

Nicolas Watkins

Cloud Engineer

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SUMMARY

Mid-level **Cloud Engineer** with 10 years of hands-on AWS experience supporting secure, highly available platforms across federal and regulated environments. Builds practical DevSecOps delivery systems with EKS, Lambda, S3, IAM, VPC networking, Terraform, **Databricks Asset Bundles**, Docker, Kubernetes, and GitHub Actions. Recent work connected tenant onboarding, automated testing, dependency scanning, secrets detection, **policy-as-code**, approval gates, audit trails, and controlled dev/test/prod promotion. Active **Minimum Background Investigation** and U.S. citizenship support mission-critical government operations. AWS DevOps Engineer Professional certified, with experience operating 24x7 services, resolving pipeline failures, maintaining runbooks, and meeting a 10-business-day provisioning SLA. Brings calm ownership, clear partnership with security and application teams, and genuine interest in helping Northstar Federal Cloud Services deliver dependable cloud platforms.

EXPERIENCE

Senior Cloud Engineer

CloudBridge Systems 📅 January 2022 - Present 📍 Alexandria, VA

Leads AWS platform engineering for federal delivery teams, owning multi-account onboarding, DevSecOps pipelines, EKS operations, observability, runbooks, and service reliability.

- Architected multi-account AWS foundations with EKS, Lambda, S3, IAM, and VPC guardrails for federal tenants.
- Built **GitHub Actions** workflows using Terraform and **Databricks Asset Bundles** for repeatable workspace provisioning.
- Added SAST, DAST, **dependency scanning**, secrets detection, **approval gates**, and audit trails across delivery pipelines.
- Established blue/green and canary releases for EKS microservices with **automated testing** and controlled environment promotion.
- Tuned CloudWatch, Prometheus, and Grafana alerts for cluster health, Lambda failures, latency, and capacity.
- Maintained Platform Operations Runbooks and versioned **IaC baselines** for dependable 24x7 incident response.
- Coordinated security, application, and tenant stakeholders while meeting a 10-business-day provisioning SLA.

Cloud Automation Engineer

CivicStack Technologies 📅 June 2019 - December 2021 📍 Washington, DC

Owned cloud automation for public-sector application teams, delivering reusable AWS infrastructure, governed CI/CD workflows, Databricks onboarding, observability, and on-call support.

- Delivered **Terraform modules** for VPCs, IAM roles, S3 controls, EKS namespaces, and shared **AWS** services.
- Reworked Jenkins and GitHub Actions pipelines with **policy-as-code**, quality checks, dependency scans, and signed approvals.
- Automated Databricks workspace configuration with **Databricks Asset Bundles** for consistent analytics tenant promotions.
- Implemented Docker testing and **Kubernetes** validation before blue/green releases, catching configuration defects before production.
- Used CloudWatch and Grafana telemetry to diagnose performance issues and guide capacity and cost-control changes.
- Joined rotating on-call coverage and documented **TCP/IP**, DNS, VPN, and IAM troubleshooting patterns.
- Partnered with application teams during off-hours deployment windows, preserving clear handoffs and change records.

AWS DevOps Engineer

Granite Peak Consulting 📅 July 2017 - May 2019 📍 Baltimore, MD

Delivered AWS DevOps engineering for consulting engagements, standardizing infrastructure, deployment automation, monitoring, security controls, and production support across client platforms.

- Provisioned AWS development and test environments with **Terraform** and **CloudFormation** for repeatable consulting deliveries.
- Created **Jenkins** pipelines for unit tests, Docker publication, infrastructure validation, and staged microservice deployments.
- Configured **EKS** workloads, **Lambda** functions, S3 lifecycle policies, IAM permissions, and VPC routing for availability.
- Introduced **CloudWatch** dashboards that gave application owners visibility into failed jobs, saturation, and deployment health.
- Applied canary testing during service releases and recorded rollback criteria in operational runbooks.
- Partnered with engineers and security analysts to resolve access, DNS, VPN, and container issues.
- Preserved configuration evidence for customer assessments through disciplined deployment records and controlled change reviews.

Cloud Operations Engineer

BlueOrbit Software 📅 August 2016 - June 2017 📍 Reston, VA

Supported AWS delivery environments through infrastructure administration, Terraform adoption, Jenkins maintenance, operational troubleshooting, runbook creation, and deployment-window support.

- Administered **IAM**, **S3**, VPC security controls, Lambda utilities, and Linux tooling for delivery teams.
- Converted manually configured infrastructure into **Terraform modules** for repeatable sandbox and integration environments.
- Maintained Jenkins jobs for **Docker** services with product tests and environment-specific configuration checks.

- Investigated CloudWatch alerts involving **DNS, TCP/IP** connectivity, permissions, and application resource limits.
- Documented backup, release validation, incident escalation, and platform maintenance procedures in shared runbooks.
- Supported rotating operations coverage and partnered with developers during scheduled deployment windows.
- Recorded fixes and verification steps in change documentation, improving handoffs across support shifts.

PROJECTS

Federal Tenant Onboarding Accelerator 📅 2024

A provisioning request once moved through several handoffs. Built a Terraform and Databricks Asset Bundles workflow that created tenant workspaces, applied policy gates, scanned dependencies, promoted approved changes across dev, test, and production, and preserved audit evidence for federal review.

EKS Release Reliability Program 📅 2023

A routine release exposed how much confidence depends on visibility. Introduced blue/green and canary deployment patterns, automated Kubernetes validation, CloudWatch metrics, Prometheus alerts, and Grafana dashboards for safer production decisions.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- AWS DevOps Engineer Professional recognition earned for advanced cloud delivery, automation, reliability, and operational leadership in 2023.
- CloudBridge Systems Platform Leadership Award recognized dependable tenant onboarding, audit-ready pipelines, and strong federal stakeholder partnership in 2024.
- Led peer runbook reviews and mentoring sessions that helped on-call engineers resolve pipeline and infrastructure incidents with confidence.

EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree in Computer Information Systems

George Mason University 🎓 GPA: 3.7 📅 2016 📍 Fairfax, VA

Coursework: Cloud Computing, Database Systems, Network Security, Systems Analysis

CERTIFICATIONS

- AWS Certified DevOps Engineer - Professional 📅 2023
- AWS Certified Solutions Architect - Associate 📅 2019
- Active Minimum Background Investigation (MBI) 📅 2024

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **AWS Services:** EKS, Lambda, S3
- **AWS Security:** IAM, VPC, KMS
- **Infrastructure as Code:** Terraform, CloudFormation, ARM/Bicep
- **CI/CD Platforms:** GitHub Actions, Jenkins, Azure DevOps
- **Container Platforms:** Docker, Kubernetes, Amazon EKS
- **Monitoring Tools:** CloudWatch, Prometheus, Grafana
- **DevSecOps Scanning:** SAST, DAST, dependency scanning
- **Deployment Strategies:** Blue/green, canary, rolling deployments
- **Networking Technologies:** TCP/IP, DNS, VPN
- **Databricks Delivery:** Databricks Asset Bundles, workspace provisioning, analytics deployments
- **Testing Practices:** Automated testing, unit testing, Kubernetes validation
- **Operations Documentation:** Platform Operations Runbooks, IaC baselines, audit trails

SKILLS

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|-------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| • AWS | • S3 | • Databricks Asset Bundles | • CI/CD Pipelines |
| • Terraform | • IAM | • DevSecOps | • Policy-as-Code |
| • EKS | • VPC Networking | • Docker | • Microservices |
| • Lambda | • GitHub Actions | • Kubernetes | |

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member, Cloud Native Computing Foundation community, with ongoing interest in Kubernetes operations and platform reliability.
- Member, Association for Computing Machinery, participating in professional discussions on cloud architecture, automation, and secure software delivery.

LANGUAGES

- English (Native)
- Spanish (Intermediate)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST