



Newsletter Issue No. 113

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## Leadership Lessons Learned from Serving Those Who Served

Over the past few years, I have had the privilege of working side by side with an incredible team dedicated to supporting the Department of Veterans Affairs. These are not just projects on a strategic blueprint, they are missions that directly impact the lives of those who have served our country.

I watched my team rally together through unexpected setbacks, late-night calls, and moments when the path forward was not always clear. I have seen them step up without hesitation, carry each other through tough days, and find creative solutions in the face of what sometimes felt impossible.

Through these experiences, I have learned that leadership is not always about standing in front of the room giving direction. More often, it shows up quietly: in the teammate who tackles the hardest task without being asked, in the steady voice that calms a tense meeting, or in the quiet commitment to go above and beyond simply because the mission matters. These moments with the VA team have deeply shaped how I think about leadership; what it means, how it feels, and the impact it can have on both people and outcomes. They have reinforced that leadership is ultimately about influence, integrity, and purpose; no matter what your title or role.

At TekSynap, leadership is not limited to project managers or executives. It shows up in how we take initiative, how we respond to setbacks, and how we lift others while staying anchored to the mission. As a mission-focused organization supporting critical federal programs, our success depends not just on technical excellence, but on the quality of our leadership at every level.

Here are a few of the most important leadership lessons I have carried forward from this journey:

### **1. Leadership Is Influence, Not Authority**

True leaders do not lead by command, they lead by earning trust. Whether you are mentoring a junior teammate or navigating a customer conversation, your ability to listen, empathize, and influence through integrity leaves a lasting mark.

**Lesson:** Focus less on giving orders and more on aligning people around a shared goal. Influence, when rooted in trust, moves faster than authority ever could.

## 2. Clarity Under Pressure Builds Confidence

In high-stakes environments, ambiguity is inevitable, but confusion does not have to be. Leaders who communicate clearly under pressure empower teams to move forward with confidence. When schedules shift, requirements evolve, or roadblocks surface, clarity is a multiplier.

**Lesson:** Be the calmest person in the room. Lead through facts, not fear. A steady leader turns stress into direction.

## 3. Ownership Speaks Louder Than Titles

One of the most impactful forms of leadership is quiet ownership, the person who sees a gap and steps in, without waiting to be asked. At TekSynap, where agility is key, those who lead by example, even behind the scenes drive results that make us excellent and uplift the communities we serve.

**Lesson:** Do not wait for permission to lead. Own your initiatives. Your consistency and follow-through builds credibility more than any title can.

## 4. Purpose Must Drive Every Decision

When the pressure to deliver is high, it is easy to chase outputs over outcomes. But at TekSynap, what is the impact of this work? Mission alignment is not a box to check; it is a compass that keeps us grounded.

**Lesson:** Anchor every task, decision, and priority to the mission. Leading with purpose creates clarity, focus, and fulfillment.

## Final Thought: Everyone Is a Leader Here

Leadership at TekSynap is about showing up for others, owning outcomes, and staying grounded in service. Whether you are in your first year or fifteenth, whether you are leading a team or managing a single task, you have the power to lead with purpose.

Let us keep raising the bar by showing others and those we serve what great leadership looks like every day.

**Alex Ospina, Vice President**



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## More Than Just a Country Fair: Celebrating the People Behind TekSynap

Last month, I had the pleasure of attending TekSynap's Country Fair—and it served as a powerful reminder of what truly fuels our success: our people.

What might appear to be a simple afternoon of

food, games, and laughter was actually something far more meaningful. Events like these allow us to step away from our desks, disconnect from our daily routines, and reconnect with each other—as teammates, as individuals, and as a community. Whether it was finally meeting someone in person after months of virtual collaboration or welcoming new faces into the fold, the energy was genuine and inspiring.



One of the most heartening moments came from a conversation with a new hire who shared how smooth and welcoming his onboarding experience was. He called the welcome email a “sigh of relief”—timely, informative, and something he returned to often to stay on track. That kind of feedback speaks volumes about our collective culture, one rooted in clear communication, respect, and people-first values.

But these connections don’t need to stop at weekend events. Every day, there are simple and fun ways to stay engaged and connected across our TekSynap family:

- **TekPets** – Send in pictures of your furry (or scaly!) friends to share with the team. Your pets deserve some spotlight too!
- ➔ **TekTraveler** – Just back from your 5 year, 10 year, and beyond anniversary trip? Share a photo and a story—we’d love to see where your TekSynap journey takes you.
- **TekTots** – Welcoming a new member to your family? Announce your bundle of joy and let the community celebrate with you.
- **Social Media Sharing** – Follow and tag TekSynap on LinkedIn or other platforms. Sharing your work stories, team photos, or event highlights helps show the world what makes our workplace special.

The country fair reminded us that behind every project, proposal, and deadline is a network of people who care—not just about the work, but about each other. Let’s keep those connections growing, online and offline.

Here’s to more handshakes, high-fives, and many more memories—because at TekSynap, we’re not just building careers, **we BUILD what’s next.**

**-Kearstin McGinnis, Vice President of Employment**



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A combination of Engineers and warehouse personnel are working together to configure the switches prior to them being shipped out to the VA



Hospital sites for installation. What you are seeing is the engineers and warehouse personnel coming together to develop and implement this process.

People Pictured: **Jonathan Tobar, Trung Uong, Mahfuz Rahman, Israel Negrón, Antwan Glover**



## Caught in the Act

A customer sent their appreciation to **Aaron Schmidt** for his exceptional dedication, proactivity, and drive.

**Xiangyu Wang** was recognized for her extraordinary willingness, remarkable dedication, and commitment.

The **VA LAN team** was thanked for their good work from our VA customer at East Orange.

**Sara Thompson** was celebrated for always having a smile on her face while doing extremely challenging work.

**David Mendoza, Derek Murphy, and JJ Saenz** were applauded for their hard work, support, and initiative.

A customer commended **Jason Ryder** for going above and beyond to support the Kirtland C4 mission.

**Howard Drake** was recognized for his ability to juggle complicated challenges.

**Evan Hoppens** was praised for his leadership, professionalism, and work ethic.

**Dana Martin** was acknowledged for her great work, help, and support.

**Bethany Gauldfeldt** was thanked for going above and beyond at a job fair, and staying late to speak with the line of candidates.

A customer celebrated **Joe Schaya** for his exceptional effort.

**Jacob McCarty** was commended for his dedication, expertise, and adaptability.

**Johnathon Neal** and **Justin McCrary** were thanked for their motivation and initiatives.

**Devon Van Rossum** was praised for his help, knowledge, and quick response.

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Don't forget to let your Quality team know about all the good things going on at TekSynap by submitting your Kudos on the ***Employee Portal***.

Help us recognize our employee contributions in the monthly Newsletter.

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In honor of VP Darrell Nealy's visit to the DC area, the AFNCR and USITC programs got together for a meet & greet at the Cadillac Ranch restaurant in Oxon Hill, Maryland.

From the USITC contract was Program Manager Robert Lee; accompanying him was **Derek Byrd, Bryant Davis, Scott Lee, Dejhane Harrison, Daniel Wilson, Kevin Huynh, Glenn Goodwine,** and **Jomah Boakai**. From the AFNCR contract was Program Managers **LaTasha Johnson & Matthew Rosov, Keira Thornes, and Harry Akinyemi**.



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**TekTots**



Congrats to **Chris** and **Julie Witt** on their healthy new grandchild, baby William

arrived in June.



**TekPets**



Toby enjoys long naps throughout the day and his favorite bacon-scented ball.

**-Dillyan Abarca**

Feature your pets in the next newsletter!  
Send pictures of your companions to [news@teksynap.com](mailto:news@teksynap.com).

## Certification Corner

**William Kile**  
CompTIA Linux+



**Scott Bertran**

Microsoft Certified Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals

**Richard Cochran**

CompTIA Cyber Security Analyst  
CompTIA Security Analytics Professional

**Ralph Egbert**

Cisco Catalyst Center Foundations

**Matthew Jewett**

Cisco Certified Support Technician IT Support

**Matthew Hileman**

CompTIA Security+ CE  
CompTIA CySA+

**John Delossantos**

FAA Part 107 Remote Pilate Cert

**Jay Patel**

CompTIA Security+

**Jacob McCarty**

Cisco Certified Support Technician IT Support

**Edward Haynes**

Cisco Certified Support Technician Networking

**Connie DeYoung**

FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Cert

**Autumn Roberto**

AIRS Certified Social and New Media Recruiter



## Employee Learning Program

Employees are encouraged to use the Employee Learning Program (ELP) Benefit. [\*\*Click Here\*\*](#) to access the form.

If you have earned a new certification, please add it to your ***TekWorkforce profile***.

Updating your certifications in TekWorkforce will help us identify you for career advancement opportunities.

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## Open Positions

AT&T NASA – Goddard

Project Manager

### **DOI BSEE TIMS**

Oracle Apex Engineer

### **VA LAN CCT**

Network Specialist

Campus Network Engineer

Server/Core Switch Network Engineer

### **VA NextGen Wireless**

Site Manager

Warehouse Associate

### **AFNCR**

TEMPEST Analyst

Data Center Manager

Senior VMware and Horizon Engineer

### **SDA**

Sr. AV Technician

AV Systems Programmer

### **IMCOM**

Lead Cyber Engineer

### **DLA VOC**

VTC Administrator

### **FBI-NEMO**

Jr. Network Engineer

### **PICARD**

Customer Service Desk (CSD) Helpdesk Technician

### **DTRA**

Machine Learning Engineer

Senior Cyber Analyst



Please email your referral resumes to [careers@teksynap.com](mailto:careers@teksynap.com) to receive up to \$2,000.

**Expanding Medical Coverage Policy  
to include Site of Care Review of  
Physical Therapy and Occupational  
Therapy Outpatient Hospital Services,  
beginning October 1, 2025**



To help ensure medically necessary services at the appropriate outpatient setting, American Specialty Health<sup>®</sup> (ASH), a Cigna Healthcare<sup>®</sup> national ancillary provider, will begin

managing the medical necessity review (MNR) of outpatient hospital site of care for Cigna Healthcare—contracted providers who render physical therapy and occupational therapy (PT/OT) services for ASO and fully insured Cigna Healthcare medical customers\* beginning October 1, 2025.

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## VOYA FSA - Spend Your Funds by 9/30/2025

**We want to inform you that TekSynap will be changing FSA providers from VOYA to Wex effective 10/1/2025.**

Please be sure to spend your commuter funds or submit for reimbursement on your VOYA account by 9/30/2025.

There will be a 30-day period after 9/30 to submit receipts that were incurred during August/September.



The 2024-2025 maximum contribution amount is \$315 for the parking or transit FSA; this is also the maximum amount that can be spent or reimbursed each month.

Orders for your smart commute will need to be placed by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for funds to be available by the first of the following month.

Your order will be processed and funds loaded directly to your Ventra, Clipper, Breeze, or SmarTrip® card.

**Please review the following documents as needed:**

[How to submit an expense](#)

[What is Smart Commute](#)

[How to place a smart commute order](#)

[How to log into my VOYA account](#)

FSA Dependent Care funds also must be spent by September 30th.

**Any unspent funds will be forfeited.**

FSA Health Care will have a 2.5 month grace period (Dec 15th) but any unspent funds after this date will also be forfeited.

You can use your debit card that was mailed to your address on file or you may submit reimbursements online through your VOYA account.

If you cannot find your debit card then you can request a new one from VOYA but keep in mind that it may take 7-10 business days to arrive.

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## AIR-GAPPED SYSTEM SMARTATTACK:

HIGH SECURITY SYSTEMS MAY BE COMPROMISED THROUGH ELECTRONIC EXPLOIT CAPABLE OF STEALING SENSITIVE DATA VIA SMART DEVICES

SmartAttack, a novel side-channel threat developed by cybersecurity researcher Dr. Mordechai Guri, demonstrates how air-gapped systems, which are traditionally considered highly secure due to their physical isolation, may be covertly compromised using smartwatches and ultrasonic signals. The attack exploits wearable devices to capture inaudible acoustic signals generated by compromised computers and relay sensitive data via paired smartphones, which bypass conventional air-gap defenses. Despite the air gap, real-world incidents and proof-of-concept research confirm that determined attackers can exfiltrate data using overlooked vectors such as audio hardware and physical proximity. Detection is difficult, and prevention demands a combination of strict policy enforcement, hardware-level controls, and real-time environmental monitoring.



## Happy 5 Year Anniversary

Steven Altemus

Bianca Berrios

Your travel award is right around the corner! Be sure to check your TekSynap email at the end of the month.

## Anniversaries

### Twelve Years

Darrin Snyder  
Rob Kennett

### Eleven Years

Froilan Aquino  
Joseph Li

### Eight Years

Thomas Murphy  
Kearstin McGinnis  
Sean Pigford

### Six Years

Christopher Nelson  
Abunasser Shaheen

### Five Years

Steven Altemus  
Bianca Berrios

### Four Years

John Alfaro  
Shelby Rea  
Carlos Welch  
Matthew Lazzarino  
Christopher Hubert  
Evan Long  
Nicole Notarangelo  
Michael Jackson  
Mark Chapman  
John Evangelista

## Welcome, New Employees!

Robin Witherspoon  
Javier Fages Asencio  
Nakia Phillips  
Adam Obaidi  
Cary Amburn  
Emmanuel Mapoh  
Matthew Ghormley  
Joseph Jarrell  
Jeff Lehman  
Richard Segovia  
Stacy Green  
Regino Garza  
Patrick Kelly  
Jamal Armstrong  
Robert Bolyard  
Shelby Rackey  
Scot Maciver  
Jacob Kulas  
Jake Clayton  
Marisa Veseli  
Rehmat Khalid  
Decavis Powell  
Justus Scichowski  
Daniel Bateman  
Cedric Leake  
Tahir Awan  
Julian Martinez  
Jose Velazquez  
Nikeya Muldrow  
Daniel Pester  
Leon Bryant  
Alton Sinclair

### **Three Years**

Cory Brown  
Glynn Johnson  
Nicholas Caldwell  
Kenneth Wood  
Whitaker Mason  
Jay Patel  
Rabia Akbar  
Trudiann Prince  
Roy Omura  
David Shuck  
Zeenat Sardar  
Andre Toppin  
Christina Myers  
John Churchwell  
Irisann Glasgow  
Mikesh Shakya  
Abimbola Olaniyan  
Olasunkanmi Ogunbiyi  
Janet Braxton  
Christopher Hermance  
Bamidele Arawole  
Jack Darbre  
Mieszko Kruszewski  
Robert LeMay  
Tobias Karp-Leiss  
Edward Kingman  
Samuel Bilsky



### **Two Years**

Neville Hewitt  
Garrett Hunt  
Dennis Taylor  
Daniel Grathwol  
David Ramirez  
Juan McEntyre  
Nicholas Vanattia  
Alexander Kristobek  
Luna Addison  
Timothy Molden  
Anita Wray  
Nizam Lalputan  
Glenn Atchley  
Stephanie Devries  
Matthew MacPherson  
Mathew Dalton  
Ronak Shah  
Brian Villanueva  
Manjula Gunasekera  
Yousef Nazary

**One Year**

Bryan Leonard

Daniel Honegger

Alyssa Fort

Darius Toppin

Chase Macarthy

Luther Schallot

Dominique Hunter

Dejhane Harrison

Ralphele Taylor-Freeman

Li Miao

Edward Haynes

Jamaal Franklin

James Harker

George Dolak

Detavion Morgan

Howard Drake

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