

# ZACK BADDORF

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National security and foreign policy practitioner with a Secret DoD security clearance and nearly 20 years of experience tackling complex international issues on the frontlines of the world's conflicts, including Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central African Republic, Crimea, Kashmir, and the West Bank.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**MEDIA OPERATIONS CHIEF** — U.S. Air Force (Joint Base Andrews, Md.) — July 2019 to Present

- Serve as liaison to the White House, Department of State, Department of Defense, Secret Service and other agencies to facilitate national media coverage of senior American and foreign leaders, including the President.
- Lead and manage a team of military personnel to support high-profile events, including the dignified transfer of Rep. John Lewis' remains, the NDAA signing by the President and the 2021 inauguration. Coverage resulted in 35.9 billion views in broadcast media and online with an ad value equivalency of \$465 million.
- Work with military units and partners to develop and communicate policy on issues affecting service members, their families and the local community, such as the base's response to the COVID pandemic.

**CEO** — Expeditionary Communicators (40+ countries) — July 2012 to Present

- Create strategic communication plans, multimedia products, reports, fact sheets, briefings, and newsletters for clients such as the UN, International Rescue Committee, and U.S. Department of Agriculture to achieve strategic objectives. Write talking points and speeches for small business and non-profit leaders such as the executive director of the Green Beret Foundation.
- Researched and wrote a 40-page report on Russian-led disinformation campaigns in sub-Saharan Africa for NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence.
- Researched and wrote a 50-page human rights report for policy advocacy on addressing sexual violence in the Central African Republic by interviewing 100+ people and conducting 10 focus groups.
- Conducted training on strategic communications, media relations, media production, and social media for the U.S. military, non-profit organizations, small businesses, and academic institutions, including a U.S. Army Reserve unit, Boston College, the New York Film Academy and the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association.

**DIRECTOR, VISUAL MEDIA** — International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (D.C.) — Oct. 2016 to June 2021

- Develop and implement countering violent extremism policies to strategically challenge ISIS and al Shabaab propaganda by designing and disseminating counter narratives designed to dissuade potential recruits.
- Research and analyze evolving militant jihadist use of online media by interviewing former extremists in Syrian Kurdistan prisons and elsewhere to produce stories distributed in over 20 languages, annually reaching approx. 20 million people, mainly in Iraq.
- Serve as an expert panelist and present research at international counterterrorism events organized by the UN, NATO, the Kenyan government, the Jordanian military and others.
- Spearheaded the creation of The Real Jihad (a website designed to present arguments against joining extremist militant groups and positive alternatives to militant jihad) and Escape Hate (a similar site for white supremacists).

**FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT** — Various media outlets (40+ countries) — July 2012 to July 2019

- Produced video, radio, photo, print and analysis as a journalist for variety of news publications, such as NY Times, Washington Post, Associated Press, Reuters, Middle East Institute, and National Review.
- Interviewed foreign presidents, diplomats, legislators, fighters, police, soldiers, non-profit leaders, community leaders, and others in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Ukraine, and other conflict environments.
- Lived in and reported from the Central African Republic for a year, breaking the story of the American military ending its mission against the Lord's Resistance Army.
- Reported extensively on Syria crisis from rebel-held Syria, Kurdish Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, covering both intricacies of the conflict and the humanitarian aftermath. In-depth reporting on the Syrian town of Moadamiyah contributed to humanitarian access being granted to besieged people there.
- Covered the Ukraine conflict on the ground since the beginning -- from Euromaidan in Kyiv, from Crimea before and during the Russian invasion, and from Eastern Ukraine before and after the fighting began.

**LESSONS LEARNED ADVISOR** — U.S. Special Forces Command (Afghanistan) — Sept. 2011 to July 2012

- Collected and analyzed lessons learned from U.S. special operations forces by interviewing Green Berets, Navy SEALs and Marine Corps Special Operators, Afghan security forces, and other groups in hostile environments throughout Afghanistan. Presented proposed policy revisions on topics such as counterterrorism strategy, countering improvised explosive devices, governance, and cooperation with development organizations.
- Analysis was presented by SOF Commander Brig. Gen. Christopher Haas to ISAF Commander Gen. John Allen who then shared it when meeting with President Karzai about the future of the Afghan Local Police.

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**SOCIAL MEDIA & WEB MANAGER** — U.S. Central Command (Tampa, Florida) — Oct. 2010 to Aug. 2011

- Managed the external communications in five languages for USCENTCOM via its website, blog and social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube.
- Focused communications efforts on counterterrorism operations and U.S. military policy in the Middle East.
- Regularly developed and reported unbiased qualitative and quantitative data to senior DoD leaders.

**JOURNALISM ADVISOR** — Internews (South Sudan) — Jan. 2010 to Sept. 2010

- Advised and trained South Sudanese radio journalists on behalf of USAID at five community radio stations in remote rural areas of South Sudan in the run-up to the region's first democratic elections in 24 years.
- Developed and led workshops with key community leaders, security forces and reporters on human rights, freedom of expression, media's role in democratic societies, and other topics.

**PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER** — U.S. Peace Corps (Romania) — May 2008 to Jan. 2010

- Conducted two-day multimedia journalism workshops in 13 cities, teaching approximately 380 high school students, 65 teachers, eight university students, and eight journalists.
- Organized a week-long national journalism camp for 60 Romanian high school students, 10 Romanian teachers and 10 Peace Corps volunteers. Collaborated with U.S. Embassy Bucharest to garner interest nationwide.

**NEWS DIRECTOR** — U.S. Navy (USS Peleliu, San Diego) — Jan. 2005 to Sept. 2006

- Supervised 10 sailors in mid-level management role, leading the newspaper and newscast production.
- Earned top DoD photojournalism award for news coverage of the 1,800 embarked Marines conducting amphibious training.
- Deployed to the Middle East, including Iraq. Honorably discharged as non-commissioned officer.

**NEWS PRODUCER/REPORTER** — U.S. Navy (Tokyo, Japan) — Sept. 2001 to Jan. 2005

- Researched and reported from across Asia and the Pacific on U.S. foreign policy and military activities for AFN Pacific Report, a daily, internationally-broadcast 30-minute video news program broadcast to hundreds of thousands of deployed service members. Won multiple DoD media awards.
- Managed the production of AFN Pacific Report for one year with a team of Marines, airmen, sailors and soldiers. Also produced stories for the AFN radio newscast broadcast on American bases around the world.
- Worked with U.S. State Department and embassy staff throughout Asia to develop and coordinate talking points and key messages to promote U.S. policy interests.

## TEACHING

- Adjunct Professor, New York University (2016 to Present) — Teaches master's level classes on disinformation, public relations, communication law and ethics, and research.

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Term Member, Council on Foreign Relations (2020 to Present) — International affairs think tank comprised of government officials, scholars, nonprofit professionals, journalists, and educators.
- Defense Council Member, Truman National Security Project (2018 to Present) — National security think tank.
- Executive Director & Founder, Military Veterans in Journalism (2019 to Present) — Non-profit supporting fellow veterans in media. Raised about \$400,000 for programs. Developed partnerships with a range of newsrooms, non-profit organizations and companies, including Knight Foundation, Poynter, Institute for Nonprofit News, Washington Post, NPR, FUJIFILM, Disabled American Veterans, National Association of Broadcasters, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, City University of New York, and University of Mississippi.
- Senior Advisor, Lobo Institute (2019 to Present) — Consulting firm focused on conflict prevention and defense policy.
- New Leader, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs. A group of next generation leaders exploring the ethical dimensions of foreign policy.
- Board of Directors Chair, Free Speech Radio News (2008 to 2010) — Produced an internationally-broadcast radio program with a small staff and an annual budget of approximately \$500,000.

## EDUCATION

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY (2012-2014) — M.S. in Public Relations and Corporate Communication

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY (2010-2011) — M.A. in International Relations (Graduate Academic Honors; 4.00 GPA)

UNIV. OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS (2003-2005) — B.A. in Communications/Journalism (Dean's List)

CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK (2014-2016) — M.F.A. in Documentary Studies

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE — Project Management Professional (PMP)

## LANGUAGES

French / Spanish / Romanian / HTML / Python (n00b) / CSS