
Lindsay Thomas Kough



Chief of Staff Office of the Under Secretary of the Navy

Lindsay Thomas Kough, KM was sworn in as the 3rd Chief of Staff to the Under Secretary of the Navy on July 27, 2020. He previously served as CEO of several startups, and as a senior private bank executive.

Mr. Kough graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) in 1988 with a Bachelor of Science in political science, and was commissioned an ensign in the U.S. Navy. Prior to USNA, he studied religion, philosophy, and public policy at Regis College (now Regis University) and the University of Denver. While studying at Regis College, Mr. Kough attended U.S. Marine Corps Officer Candidate School, Platoon Leaders Course, Junior Course in June/July 1982.

Mr. Kough graduated Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training in April 1989, and was designated a naval special warfare/SEAL officer in December 1989. His first operational assignment was SEAL Team THREE where in 1990 he deployed in a special operation platoon that trained foreign counterparts throughout the Western Pacific. In 1991, he served as Team Commander of the U.S. Navy Parachute Team, the “Leap Frogs,” and studied Japanese at the Defense Language Institute in 1992.

He left active duty in 1993, continuing his naval service in the Navy Reserve where he served at numerous commands to include as Commanding Officer of NR SEAL Team ONE; Commanding Officer, NR Commander Amphibious Squadron FIVE; Aide-de-Camp/Personal Security for the Director, Public Affairs, Multi-National Forces – Iraq (MNF-I); and Maritime Plans Officer, Special Operations Command, Central (SOCCENT). In 1998, he attended and graduated the Public Affairs Officer Course at the Defense Information School in Ft. Meade, Maryland.

From October 2004 through March 2006, Mr. Kough was mobilized back on active duty as Special Assistant to Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group ONE; Special Operations Liaison Element (SOFLE) commander, US Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya; and Maritime Plans Officer, J-3 Special Operations Division [now Special Operation Command, Northern (SOCNORTH)]. Once off active duty, he continued to serve in the reserves as Executive Assistant to Commander, Fourth Air Force; Special Projects

Officer, Intelligence Directorate, Defense Threat Reduction Agency; and Public Affairs Officer, Joint Public Affairs Support Element, US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM).

Initially he began his private sector career as a financial consulting executive with CIGNA Financial Advisors (vice president at what is now Sagemark Consulting). He subsequently led private bank, trust and investment teams as president, First Western Trust Bank, DTC | Cherry Hills; as regional wealth advisor for 14 States at JPMorgan Private Client Services (now JPMorgan Private Bank); and as vice president, Key Private Bank.

While at JPMorgan in 2006, Mr. Kough co-founded and served as a director of Gryphon Airlines, an American-owned passenger airline serving the U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. government contractors. From 2007 through 2011, the airline provided daily flights from Kuwait International Airport into Baghdad, Iraq, and from Dubai International Airport into Kandahar and Bagram Air Bases, Afghanistan. He also led the airlines' air operations team in Kandahar, Afghanistan, from 2009 to 2010. In 2011, Mr. Kough sold Gryphon Airlines and went on to focus on other entrepreneurial pursuits. Mr. Kough is a Knight of Malta in the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta (Order of Malta); a former board member of the Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum; an alumnus of The Honor Foundation; and a founder in Boomtown Accelerators' Cohort 12.

Mr. Kough has two sons, and continues to honor the legacy of his late daughter.