DHS Hires First 10 Experts in "AI Corps" Recruiting Sprint

New Hires Will Help DHS Responsibly Leverage New Technology and Mitigate Risks Across the Homeland Security Enterprise

WASHINGTON – Today, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas and Chief AI Officer Eric Hysen announced the first 10 members of the "AI Corps," the Department of Homeland Security's first-ever sprint to recruit 50 Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology experts. The new hires will play pivotal roles responsibly leveraging AI across strategic mission areas, including countering fentanyl trafficking, combatting online child sexual exploitation and abuse, delivering immigration services, fortifying critical infrastructure, and enhancing cybersecurity.

The AI Corps brings a range of professional backgrounds to DHS, including from the private sector and academia. The 10 inaugural AI Corps hires are technology experts with backgrounds in AI and machine learning (ML), data science, data engineering, program and product management, software engineering, cybersecurity, and the safe, responsible use of these technologies. Their collective experience and commitment to public service exemplify the high caliber of candidates the Department continues to attract. The hires are:

- **Sadaf Asrar** was an AI Technology expert for the National Center for Education Statistics, responsible for analyzing performance results from the Nation's Report Card to deepen our understanding of what students know and can do in the United States. In his role as Director of Data Science at Optimal Solutions, he also built complex data products for agencies such as the SBA, USAID, and the USDA.
- **Zach Fasnacht,** previously a Senior Manager of Product Management at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and prior to that a Lead AI/ML Product Manager at Allstate Insurance, and a Digital Projects Coordinator at the Library of Congress.
- **Pramod Gadde** was a machine learning lead and founder of several healthcare-related startups, including Confidante, that used conversational AI to address the gaps in mental healthcare. Confidante used generative AI and traditional NLP techniques to improve patient care and provide them information and support empathetically.
- **Sean Harvey**, former Group Product Manager at Google where he served as the lead on YouTube's Trust and Safety team focused on global elections and combatting misinformation. He also launched the Page Experience at Google Search and served as Product Lead at MLtwist, an early-stage AI data startup.
- **Jenny Kim** was Principal Product Manager at McKinsey & Company, leading development of machine learning and advanced analytics solutions for U.S. defense and healthcare clients. Previously she served as a Digital Service Expert at the DHS Digital Service and the Defense Digital Service.
- **Babatunde Oguntade** served at the Senior Principal Data Scientist at CACI International where he supported agencies such as the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and the Joint Special Operations Command. He previously received an American Society of Engineering Education/National Science

Foundation Industrial Post Doctoral award and served as a White House Presidential Innovation Fellow.

- **Christine Palmer** served as Chief Technology Officer of the U.S. Naval Observatory, directly responsible for critical network operations, cybersecurity, and software development.
- **Stephen Quirolgico** has over 25 years of government, industry, and academic research and development experience in areas including artificial intelligence, machine learning, networking, and cybersecurity. He served as principal scientist, project manager, and lead engineer for advanced technology development projects, including those sponsored by DHS, NIST, DARPA, and SPAWAR.
- **Raquel Romano** joins with a wealth of private and public sector experience – most recently as Senior Director of Engineering at Fora and previously Engineering Lead at the United States Digital Service. She also previously worked as a Software Engineer at Google developing products and services in accessibility, computer vision, and social impact/crisis response, and as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.
- **Robin L. Rosenberger** was the Director of Interagency IT, Data, and Analytics Initiatives in the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. She previously served as the Director of Strategic Acquisition Partnerships in the F-35 Strike Fighter Joint Program Office and numerous other technical and managerial roles throughout DOD.

"Our Department is at the forefront of the federal government in harnessing AI's potential to achieve the mission. To advance our leadership, we have been recruiting AI talent from around the country, drawing skilled professionals to public service," **said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas.** "We are excited to onboard our first group of AI experts to begin the work of our new AI Corps. I look forward to growing our AI Corps in the months ahead, as we continue to introduce the safe and responsible use of AI across the broad range of missions we perform."

DHS also announced the appointment of Michael Boyce as the first Director of the DHS AI Corps. Boyce, a former official at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), helped write the section on federal use of generative AI in the President's [Executive Order](#) on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence. Before joining the White House, he was the Chief of Innovation and Design at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) Refugee, Asylum and International Operations (RAIO) Directorate. While there, Boyce oversaw technology, analytics, and innovation for USCIS' humanitarian immigration programs. He also served as a Digital Service Expert at the United States Digital Service.

"I'm honored to join and lead this team alongside such talented individuals; the first of several additions to what will become largest and most dynamic civilian AI team in the federal government," **said Michael Boyce, Director of the AI Corps.** "AI is the most important technology of our time and it is going to change how we do our critical work to serve the American people. We have a big responsibility to develop and use AI in ways that take advantage of its potential while protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties."

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas and Chief AI Officer Eric Hysen kicked off the AI Corps initiative in February with a recruitment event in Mountain View, CA. As leaders in safe and secure AI development, DHS prioritizes identifying and promptly onboarding top talent for the AI Corps, utilizing flexible hiring authorities to

expedite the process and underscore its commitment to leveraging AI for national security.

"The new talent joining DHS will help empower our workforce to quickly leverage AI technology in their efforts to safeguard our nation," **said Chief Information Officer and Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer Eric Hysen. "**The range of professional and academic experiences these new hires bring to the federal government, some for the first time, will go a long way in our efforts to modernize our services. The AI Corps will help transform the way people interact with the government."

In April 2023, DHS established its first AI Task Force, led by Chief AI Officer Eric Hysen and Under Secretary for Science and Technology Dimitri Kusnezov, to enhance mission areas like supply chain integrity, cargo screening, and criminal network disruption. By March 2024, DHS introduced its "Artificial Intelligence Roadmap," outlining plans to advance homeland security missions responsibly, promote nationwide AI safety, and maintain leadership through strong partnerships. Roadmap," outlining plans to advance homeland security missions responsibly, promote nationwide AI safety, and maintain leadership through strong partnerships.

The Department's latest efforts follow President Biden's Executive Order (EO) "Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence," which established a National AI Talent Surge to rapidly hire experts to build and govern AI. The EO, signed in October 2023, directed DHS to promote the adoption of AI safety standards globally, protect U.S. networks and critical infrastructure, reduce the risks that AI can be used to create weapons of mass destruction, combat AI-related intellectual property theft, and help the United States attract and retain skilled talent, among other missions. The President has directed DHS to establish an AI Safety and Security Advisory Board to support the responsible development of AI. This Board will bring together preeminent industry experts from AI hardware and software companies, leading research labs, critical infrastructure entities, and the U.S. government. This Board will issue recommendations and best practices for an array of AI use cases to ensure AI deployments are secure and resilient.

To learn more about the DHS AI Corps and how to apply, visit the Leading AI at DHS webpage.

To learn more about how DHS uses AI technologies to protect the homeland, visit Artificial Intelligence at DHS.

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