



John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellowship Program



Leah Hickert

Cohort 5 Fellow, John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellowship Program

Organization: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Education:

- Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs, Master of International Affairs, International Security Policy
- Boston College, Bachelor of Arts, International Studies & Political Science

Leah is honored to serve as a McCain fellow and seeks to lay the foundation for a long career in public service. She looks forward to learning more about the Department of Defense's role in shaping the U.S. foreign policy landscape and leveraging her expertise to support the development of strategic, insightful policy. Her research focuses on the intersection of security issues and humanitarian crises, with a specialization in counterterrorism, conflict resolution, and stabilization efforts in the Middle East. Prior to joining the Department of Defense, Leah worked as a program manager and research associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Middle East Program. Additionally, she has interned across sectors at the United Nations, the Department of State, and peacebuilding non-profits abroad. Born and raised in Colorado, Leah enjoys hiking as much as possible in the DMV area.

