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Episode 8

DATAWorks 2022: Day 3 Attendee Reactions



DATAWorks

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DATAWorks 2022: Day 3 Attendee Reactions

IDA Ideas host Rhett Moeller spoke to Breeana G. Anderson and Kelso W. “Kelly” Horst Jr., researchers in the IDA Systems and Analyses Center, about their experiences as attendees on the first day of the Defense and Aerospace Test and Analysis Workshop (DATAWorks) 2022, held at IDA in Alexandria, Virginia, on April 26-28.

[Begin transcript]

Rhett Moeller: Hello listeners, I’m Rhett Moeller the host of *IDA Ideas*. Welcome back to the third and final installment of our end-of-day podcast shorts for the 2022 DATAWorks workshop. If you’ve listened to our previous two shorts in this series, you’ll know that DATAWorks is a premier annual event dedicated to bringing together a community centered around applying rigorous statistical approaches to test design and data analysis, particularly in the fields of defense and aerospace. This workshop is the product of a collaboration between the Institute for Defense Analyses, the Director of Operational Tests and Evaluation, NASA, and the American Statistical Association. We find ourselves at the end of the third and final day, and with a glance at the schedule of events, it’s been a full week of information and opportunities to get to know other thinkers in the area of defense and aerospace and how to evaluate advances in these areas. I’m joined in the recording studio by Breeana Anderson and Kelly Horst, both from IDA’s Operational Evaluation Division [OED]. Can you take a moment to introduce yourselves?

Breeana Anderson: Yeah. Hello Rhett, my name is Breeana Anderson. I have been at IDA for almost seven years now, and I have worked in a variety of functions within the Operational Evaluation Division first supporting army systems and now in support of test science.

Kelly Horst: Hi Rhett, my name is Kelly Horst. I’m a research staff member in OED. I was in the Army 27 years and had the great opportunity of joining IDA about five years ago, and I work primarily on land fire support systems.

Rhett Moeller: The first question is an easy one. Was there a particular presentation throughout the three-day course that really stood out to you? Anything that really jumped out and made you think, “man this was great”?

Breeana Anderson: Yeah, I wanted to highlight the panel that we had this morning on data-centric organizations. It was great to hear from a variety of people in the field who are really in the trenches, I think, of trying to get at and solve the problems and some of the concerns we have with evolving these data-centric organizations, so I really enjoyed listening to some of the solutions they’ve come up with to some of the overarching themes that they’ve seen. But then, just their

honesty about the hard part of their job every day because I think we sometimes forget about how those little things are actually very big problems.

Rhett Moeller: Great. Kelly?

Kelly Horst: Yeah Rhett, I think I found value in all the presentations I attended. I thought it was great to hear our primary sponsor, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, Mr. Guertin, speak this morning. That's first time I've heard him speak in person. He shared some of his priorities, but he shared an interesting quote, he said that this was like "the rising tide that raises all the boats." As an Army guy I had to think about it a little bit, but we're all together here at DATAWorks, trying to figure out ways to do our business better. I thought that was a great way to summarize the workshop.

Rhett Moeller: Perfect. Breeana, so I get the impression you've attended more than one DATAWorks. Is that correct?

Breeana Anderson: Yes.

Rhett Moeller: Yeah, and, obviously, Kelly you said that you had, having attended several I think this is helpful for perspective, where do you find the greatest value?

Breeana Anderson: I really do believe the greatest value is being able to share our ideas with the community, and more specifically, and Mr. Guertin alluded to this this morning as well, being able to actually make our ideas more widely known. So, getting out of the silos that we currently work in and sharing ideas across communities. He spoke about external publication is one way to do it, but I think that this conference is another great way for us to be able to share those ideas and disseminate them so that we can have these great follow-up conversations in the community as well.

Rhett Moeller: I can see that.

Kelly Horst: So, I think the greatest value is, I think we all have ways of doing things and how we attack our problems, and we get here and we hear different methods and great ideas that could make our work more efficient with the same statistical rigor. I think that's the greatest value. If we can do what we do better and more efficiently. This is a great source of ideas to get there.

Rhett Moeller: Gotcha. Conferences like these tend to improve over time and offer new things. Was there something this year that maybe stood out and grabbed you, that was particularly interesting?

Breeana Anderson: I think I really enjoyed having these three very unique keynote addresses that we heard over the last two days. They all had a common theme though, and that theme to me was this workforce change, and that's what we're all here to do in this conference, right, is to create change and to learn both from the expertise level, and from the process level, but also culturally, and I think that a lot of what we're talking about in terms of data-centric organizations requires cultural changes from the top.

Rhett Moeller: Kelly?

Kelly Horst: Yeah Rhett. So, this year's program, you know, I saw on day two the speed sessions. And I thought, how could I pass up an opportunity to hear 19 briefs in three hours? Sort of like the appetizer sampling platter. So, I went and sat through all of them. It was great. Even though each speaker had only eight or nine minutes to talk, it was a great intro to multiple ideas in that single day, and it brought a lot of attention to their poster sessions too. I thought it was great. I got to hear three of the West Point cadets brief that I'll be working with here in the near future.

Rhett Moeller: Wonderful. Thank you, Breeana and Kelly for taking the time to share your experience.

Breeana Anderson: Thank you.

Kelly Horst: Thank you, Rhett.

Rhett Moeller: Listeners, if you haven't yet taken the time to listen to our previous discussions, please take a few minutes to do so. As before, we link to the DATAWorks site in the episode show notes. So, if you've missed the program this year, or just need a refresher about the various presentations and learning opportunities available, it's all laid out there. As always, thank you for joining us. Although our coverage for this year's workshop wraps with this episode, we have other episodes that cover topics of relevance to national security and international events. So please do check out our other offerings, and we look forward to sharing more big ideas with you soon.

Show Notes

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Learn more about these and other events during DATAWorks 2022 at <https://dataworks.testscience.org/full-agenda/>.