



07 December 2007

Commissioned Corps Officers,

With temperatures dropping, holiday plans in full swing, and thoughts turning towards the New Year, I send you season's greetings from the Office of the Surgeon General. This past year was an exciting and eventful year for me as I assumed the role of Acting Surgeon General, joined by RADM Robert Williams as Acting Deputy Surgeon General and RADM Sam Shekar as the Special Assistant to the ASH for Transformation. 2007 was certainly an exciting time for the Department and the Commissioned Corps as well.

In just one of many examples, dozens of Public Health Service Officers deployed over the summer months as a part of the President's Health Diplomacy Initiatives on the USNS Comfort in Central and South America and the Caribbean and on the USS Peleliu in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, partnering with our brothers and sisters in the Armed Services, and those of Project Hope, to bring vital healthcare and public health resources to literally thousands of people in underserved areas around the world. Contributing to the successes of this mission were the thoughtful behind-the-scenes collaborations between the Services; the generosity of agency supervisors who supported their officers' participation in each tour; and the capable, technical talents of the deployed officers themselves who gave up time away from their families to help those in need and to represent the Department and the Corps on this all-important mission. What a fantastic example of the spirit of giving that brings us memories associated with the holiday season!!

Of course, day in and day out, members of our Commissioned Corps contribute immeasurably to every facet of the public's health and well-being. We provide health care to geographically isolated parts of Alaska and keep careful watch to ensure the safety of pharmaceuticals that keep our children healthy. We research cures to some of the most infamous diseases of our time and ensure that we are ready and prepared to handle any disaster that may come our way. We serve in our Federal prisons, aboard Coast Guard cutters, on our Nation's borders, and abroad – in Africa, Afghanistan, and Iraq. From broad policy work at the highest levels of our government to grassroots, community-based work on the ground, PHS Officers contribute in so many ways, and I am proud to serve as your Acting Surgeon General.

It is my hope that we, as the PHS Commissioned Corps, move forward into 2008 with the same excitement and enthusiasm with which we rode through this past year. With the momentum of Transformation and the announcement of exciting initiatives across the Department, I know that each of us will step up to do what we do best – PROTECT, PROMOTE, and ADVANCE the health and safety of the Nation. Thank you for all that you do!!

I wish each of you and your families a happy and safe holiday season, and best wishes for the New Year.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Galson", written over a horizontal line.

Steven K. Galson, M.D., M.P.H.  
RADM, USPHS  
Acting Surgeon General