

# George Peter Nanos

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**George Peter (Pete) Nanos** is a former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and Vice Admiral in the US Navy. Having served from January 2003 to May 2005, he was one of the shortest serving directors of the laboratory.

## Early life

Nanos is from Bedford, New Hampshire. He received his bachelors degree at the United States Naval Academy in 1967 and his doctorate in physics from Princeton University in 1974.

## Los Alamos

He took the helm at Los Alamos in the wake of a string of allegations and scandals involving security, safety and business issues. Initially he was given the title "director", but in July 2003 he was made a permanent director by the University of California without any further search.

Controversy continued during his tenure including: a case of suspected missing classified disks (which turned out never existed, but were thought to be missing due to a flawed LANL procedure for tracking the bar codes affixed to classified media), improper charges on lab credit cards, and a student injuring her eye with a laser ([1] ([http://www.bnl.gov/esh/shsd/ih/PDF/NREL\\_LASER\\_INC.pdf](http://www.bnl.gov/esh/shsd/ih/PDF/NREL_LASER_INC.pdf)) PDF). Nanos made the unprecedented decision to stop all normal operations of core functions at the lab for nearly seven months (July 2004 to January 2005) to examine and supplement the Laboratory's procedures and practices. The shutdowns could have cost as much as US\$367 million in lost work time [2] (<http://www.freewmexican.com/news/11697.html>) . During an address to Laboratory personnel, he characterized alleged rule-breaking scientists at the Lab as "cowboys" and "buttheads," causing an uproar amongst personnel who felt Nanos had little respect for their efforts to function under what they saw as perpetually defective management practices. His actions as laboratory director were criticized in the pages of several scientific and technical publications, including Nature Magazine, Aviation Week, and Physics Today.

Nanos abruptly resigned his position and left Los Alamos to take a job at the Department of Defense (specifically the Defense Threat Reduction Agency) under a Change of Station (COS) agreement with the University of California. Under that agreement, The University of California continues to pay Nanos' annual salary of \$235,000 (2005 salary figure). His separation agreement stipulated that he was legally bound not to make disparaging remarks about the University of California or LANL, and that his UC salary would terminate when he reached 5 years of employment, when he would become vested in the retirement plan [3] (<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2006/04/23/UCPAY.TMP>) . The year he left there was a large spike in retirements [4] ([http://publicbroadcasting.net/ksfr/news.newsmain?action=article&ARTICLE\\_ID=753592](http://publicbroadcasting.net/ksfr/news.newsmain?action=article&ARTICLE_ID=753592)) . An employee-run blog [5] (<http://lanl-the-real-story.blogspot.com>) criticized Nanos [6] (<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F70A1EF935550C728CDDAC0894DD404482>) and his

### George Peter "Pete" Nanos



#### 7th Director at Los Alamos National Lab

<b>Director Since:</b>	2003- 2005
<b>Born/Residence</b>	Bedford, New Hampshire
<b>Education:</b>	United States Naval Academy Princeton University
<b>Former Job(s):</b>	Vice Admiral in the US Navy LANL Director

management of the institution. The blog was credited by many with expediting, or even facilitating Nanos' early departure. Nanos left under a cloud of employee discontent, missed programmatic milestones and doubts regarding the institution's future prospects. His successor was Robert W. Kuckuck, who took office on May 16, 2005.

## External links

- Official biography (<http://www.lanl.gov/history/people/nanos.shtml>)
- LANL Biography (<http://www.lanl.gov/organization/docs/Nanos.pdf>) (PDF)
- UCOP Biography (<http://www.ucop.edu/news/archives/2003/nanos.pdf>) (PDF)
- LANL: The Real Story (employee blog) (<http://lanl-the-real-story.blogspot.com/>)
- The New York Times story (<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/01/national/01alamos.html?ex=1272600000&en=de7c4ba51273f8af&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss>)
- Tribute to Vice Admiral George Peter Nanos ([http://www.washingtonwatchdog.org/environmental\\_justice/documents/cr/02/jn/19/cr19jn02-154.html](http://www.washingtonwatchdog.org/environmental_justice/documents/cr/02/jn/19/cr19jn02-154.html))
- [7] ([http://judiciary.senate.gov/testimony.cfm?id=668&wit\\_id=5618](http://judiciary.senate.gov/testimony.cfm?id=668&wit_id=5618))

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