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Dr. James Watson Inducted into SES Corps

By Aerial Storey



Dr. Eric Moore presented Dr. James Watson with the SES certificate during Watson's SES Induction Ceremony held at DEVCOM CBC on January 18, 2024, recognizing him as the Center's newest Engineering Director. (U.S. Army photo by Ellie White)

Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD – Dr. James “Jim” Watson was formally inducted into the Senior Executive Service (SES) Corps and recognized as Director of Engineering for the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Chemical Biological Center (DEVCOM CBC) in a ceremony at Aberdeen Proving Ground's Edgewood campus on Jan. 18.

As the Center's Director of Engineering, Watson

oversees a staff of roughly 500 engineers, scientists, logisticians, and other highly skilled professionals who work to design, build, test and sustain Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) capabilities for the joint warfighters and other customers.

Watson joins more than 8,000 other members in the Senior Executive Service (SES) Corps, which was established in 1978 to be a corps of executives to serve in key governmental positions not filled by top presidential appointees. It is the highest civilian service in the government and is extended only to those federal employees who demonstrate professional integrity.

Watson's position was made official during a pinning ceremony where he was joined by friends and colleagues, both in person and virtually. DEVCOM's Deputy to the Commanding General Dr. Eric L. Moore officiated the ceremony. During his remarks, Moore shared Watson's contributions to the Department of Defense (DoD) as a whole and highlighted the value of Watson's leadership and expertise in the field. “Jim has worked on many assignments and did amazing work to make programs successful,” Moore said. “He's very passionate about what he does



and, most of all, he takes care of people. We are very pleased to have him, and I look forward to seeing him succeed in this role.”



DEVCOM CBC Engineering Director Dr. James Watson was inducted into the Senior Executive Service Corps on Jan. 18. DEVCOM Deputy to the Commanding General Dr. Eric Moore adorned Watson with the SES pin during the Induction Ceremony. (U.S. Army photo by Ellie White)

During the ceremony, Moore swore Watson into the SES Corps as he took the oath of office. Watson was then adorned with the SES pin and presented with the SES certificate and flag.

“I am excited to join this position given the remarkable legacy,” Watson said during his remarks. “I’m only successful because of the people around me. So, I want to thank you for allowing me to have a great, new opportunity.”

Watson has served in the DoD in the chemical biological defense field as a scientist and leader for more than 12 years. Prior to entering his current position, Watson was the Deputy Program Executive Officer for the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (PEO ACWA) headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground. He was responsible for assisting the Program Executive Officer with the oversight of all aspects of operations at the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Colorado, the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant in Kentucky, and PEO ACWA’s Anniston Field Office in Alabama. Under Watson’s leadership, the PEO ACWA team destroyed the last munition in the U.S. declared chemical weapons stockpile.

Before joining the PEO ACWA team, Watson served as an Associate Director of the U.S. Army’s Operational Applications Directorate at DEVCOM CBC. In his role, he was responsible for leading strategic initiatives, including technical direction and management oversight of the Center’s BioTesting Division. During this time, he led the successful return of the BioTesting Division to full operational status after a five-year moratorium on their work with biological agents and toxins.

Watson received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Missouri in 2000 and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Maryland in 2006. He was awarded the Civilian Service Commendation Medal in 2022 and the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal in 2023.



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###30###

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The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) Chemical Biological Center (CBC) is aligned under the U.S. Army Futures Command (AFC) and U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM.)

AFC provides Army modernization solutions (integrated concepts, organizational designs, and technologies) in order to allow the Joint Force, employing Army capabilities, to achieve overmatch in the future operation environment. DEVCOM is a major subordinate command of AFC. DEVCOM leads in the discovery, development, and delivery of technology-based capabilities to enable Soldiers to win our nation's wars and come home safely. DEVCOM CBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering, and field operations. DEVCOM CBC is headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.