

Biography of Sterling Thomas, GAO's Chief Scientist



Sterling Thomas is GAO's Chief Scientist. Sterling helps lead GAO's science and technology work with GAO's Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics (STAA) team. STAA provides Congress with foresight, oversight, and insight on the most pressing science and technology issues. The team assesses emerging and evolving technologies, evaluates their application in government, and examines their impact on society. Prior to joining GAO in October 2023, Sterling was Chief Scientist at Noblis, a nonprofit research institute. He managed the institute's applied research programs and conducted his own research projects, which included creating new methods for synthetic biology and methods for using artificial intelligence to detect sophisticated cyberattacks. Sterling also served as a principal investigator where his research was funded by the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity, and other intelligence community partners. Sterling earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Integrated Life Sciences from Virginia Commonwealth University, a Master's in business administration from Columbia University, and a Bachelor of Science from Old Dominion University. He also holds four patents for inventions related to analysis of genetic sequences without assembling, detecting low signals in high noise environments, and machine learning, and he has multiple patent applications pending.