

ANS NCSD Newsletter Summer 2024

Member Highlight- James Cole

James is a nuclear criticality safety (NCS) engineer at Sandia National Laboratories (Sandia) and recently was appointed to the Deputy NCS Program Lead position. James received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Nuclear Engineering from the University of New Mexico in 2014 and 2016.

After completing his M.S, James began his career at Los Alamos National Laboratory supporting The Off-Site Source Recovery Program to remove excess, unwanted, or disused US-origin radioactive sealed sources that pose a potential risk to national security, health, and safety. Through this program he was able to travel to 9 countries providing training on the detection, packaging, and transportation of radioactive material that had fallen out of regulatory control.

In 2020 James started at Sandia supporting the NCS Program. James leads the NCS Program's training efforts for members of the work force, NCS engineer candidates, and emergency response personnel. He is the primary interface between NCS and the emergency response team at Sandia, as well as currently mentoring several of the NCS staff. James received a Sandia Director's Recognition Award for his work developing and providing a new training designed to educate emergency response personnel of the NCS hazards at Sandia and a 2024 Sandia Employee Recognition Award for a collaborative effort developing an Emergency Planning Hazards Assessment for Sandia's nuclear facilities.

Sandia operates one of the two available DOE criticality experiments facilities, providing unique opportunities to be involved in integral critical experimental design and execution as well as hands-on training. James has been able to attend the hands-on training at Sandia as well as at the National Criticality Experiments Research Center (NCERC) and has supported a feasibility study for a critical experiment design utilizing Annular Core Research Reactor (ACRR) fuel and 7uPCX fuel at the Sandia Pulse Reactor Facility (SPRF).

James is the current ANS NCSD Honors and Awards Committee Chair, the 2025 NCSD Topical Marketing Chair, and a member of the ANS/ANS-8.23 working group.

Outside of NCS, James likes to spend his time doing CrossFit, playing pickleball, and hiking with his husband Justin and two dogs Bailey and Gambit.



Site Highlight-Learning from Experience Database

At ICNC in Paris, France, in 2019, ORNL and staff from the United Kingdom, National Nuclear Laboratory, and subsequently, IRSN staff in France discussed submitting an NCSP proposal for a database to record Learning from Experience (LfE) relevant to the criticality safety community. The proposal was accepted by the NCSP Manager in FY2023. The goal of the database is to highlight experiences at other sites that might be applicable to the site/facilities (i.e., to help the reader answer the valuable questions of "is the event or learning relevant to my site/facility?" and "have I considered the possible events?"). Entries should include sufficient information to enable a reader to understand its relevance to their site/facilities. The hope is to share event lessons learned to assist with recovery events at other sites in the future. The database is now available on the NCSP website under "Information Preservation and Dissemination." Information about how to share an event can be found on the website along with contact information to help share your event with the community.

Reminders and Announcements:

Nominations are open for the Technical Excellence Award and the Distinguished Service Award. Please submit nominations to James Cole at jrcole@sandia.gov by September 1st.

The ANS NCSD Honors and Awards Dinner will be Wednesday, November 20th of the winter conference/expo!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Trainings/Classes:

- Manager CSO Course at SNL (Sept 9-13, 2024; Apr 14-18, 2025)
- Intermediate MCNP at LANL (Sept. 30-Oct 4, 2024)
- Introduction to MCNP Online (October 21-25, 2024)
- SCALE Criticality Safety Calculations @ORNL (Oct 28-Nov 1, 2024)
- Variance Reduction with MCNP6 at LANL (December 2-6, 2024)
- Manager CSO Course at NCERC (Dec 9-13, 2024; March 17-21, 2025)
- Two-week CSE course at NFO/NATM and NCERC/SNL (January 27- February 7, 2025)

Meeting Reminders:

- MCNP User Symposium (August 19-22, 2024, LANL/hybrid)
- Nuclear science week (October 21-25, 2024)
- ANS Winter Conference and Expo (Nov 17-21, 2024, Orlando, FL)
- 2025 Annual NCSP Technical Program Review (December 3-5, 2024, Santa Fe, NM)
- ANS Student Conference (April 3-5, 2025, Albuquerque, NM)
- ANS Annual Meeting (June 15-18, 2025, Chicago, IL)
- ANS NCSD 2025 (September 14-18, 2025, Austin, TX)