



Newsletter Issue No. 64

July 2021

## Life has no timeline

My name is Thomas Murphy, and I am the Director of Operations for TekSynap's Business Unit 3. The path that led me to TekSynap was a long and winding road. After several attempts at summarizing how I got here, I have given up, and decided to give you the long version. Apologies in advance for the heavy reading.

Since I was a kid, I have always had an aptitude for technology. Unfortunately for my parents, that manifested in the form of me taking apart my family's Compaq 486 computer that I had usurped for gaming and moderating bulletin board systems, a kind of pre-internet social media forum. Being the only one who understood anything about computers, I often found myself on the receiving end of accusations like "You must have done something to it, it's not working!" or "What did you do, you broke it!". Of course, it clearly wasn't me that had broken the internet! If only my sister could see that installing AutoCAD would have nothing to do with AOL being down! It wasn't all bad though, and I was lucky enough to have my parents send me to "computer camp" where I learned to code with Pascal and Basic, making rudimentary games and puzzles for our class assignments. However, as years passed and technology continued to advance, I found that other interests and pursuits, namely music, came to dominate my life.



From the first time I heard the music of my childhood heroes, Led Zeppelin, Stevie Ray Vaughn, and Pink Floyd, I knew that I wanted to be a musician. At 14, my parents bought me my first electric bass and with a little luck and persistence, I managed to land the role of lead bassist in my high school's Jazz Band. It was there I learned to love this uniquely American art form, mastering big band charts from the likes of Count Basie and Charles Mingus while at the same time memorizing the standards of Miles Davis and John Coltrane. Not to be left out of our local music scene, I found myself staying up all night, building my chops practicing the songs of Iron Maiden and Metallica to perform at our local battle of the bands. As I began to master my instrument, I decided that I wanted to pursue a degree in music, and all the warnings and lectures from family and friends on my future insolvency be damned!

With my mind made up, I enrolled in the music conservatory at the University of North Texas where I was to major in Jazz Performance Studies. However, I was soon to learn the first of many lessons, that no one cares if you have a degree in music if you are a bad musician, and likewise, no one cares if you have a degree in music if you can play like Hendrix and Joe

Pass! After two years in Denton, TX, I felt that maybe I had made a mistake and should hedge my bets with a “real” degree. The opportunity came when I discovered and enrolled in an exchange program for Bond University, a privately run school out of Queensland, Australia. My degree was to be international diplomacy and I was going to become a diplomat! Alas, my newfound career was cut short when I found out the visa my parents applied for was a visitors’ visa and not a student visa as I had thought. The reality soon sunk in that I had overstayed my welcome to the tune of 6 months. For any of you familiar with Australia’s immigration system, you will know they do not take to this kindly to folks overstaying their visa! I was left being unable to enter the country for a period of 3 years. Heartbroken, I applied and was accepted to Bond’s satellite school in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The next fall I found myself living in Sandton, a suburb in Gauteng Province, just outside of Johannesburg where I rented a room from an elderly Greek gentleman and drove a 1985 Mercedes 300D to and from class. The car, which I had rented from my landlord, came with a handgun under the front seat that I was commanded to have on me at all times. South Africa is a beautiful country with wonderful people and culture, and I loved the school and the friends I had made, but my security was and still is a major concern and I began to feel homesick for the country I had left behind. After a year, I was done living in a place where all homes and businesses were surrounded by 10-foot concrete walls with razor wire, and you couldn’t safely walk down the street.....to continue reading, [click here](#).

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## Caught in the Act

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Brian Peacoe would like to thank **Thomas Dyke** for his dedication to the accomplishment of the team’s mission which was vital during the period of an absent teammate.

Toni Fisher would like to give a shoutout to **Matt Davies** and **Kearstin McGinnis** for their effort put toward expanding our business globally with our first 2 employees in Germany.

Julie Ennis would like to extend her gratitude to **Ken Farber** for stepping up to complete a last-minute assignment for DLA with mere hours to spare before the deadline.

**Grace Jinnah** has designed a next-generation business card that is environmentally friendly and more convenient and efficient than old-school business cards. It transfers information wirelessly via QR code or Near Field Communications. Fantastic job, Grace!

The NGA EMS team would like to recognize the extraordinary efforts of the following individuals **Kaitlyn Eber**, **Ashley Frederick**, **Mario Pineda**, and **Grace Jinnah**.

**Pat Pocock** and **Lesley Quezergue**, congratulations on receiving kudos from the BOEM GOM Regional Director for your work on the High-Resolution Survey project.

**Lester Dunn** and **David Bourgeois** were acknowledged by BSEE and BOEM for Kofax Capture installation, configuration, and documentation.



Tami Devitt and David Bourgeois would like to thank **Rachel Bates** for the last-minute review of an EPA RFI.

**John Kornovich** received kudos from Tami Devitt and BOEM for his assistance with the new client technology.

*Don't forget to check your TekDollars balance and pick out TekSwag in the store.*

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## Understanding a data breach

There was a recent data breach of the popular website LinkedIn. During this breach, account details for over 700 million accounts were exposed. User information including email addresses, full names, phone numbers, physical addresses, geolocation, LinkedIn Usernames/profile URL, personal and professional experience/background, genders, and other linked social media accounts and

usernames were retrieved by bad actors. This includes private account data that was not set to be shared publically on the site.

The information stolen was put up for sale to the highest bidder on the Dark Web on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is very important to remember that after a data breach, there will be phone calls, emails, and other attempts at unsolicited communications from people who do not know you. These people may be attempting to reach out to manipulate you into clicking links or documents using your exposed personal information which gives them more legitimacy.

## Be on the lookout for the following tricks and schemes

### Emails:

- Emails from people or addresses you do not know asking you to review documents, click links, or see specialized offers.
- Very tailored emails that look legitimate and are focused on getting you to open a document that may contain malware which could give the bad actor full control over your device.
- Always check the sender's address, review all information on the email, and never open a document from an address you do not know and did not request communications from.

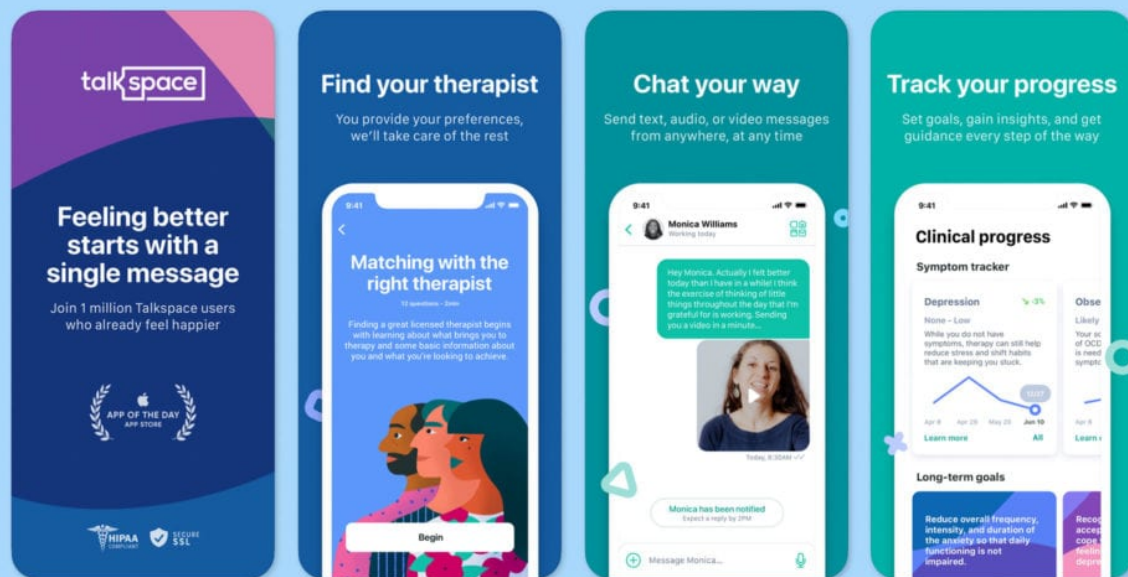
### Phone Calls:

- Calls from people or numbers you do not recognize. They will tell you your information. Is your name Jane Doe/John Smith and you live at 123 ABC Lane? Then they will go on to tell you additional information to prove they are legitimate before they ask you to provide more sensitive information about yourself.
- The caller may pretend to be someone from a business you do deal with and ask for a credit card number or banking information. When you receive a call you are not expecting, always ask for more clarification and question who is on the other end of the call.
- Always challenge unknown calls. Attackers work hard to gain your trust with stolen information so you will be vulnerable to follow-on actions.

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**Happy Retirement, Richard!**

Please join us in congratulating **Richard Conklin** on his retirement. Richard has had a distinguished career beginning with an impressive 28 years serving in the United States Air Force. Following his retirement from active duty in 2005, he was able to leverage his extensive technical and leadership experience to successfully transition into the private sector as a DoD contractor. He began working with the Defense Logistics Agency as a help desk analyst where his strong work ethic and natural leadership quickly led to him becoming the projects team lead. Richard made the transition to TekSynap in 2018 as a member of DLA's LAN South Team where we had the privilege to meet him for the first time. He once again proved to be an invaluable asset as he quickly became known as a subject matter expert and mentor to our team's engineers. In 2020, Richard would once again rise to the occasion when TekSynap asked him to earn several high-level certifications in order to fill a very important and highly visible position on the DLA Enterprise Telecommunications Network contract. In a matter of months, he acquired the needed certifications including the Program Management Professional, CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner, Check Point Certified Administrator, and Check Point Certified Expert certifications. His dedication and unfailing work ethic were apparent to all, earning him repeated praise from DLA as well as TekSynap partners. Throughout his time with TekSynap, Richard has been an invaluable member of the team and a friend to many. We would like to thank him for his service to our country and wish him the best as he transitions to his well-earned retirement!



## Talkspace and Cigna

### What is Talkspace?

Talkspace is an online therapy service that connects users to a dedicated, licensed therapist in their state of residence via private messaging or live video. Users can regularly message their dedicated therapist via text, voice, or video as life happens - anywhere, anytime. Therapists engage daily, 5 days per week. Founded with the mission to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health and make therapy available to all, Talkspace has a network of thousands of credentialed clinicians and has been used by over one million people.



### ***Is Talkspace confidential?***

Yes. Talkspace will not share your information with your organization. In order to protect confidentiality according to HIPAA, we require all users to create a unique nickname during the registration process, which is only shared with their therapists.

### ***Using Talkspace with Cigna:***

TekSynap Cigna health members can now access Talkspace through their behavioral health benefits plan. If you have Cigna through TekSynap then this is covered by your in-network deductible HRA account. If your in-network deductible has been met then it will follow your specialist coinsurance. If you are interested in using Talkspace with Cigna, [click here](#).

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## **Exciting Times!**

As we continue to grow and reach new customers, explore new technologies and emerge into the full and open market it's important we all consider where we fit and how our individual efforts impact the team's forward momentum. People are inherently resistant to change, as we all find comfort in the "known" however now is the time for us all to reach for the next level.

During our transition from a small business to an emerging large, all facets of our organization will be tested. It is a formidable challenge and one that all small businesses hope to face. It is through our collective strength that we will successfully emerge and continue our amazing growth that will lead to exciting opportunities at all levels within the company. We have made great progress so far this year with new wins at:

- **DOJ PPAMs in support of Department of Justice Office of the Chief Information Officer (DOJ/OCIO)** – The win continues to build our Program and Project management support at the OCIO level to include decision support, project management, budget operations, ISO 20000 and 27001 support, digital services and portfolio management.
- **Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Enterprise Windows Administration Services (EWAS)** – TekSynap provides skilled and experienced teams supporting Microsoft Windows Operating System Administration across NIPR / SIPR and all DLA domains and subdomains physical and cloud based. We also provide support to DLA Disaster Recovery (DR) and continuity of Operation Plans (COOP) on mission critical systems.
- **Army HR Transformation and Integrated Personnel and Pay System (IPPS-A) Training and Help Desk Support.** This was bid as a Full and Open opportunity. TekSynap won against 125 other potential ITES-3S bidders and replaced the incumbent, Booz Allen Hamilton. This win thrusts TekSynap into the Army spotlight of a massive HR Transformation effort that is scheduled to continue through 2025, with the next major release of IPPS-A due in Dec 2021 for which we will be building the course curriculum, providing train-the-trainer courses, as well as providing HR system Help Desk Support for multiple HR systems that are being replaced by IPPS-A.
- **NRC GLINDA Mission Application Systems (MAS)** - TekSynap provides Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) application development and O&M support for four of the NRC's critical applications. MAS is a suite of tools built on a variety of platforms to include Enterprise Project Management System (EPM), replacement Reactor Program System (RRPS or RPS), Enterprise Docket Management System (EDMS), and Mission Analytics Portal (MAP)
- **VA Annual Property Inventory Services for Midwest** - This is a multi-award, Blanket Purchase Agreement for 5 years. The task involves conducting wall-to-wall equipment inventory scanning of an estimated 800,000 available assets and identify the assets not located in the VA MAXIMO database for VA VISNs 10, 12, 15, and 23 which makes up the mid-west region of the country and consists of 33 VA Main medical facilities and their child sites.
- **U.S. Army Information Systems Engineering Command (ISEC) Database**

In keeping with our tradition of climbing the tallest mountains, we are emerging into the full and open market during an unprecedented time that has closed many traditional paths of a growing business – personal contact. The pandemic has certainly created uncharted territory and required us all to adapt to a “new normal”. Our collective ability to adapt and overcome has truly inspired me. I’m continually amazed at what our teams are accomplishing across the company on both the customer-facing and corporate sides. Thank you all for your resolve and dedicated efforts in keeping our customers and our team moving forward and embracing the change.

With all growth, new challenges and opportunities present themselves. At the end of the day, remember our core strengths and ensure you remain true to those... Solid technical performance that produces tangible results for our customers and professionalism and respect in dealing with everyone you encounter, will serve you well! Enjoy the journey and remember all of us are stronger than any of us.

–MJ

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## Tiny Team TekSynap!

### Jeremiah Nance's New Baby!



Jeremiah Nance and his wife Alix welcomed their baby boy this past weekend. His name is Forrest Bodhi Nance.







## Kearstin McGinnis' Puppies!

Meet Huck (3 yo) and Harper (6 months)!

Both are Hound Dogs and love their naps! Harper loves to play with her big brother and he is adjusting to having her around.

Favorite Nap Spot: My Office

Favorite Toy: Anything the other is playing with



## Rachel Bate's New Fowl!



Joy was born at the beginning of June this year and she is a bundle of love!



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

## Sara Thompson's Bunny

Syrup (sometimes Mr. Bunny Boo) is New Orleans team member Sara Thompson's 6 month old Holland Lop that loves to run in circles, binkies (jump straight up in the air

and twist and kick), eat a LOT of hay and is just adorable.



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## ADP Verification

Please review your personal profile in ADP. This information is used for your taxes and health benefits.

You will need to double-check:

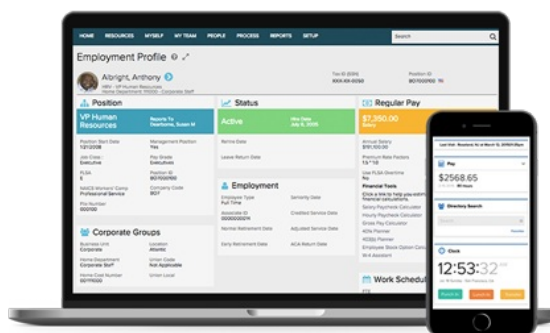
**The spelling of your name**

**Date of birth**

**SSN**

**Address**

**Phone Number**



To complete this task, continue to the [employee portal](#)

Click the “ADP Employee & Managers” button

Log in with your TekSynap credentials

Myself > My Information > Profile

If you have any questions, please reach out to [HR@teksynap.com](mailto:HR@teksynap.com).

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## Get your annual exam!

This is a friendly reminder to make time for your health. Many people may have skipped their annual exam last year due to COVID.

### What is an annual exam?

This is when your Primary Care Provider (PCP) checks all areas of your health—physical, as well as emotional. This can help detect any health concerns early before they become major medical problems. A face-to-face visit with your doctor will be needed so they can do a head-to-toe check. Every annual physical exam will vary due to your age and gender. They can help you avoid more serious and frequent visits from being needed in the future.



If you are enrolled in the Cigna Medical plan, annual wellness exams are covered at 100% with in-network providers.

Not with Cigna, that is okay! Most health plans are required by law to cover eligible preventive care services at 100% with in-network providers.

No insurance at all, also okay! Please [click here](#), to search the free/discounted clinics throughout the U.S.A.

If you want an example of what may be included, [click here](#).



## Certification Corner

**Jim Butler**

PMP

**Cole Withers**

Network+

**Jike-Ere**

ITIL Foundation

**Rhett Richoux**

AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner

**Williams Asiamah**

PMP

**Michelle Norris**

AIRS Professional Recruiter Certification

**Kearstin McGinnis**

AIRS Professional Recruiter Certification



We encourage employees to use the Employee Learning Program (ELP) Benefit.

[Click Here](#) to access the form and submit it to your manager for approval.

**If you have received a new certification please add it to ADP  
and include an effective date**

ADP > Myself > My Information > Profile

And email a copy to [HR@teksynap.com](mailto:HR@teksynap.com)

Updating your certifications in ADP will help us grow your career through advancement opportunities.

## DOI - BOEM - TEKSYNAP

The Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR) manages offshore resources in Federal waters off the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. The TekSynap Resource Evaluation (RE) Team provides an array of support to the BOEM geologists, geophysicists, petroleum engineers, physical scientists, biologists, environmental protection specialists, and environmental scientists for managing the development of the nation's offshore resources in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

TekSynap's RE Team was recently the featured "Team of the Week" for the digital BOEM "Currents" portal. "Currents" provides news and information to all of BOEM GOMR and TekSynap is the only contractor team to be featured!

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## Open Positions

### **DOT EITSS – Washington, DC**

Power BI Platform Administrator  
Dynamics 365 and Power Platform Administrator

### **DOT EITSS – Colorado**

Business Intelligence Developer

### **NRC-SNCC**

Sr. O365/Azure Systems Administrator

### **Senate ITSC – Washington, DC**

Help Desk Tier III Network Technician  
System Consultant  
Email Queue Coordinator  
Service Delivery Coordinator  
Sr SharePoint Developer/Admin

### **Wireless – Remote**

Configuration Analyst

### **USITC ITSDSS – Washington, DC**

Windows Administrator  
Network Analyst

### **DLA ESD – Fort Belvoir, VA**

Senior Computer Operator – Fort Belvoir, VA

### **DLA ESD – Oklahoma City, OK, Richmond, VA and New Cumberland, PA**

Computer Operator

### **DLA WAN – Multiple locations**

Network Engineer

### **NETOPS – Remote**

Network Engineer



Please email your referral resumes to [careers@teksynap.com](mailto:careers@teksynap.com)

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## Referral Program



TekSynap offers \$3,000 for candidates that fill a cleared position and \$1,000 for non-cleared positions.

Please visit the employee portal [here](#) to learn more.



## Anniversaries

### Eight Years

Robert Kennett  
Darrin Snyder

### Seven Years

Elpidio Froilan Aquino  
Joseph Li  
Leon Faircloth

### Three Years

Michael Foote  
Steven Yingst  
Patrick Miller  
Sean Pigford  
Kearstin McGinnis  
Thomas Murphy

### Two Years

Tracy Shurtleff  
Abunasser Shaheen  
Pancratius Chuba  
Kimberly Snyder  
Martha Wadsworth  
Mitchell Clouse  
Christopher Nelson

### One Year

Shane Rivers  
Bianca Berrios  
Cheyenne Patty  
Chelsea Townes  
Steven Altemus  
Vera Dydson-Dzissah  
William Ford

## Welcome, New Employees!



Kelly Keyser  
Michael Adeyemi  
Sarah Fritz  
Edison Clarke  
Sean Hollern  
Erick Perez  
Loren Dingli  
Tyler LeGrand  
Bryan Massey  
Rashida Smith  
John Evangelista  
Ramina Rouhani (Welcome Back)  
Eathon Chaney  
Mackenzie Fisher  
Joseph Paul  
Logan Bennett  
Derek Edwards  
Charles Hill-Taylor  
Dondre Robinson-Green  
Mark Chapman  
Andrew Montz  
Fara Wiles  
Ryan Ritch

