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AARON ALLEN is a senior legislative assistant for a California Member of Congress who works on national security issues. He is also the founder and current president of the Foreign Affairs Congressional Staff Association. Prior to his current position, Allen had positions with the California State Senate, the Chula Vista City Council, the San Diego World Affairs Council, the International Rescue Committee, and the National Conflict Resolution Center. Born and raised in San Diego, California, Allen attended UC Berkeley and graduated in 2009 with degrees in history and political science. He has also completed coursework with Georgetown’s Security Studies Program, the Harvard Law School’s Program on Negotiation, the US Army War College, the Air Command and Staff College, the US Naval War College Fleet Seminar, and the United States Institute of Peace. Allen has also held fellowships with the Woodrow Wilson Center, the Partnership for a Secure America, the Council on Foreign Relations’ Congressional Foreign Policy Study Group, and the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center.
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Kirsten HOWLEY is a physicist on the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) planetary defense team. She derives analytic equations and leverages large-scale computing systems (supercomputers) to simulate asteroid deflection scenarios, with a focus on the effectiveness of standoff nuclear explosions to alter the speed—and thus orbital timing—of potential threats. In addition to her planetary defense work, she is involved in modeling and executing hydrodynamic experiments important to assessing the safety, security, and effectiveness of explosive devices related to national security. Howley holds a PhD and MS in astronomy and astrophysics from UC Santa Cruz, and a BA in physics and astrophysics from UC Berkeley. She joined LLNL as a graduate student summer intern in 2007, worked as a postdoc, and was hired onto the staff in 2013. She was the first of numerous staff members who got their start at LLNL as postdocs and graduate interns conducting planetary defense research.

Elsa B. KANIA is an adjunct fellow with the Technology and National Security Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS). She focuses on Chinese defense innovation in emerging technologies in support of the Artificial Intelligence and Global Security Initiative at CNAS, where she also acts as a member of the research team for the new Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and National Security. Her research interests include Chinese military modernization, information warfare, and defense science and technology. Kania is an independent analyst, consultant, and co-founder of the China Cyber and Intelligence Studies Institute. She was also a 2018 Fulbright Specialist and is a non-resident fellow with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s International Cyber Policy Center. Kania works in support of the China Aerospace Studies Institute through its associates program, and she is a consulting analyst with Pointe Bello and a policy advisor for the non-profit Technology for Global Security. Kania has been named an official “mad scientist” by the US Army’s Training and Doctrine Command. She is a graduate of Harvard College and was a Boren Scholar in Beijing, China.
Matt KORDA works in the Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-Proliferation Center at NATO HQ in Brussels. He received his MA in international peace and security from the Department of War Studies at King’s College London, where he subsequently worked as a research assistant on nuclear deterrence and strategic stability. He also completed an internship with the Verification, Training, and Information Center in London, where he focused on nuclear security and safeguards. In September, Korda will join the Federation of American Scientists as a research associate for the Nuclear Information Project. Korda’s research interests and recent publications focus on nuclear deterrence, missile proliferation, gender mainstreaming, and alliance management, with regional concentrations on Russia and the Korean Peninsula.

Jamie KWONG will be pursuing her PhD in war studies at King’s College London in the fall as a Marshall Scholar. Her research focuses on nuclear strategies and arms control, with a special emphasis on the nuclear posture revision process. She recently graduated from the University of Southern California with a BA in international relations and a master’s in public diplomacy. Kwong interned at the State Department’s Office of WMD Terrorism and the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and served as a Korean Studies Institute Fellow researching North Korea’s nuclear weapons program.

Janine LAMBERT currently works at Idaho National Laboratory with the Material Minimization, Security and International Safeguards Department. Her work focuses on mass balance for pyroprocessing fuel, testing detectors for various applications, cask change detection, and helping with the Material Protection, Accounting, and Control Technologies (MPACT) Advanced Integration Study. She also organizes courses for visitors, mainly IAEA inspectors, on subjects such as instrumentation, data collection methods, pyroprocessing, and plutonium diversion detection. She is currently pursuing more projects with international relations, development, and safeguards as well as technical cooperation. She attended the University of Michigan and obtained a BSE in nuclear engineering and radiological sciences. During this time, she interned twice at Brookhaven National Laboratory where she discovered her interest in nuclear nonproliferation and safeguards. She then pursued an MS in environmental engineering at the University of South Florida as part of the Master’s International Program with the Peace Corps. To finalize her MS degree, she wrote her thesis, “A Life Cycle Assessment of a Uranium Mine in Namibia,” while serving in Namibia as a math and science teacher in a small village.
Grace LIU is a research associate at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) for the East Asia Nonproliferation Program. She produces geospatial intelligence, translates Korean and Chinese sources, and uses 3D modeling techniques to assess North Korea's WMD and ballistic missile capabilities. Her research focuses on applying open-source intelligence to verify treaty compliance. She presented on codifying the international monitoring system as a verification measure in a Korean Peninsula nuclear-weapons-free zone at the 2018 NPT Preparatory Committee and the 2018 CTBT Science Diplomacy Symposium. Liu is also an all-source military intelligence officer in the US Army. She holds a MA in nonproliferation and terrorism studies from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, a MBA in international management, and a BA in international relations and military science from the University of New Mexico.

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Daniel PUENTES is a second-year PhD student at Michigan State University. He performs research on experimental nuclear physics at the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory with the Low Energy Beam and Ion Trap group. His research focuses on measuring one of the most fundamental properties of a radioactive particle, the mass. Understanding the mass of different radioactive particles leads to a better understanding of different nuclear astrophysical phenomena, as well as nuclear structure. Puentes earned a BS in physics and a BA in chemistry with a minor in astronomy at Florida International University. He has a strong interest in understanding the intersection between public policy and nuclear science.

VICTORIA SANCHEZ

Victoria SANCHEZ is a postdoctoral fellow with the National Nuclear Security Administration Graduate Fellowship Program. During this year she is assigned to the Office of Strategic Stability and Deterrence in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance at the US Department of State. Previously, she was a nonproliferation analyst at the Pentagon for the CWMD and Proliferation Policy Division of Army Staff, and worked as a nuclear energy and nonproliferation analyst for multinational corporations and foreign governments at a boutique international consulting firm in Washington, D.C. She holds a BA and MA in international affairs from the University of Georgia, and an MA and PhD from the University of Delaware in political science and international relations. Her doctoral research focused on comparative policy change following nuclear accidents.

SELIM CAN SAZAK

Selim Can SAZAK is a PhD student in political science at Brown University. His interests include the theory and practice of nuclear deterrence, dynamics of nuclear proliferation, alliance politics, civil-military relations and security policy-making, particularly in the Middle East. Selim is also an adjunct fellow at the Century Foundation, a progressive think tank based in New York. Previously, he was a non-resident fellow at the Delma Institute, an Abu Dhabi-based think tank, and held positions at the Pugwash Conferences for Science and World Affairs and NATO Center for Excellence on Defense Against Terrorism. He received an MIA in international security policy from Columbia University.
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Robert ZEDRIC is a PhD student in the Department of Nuclear Engineering at Texas A&M. Supported by a Nuclear Nonproliferation and International Safeguards fellowship, his work aims to halt the global spread of nuclear weapons by improving technologies for verification of treaties and safeguards agreements. He recently spent a year at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria, and conducted research on the damaging effects of radiation on certain electronics. He is now continuing this work for his PhD, which can lead to better understanding and designs of electronics to withstand radiation environments.