior of Terrorist Organizations

PI: Evan Perkoski (University of Connecticut)



This project will study how characteristics of terrorist recruits affect the lethality, success, complexity, innovation, and targets of terrorist violence.

Assessing the Benefits of Simulations and War Games for Homeland Security Enterprise Workforce Development

PI: David Schanzer (Duke University)



This project will exhibit skills that participants can gain through active-learning gaming experiences. It will measure how games can expose students to new career possibilities, create a way for the homeland security enterprise to improve preparation for the workforce, and determine best practices for games and simulations.

Understanding Threats to Public Officials

PI: Pete Simi (Chapman University)



This project will study threats to public officials from 2013 to 2023. It will also conduct a state-of-science review to assess existing survey studies focused on the level of public support for political violence.



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Barriers to Family Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) of Mobilization Behaviors

PI: Karyn Sporer (University of Maine)



This project aims to identify how prevention practitioners can leverage community partnerships to help counter violent extremism and to provide actionable insights on what technological, social, and financial barriers exist for families of extremists in reporting suspicious activities.

Understanding the Transition from Political Discourse to Election-Motivated Violent Extremism

PI: Adan Vela (University of Central Florida)



This project seeks to examine the nature of electoral violence in the U.S. and establish appropriate criteria to assess the transition from political discourse to election-motivated violence.

Providing Resilience to Individuals Examining Difficult Content for Their Work – Efficacy of Peer Support Programming

PIs: Joseph Young (American University), Daisy Muibu (National Defense University)



This project will assess the efficacy of peer support programs in providing resilience in teams that must examine difficult content in their work. Researchers will conduct a literature review on peer support programs in government and law enforcement, as well as provide ICE-HSI with a guide map for evaluating their Peer Support Program.

Vicarious Trauma in Counterterrorism Practitioners

PI: Joseph Young (American University),
Daisy Muibu (National Defense University)



This project will develop a baseline understanding of how counterterrorism practitioners are affected by exposure to violence and the implications this may have on the resilience of and future development of the homeland security workforce.



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CURRENTLY AWARDED BOA & OTHER

Public Safety Violence Prevention – BOA Task Order from S&T

PI: Matt Allen (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



DHS's Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3) provides grant funding to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments – along with nonprofits and higher ed institutions – to enhance the capability of local terrorism and targeted violence prevention efforts. Allen's project will perform rigorous evaluations of two of these programs and develop recommendations for scaling evaluations for sustainability.

Reintegrating the Returning Families of Foreign Terrorism Fighters – Grant from S&T

PI: Austin Doctor (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



Bringing home families of terrorist fighters who left the U.S. to fight for the Islamic State can be a complicated and controversial process. This project aims to promote evidence-based models for the reintegration of spouses and children and develop tools and training for practitioners.

Workshop and Report on Research Challenges in Combating Terrorist Use of Explosives in the United States – BOA Task Order from CISA OBP

PI: Austin Doctor (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project aims to develop an unclassified report that reflects the changes to the improvised explosive device (IED) threat and capability landscape. The report will improve the nation's ability to prevent, respond to, and mitigate the use of explosives against critical infrastructure.

Innovation in Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention: Developing and Testing an Intelligent Chatbot to Help Individuals Identify Threats and Improve Tips Reporting – Grant from CP3

PIs: Joel Elson (University of Nebraska at Omaha), Erin Kearns (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



Effective terrorism and targeted violence (TVTP) prevention relies on members of the public to report suspicious behavior. Yet, breakdowns in this process occur when people are unsure what should be reported, unwilling to report, or unclear about how and where to report. This project aims to create and test an intelligent chatbot that can be used by members of the public to report suspicious activity.



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Public Safety and Violence Prevention Evaluations – BOA Task Order from S&T

PI: Sam Hunter (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project aims to evaluate the current utility and efficacy of threat assessment tools and approaches. In addition, the team is evaluating the challenges and utility of standardized approaches to assessing vulnerabilities of soft targets.

Handbook for Managing the Release of Federally Incarcerated Extremists in the Community

PI: Erin Kearns (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project will develop a handbook to be used as a resource to reintegrate previously incarcerated individuals charged with violent extremism-related offenses back into the community.

Screening for Insider Threats in U.S. Law Enforcement: A National Representative Sample of Department Policies & Practices – Grant from S&T

PI: Erin Kearns (University of Nebraska at Omaha)



This project aims to identify best practices in screening for insider threats in law enforcement. The team will develop a toolkit and online module for law enforcement agencies to self-assess.