

Roxana Leal and Dylan Cohen Receive David S. C. Chu Award for Excellence in Research

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (January 2026) — Roxana Leal and Dylan Cohen received the 2025 David S. C. Chu Award for Excellence in Research. The award recipients are Research Associates, Roxana in the Cost and Analysis and Research Division (CARD) of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center, and Dylan in IDA's Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI) FFRDC.

The award, named in honor of the former IDA President, is presented annually to a Research Associate who has made one or more outstanding analytic contributions in support of IDA's mission.

“As policy analysts, Roxana and Dylan have demonstrated exceptional intellectual rigor, independence of thought and dedication in producing high-impact research,” said IDA President Norty Schwartz. “I offer my congratulations and thank them for their extraordinary work.”

Roxana's recent coauthored paper, “Place-Based Variation in Health Care: Evidence from Mandatory Movers in the U.S. Military Health System,” exemplifies her ability to produce innovative, high-quality research that elevates both the scholarship within the Department of War and IDA's reputation in rigorous economic research. In this paper, Roxana and her coauthors, CARD researchers John Zhou and Patrick Luan, look at how the mandatory relocation of U.S. military personnel and their dependents drives regional variation in health care utilization.

Dylan has worked on a range of topics including crisis scenario crafting for tabletop exercises (TTXs), space policy and the assessment of Earth-observing systems. In 2024, he led a task that facilitated a TTX on the development and operation of the National Strategic Computing Reserve, a body of federal computing resources that research communities can use in times of crisis to help save lives and property. The TTX involved Office of Management and Budget and White House Office of Science and Technology Policy decisionmakers.

Roxana holds a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics from Johns Hopkins University. Dylan holds master's degrees in technology and public policy and in planetary science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He also holds bachelor's degrees in physics and in public policy from the University of Chicago.

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