

David Nesting

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Washington, DC

Who I Am

I am an engineering leader, with an emphasis in complex systems, resiliency, and solving problems. My superpowers include working with empathy, communicating with non-technical leaders, and adapting. I enjoy edge cases, adversarial thinking, and being hands-on. My interests range from hacking electronics to public policy.

Qualifications

- Can effectively lead small task forces and large product delivery teams
- Ran a CIO organization in the federal government, procurement, law
- Can design, build, and support modern large-scale systems that are available, scalable, and secure against common threats
- Can understand and troubleshoot complex systems at all layers of the stack
- Can write efficient and readable code (Go, Python, others)

Overview of security clearances available on request.

Experience

Self-Employed, March 2025 - Present

- Multiple speculative Artificial Intelligence and Software Defined Radio projects, public safety communications incident tracking, SDR orchestration on Kubernetes, AI agent workflow and orchestration
- Home Kubernetes lab
- Secure network design and deployment for a 30-unit residential building
- Guest Lecturer on Privacy Engineering for the Vanderbilt Policy Accelerator
- Additional consulting engagements in New York City and Washington, DC

Expert Witness, Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), May 2025

- Consulted on IT modernization, cybersecurity, and privacy
- Testified as an Expert Witness at the US District Court for the Southern District of New York

Vega-Bray Observatory Rehabilitation, March 2025

Rehabilitated the Observatory's telescope, which had not seen light in 15 years.

- Reverse engineered the dome control system, delivered schematics and run book
- Reverse engineered the telescope's drive and tracking system
- Built a custom hardware control system, directly interfacing with the telescope's hardware
- Wrote custom drive and tracking software, accepting inputs from a hand controller

AI and Cybersecurity Advisor to the Federal CIO, 2024 - 2025

The White House, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

- AI, Cybersecurity, and Technology Modernization policy and implementation advisor to the Federal CIO
- Artificial Intelligence Lead at OMB, collaborating heavily between IT, policy, records, and legal teams
- Technology Advisor to the OMB Chief Information Officer on AI, data, cybersecurity, and modernization
- Led a Technology Modernization Fund Discovery Sprint
- Fired by DOGE

SRE and Infrastructure Team Manager, Rebellion Defense, 2021-2023

Rebellion Defense is an AI-focused defense startup.

- Designed and built cloud (AWS, Kubernetes) infrastructure, tooling (Terraform) and software, and AI and novel infrastructure for Rebellion projects
- Managed a team of ~12 Site Reliability Engineers and Software Engineers
- Improve resiliency, maintainability, and operational support
- Kubernetes, GPUs, Go

Deputy CIO, US Office of Personnel Management 2019-2021

- Stabilization of high-value assets. Led a mainframe modernization activity to improve OPM's disaster preparedness and manage risk associated with multiple single points of failure.
- COVID-19 response. Introduced the agency to modern collaboration tools, such as Zoom and Slack, to prepare the agency for extended majority-telework.

- Served as technology partner to the OPM CIO, focused on investigating the technology landscape at the agency and advising the CIO organization on risk, modern practices, and engineering
- Led a deep dive into call center issues resulting in disastrous customer experience, ultimately resulting in the formation of a cross-disciplinary team of 40 people all working on a cross-section of the problem from a process, self-help, and technology platform perspective. Built a fully-functional, call-accepting reproduction of the call center using cloud tools in about 3 hours to disprove the belief that this was a multi-year level of effort.
- One time I had to build a Prometheus-based monitoring system from scratch in order to effectively troubleshoot a problem for which we had no visibility.
- One time I had to reverse engineer the agency's correspondence tracking system because it finally died and nobody knew how it worked and we needed the records out of it.
- Generally advise on cybersecurity

US Digital Service, 2014-2019

The White House, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Director of Engineering from 2017-2019:

- Mentored a community of ~50 SREs, SWEs, and Data Engineers spread across several agencies
- Supervised work assignments for 25
- Represented engineering and IT to agency and White House leadership
- Recruiting, speaking at round tables and conferences
- Helped build the engineering hiring process

Site Reliability and Security Engineer from 2014-2019. Projects included:

- Multiple rapid response and modernization efforts, including security and availability incidents, at HHS/CMS, GSA, State, Army, DOJ, and other agencies
- Identified, build, and managed collaboration and records tools
- Security Engineering, performing code reviews, advice on prioritization and mitigation.
- One time I wrote an ASP parser and data flow analyzer to automatically generate code fixes for thousands of vulnerabilities in a government system
- Various projects, researching and advising on security threats and capabilities of nation-state adversaries
- Advised on professional and personal infosec threats to projects and USDS employees, and built and conducted bi-monthly security training and workshops for USDS.

Google

Site Reliability Engineer from 2007-2014 (7.5 years), on the logs infrastructure team, managing all layers of the logs infrastructure, including hardware, OS, and service, and supporting Google's legal and privacy teams. Projects included on-call, data integrity, privacy, access control, data availability, large-scale data migration, security, and hiring.

AT&T

Technical Architect and similar roles, from 1999-2007 (8 years), as a technical lead supporting www.att.com and similar sites. Shifted team from a traditional production operations team to a DevOps model.

Texas Networking, Inc.

Engineer, from 1995-1999 (approx.), as a member of the engineering staff. This was a small/startup regional ISP.

Education

Texas A&M, Computer Engineering major, 1998