

# Champion of COVID Response

Zachary P. Schwartz

Operations Research Analyst

**US Military Entrance Processing Command**

Years of Service: 3



## **Summary:**

Continuously since March 2020, Mr. Schwartz has demonstrated exceptional professionalism and competence providing mission-critical planning and decision-making information about COVID-19 distribution, trends, and risk factors customized for each of our 67 nationwide sites where we screen applicants seeing to join the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Description:** Mr. Schwartz's work as a data scientist significantly contributed to the safety and well-being for USMEPCOM personnel, for applicants screened at MEPS for entrance into the US Armed Forces, and for recruiters who bring those applicants to MEPS. By harvesting authoritative national and state COVID-19 data from Johns Hopkins University, validating, analyzing, and then applying the data in his customized models, he was able to provide clear, actionable awareness of COVID-19 conditions at each of the 65 MEPS plus remote sites and Headquarters. The heat maps along with other supporting products created every week were not only analytically sound and artistically elegant, but more importantly "intuitive to grasp, despite the great complexity and challenges of the underlying data.

His products underpinned mission-critical COVID-19 planning, risk management, and decision-making both Command wide and with nationwide Recruiting Services and Basic Training Stations. These products are also shared with the Joint Accession Community, Department of Defense (DOD) Accession Policy, DoD Personnel and Readiness, and Secretary of Defense. It has sustained manning activities and mission Readiness for the All-Volunteer Force.

Mr. Schwartz continues regular professional development activities to enhance his ability to support USMEPCOM's mission. He maintains an active professional development plan. His mastery level competencies in applied statistics, advanced quantitative methods and a mindset of a continuous learner is a contributing factor to his ability to produce useful, actionable information from the extensive and often variably reliable COVID-19 data.

Mr. Schwartz is enrolled in a prestigious 1-year online data science course with Naval Postgraduate School. His conscientious professional development and application of skills in USMEPCOM's complex multi-Service data analysis and reporting environment has made Mr. Schwartz a preeminent data scientist within the DOD Accession Community

Mr. Schwartz always helps colleagues in the Command Advisory Group as well as other elements of the Joint Staff. This spirit of volunteerism and teamwork applies wherever and whenever he can contribute. He relishes simplifying the complex to create clear comprehension. Related recent contributions include supporting command working groups with workforce modeling and requirements analysis. He is equally at home supporting morale and team building activities and was known, pre-COVID 19, to lead a jazz band with his smooth tenor saxophone.