



THE JUNIOR OFFICER CHRONICLES

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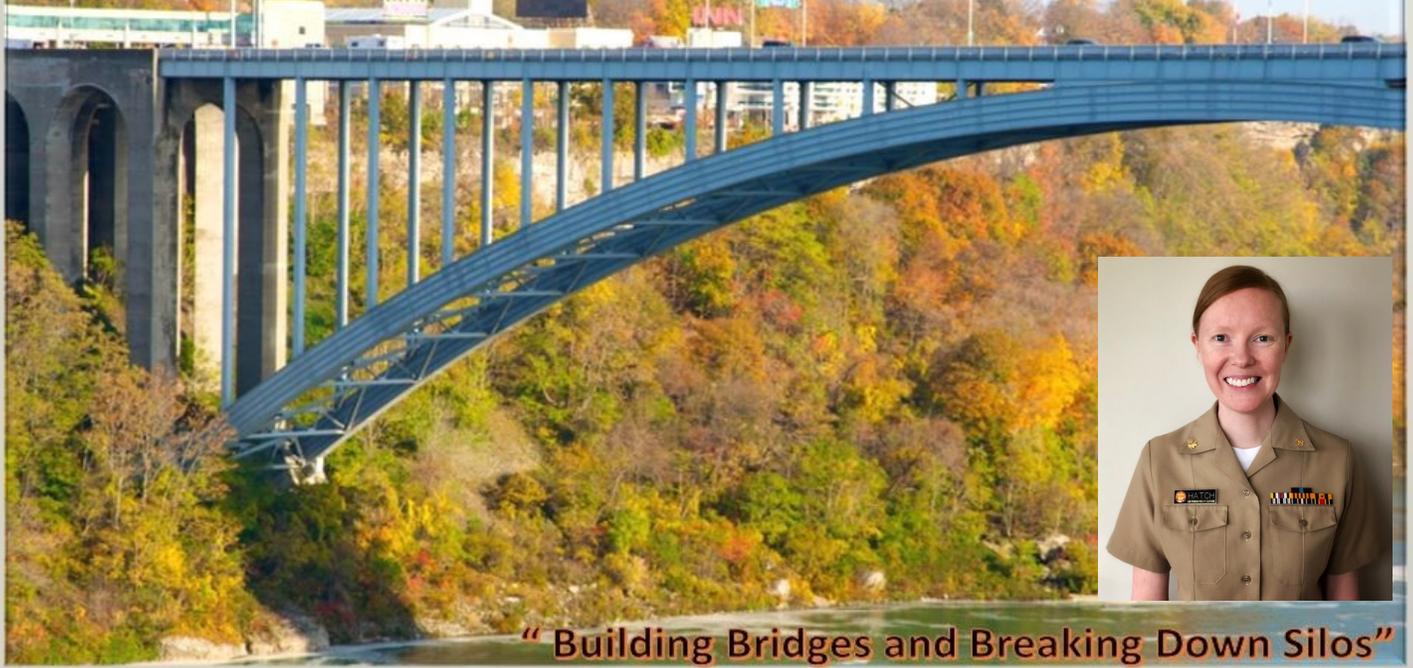
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- ◆ *The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) is a public health professional group whose purpose is to provide advice to other Corps and non-Corps entities on interests and concerns specific to junior officers in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps.*
- ◆ *The Junior Officer Chronicles (JOC) is a quarterly publication produced by the JOAG Communications & Publications Committee (CPC) JOC Subcommittee.*
- ◆ *Send editorial comments, concerns and contributions to future editions to [LCDR Beth Wittry and LT Roseline Boateng](#).*
- ◆ *Any opinions or thoughts presented in The Junior Officer Chronicles are solely those of the author and do not represent the USPHS, United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or any other government agency.*

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Greetings Fellow Junior Officers,

Happy Summer! I hope you all are enjoying all the fun that Summer has to offer, and our last days of warm weather this year.

It's hard to believe we are nearing the end of another successful JOAG operational year! Looking back, I can say with great confidence that we accomplished many challenges and executed our mission, all while staying true to our priority theme of "Building Bridges and Breaking Down Silos." JOAG's committees are active in enhancing the development of junior officers by providing opportunities to take on leadership roles, increasing JOAG visibility, and raising concerns specific to the interest of junior officers. JOAG represents over half the Corps, and we have been the "junior officer voice" at the highest levels of Corps leadership. Please don't ever think that you as a junior officer do not make a major impact, because you really do touch all aspects of public health leadership and service. So, celebrate your achievements, because you play a pivotal role in protecting, promoting, and advancing the health and safety of our Nation, and the world. To showcase JOAG's annual accomplishments, we proudly publish an "End-of-Year Report," which will be posted on our website, <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/JOAG/>, as well as distributed via the JOAG listserv.

As you may recall from the Spring edition of The Junior Officer Chronicles, each issue this year will feature an introduction from a different member of the JOAG Executive Committee (EC). Well, you're in luck, because in this edition, you get to hear from two EC members! In this edition, you'll hear from LCDR Griff Miller, Financial Liaison, and Executive Committee Liaison to both the Outreach Committee and the Readiness & Deployment Committee. You'll also hear from me, LCDR Lindsay Hatch, JOAG Chair, and Executive Committee Liaison to both the Recruitment & Retention Committee and the Public Health & Community Service Committee. I hope our articles will provide you with valuable information on how we became leaders in JOAG and how we were led down our career paths.

This edition of the Junior Officer Chronicles will focus on highlighting all the exciting activities and events that JOAG sponsored at the Symposium this year. This past June, many PHS officers gathered in Dallas, Texas for the annual USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium. I know for the Executive Committee, as well as many other JOAG members, this is one of the highlights of our operational year. The Symposium gives many of us the opportunity to meet for the first time, as well as reconnect with many of our fellow junior officers.

Continued on next page

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

JOAG prides itself in having a strong presence at the Symposium. As such, we hold our only in-person General Meeting of the year at the Symposium. At the meeting this year, junior officers were able to hear words of wisdom from the Surgeon General, Deputy Surgeon General, and Chief Professional Officers (CPOs), in addition to learning about the many JOAG activities and accomplishments. Our in-person meeting is also a time to honor outstanding Corps officers and their contributions, through presentations of the Junior Officer of the Year Award, JOAG Excellence Award, VADM Richard H. Carmona Inspiration Award, and the VADM C. Everett Koop Award, all highlighting their astonishing works and accomplishments. JOAG's presence at the Symposium is also exhibited through our Uniform Inspection Booth and the Junior Officer Career Enhancement Booth. Our junior officers also found time to volunteer in the local Dallas community through a community service event that was sponsored by JOAG!

So, as you read the pages of this Edition of the Junior Officer Chronicles, please be looking for ways to become involved with JOAG and the next Symposium. The Symposium is a great time to network, learn, reconnect, and rededicate ourselves to the Corps. We look forward to seeing you at the 2019 Symposium in Minneapolis, Minnesota, next May!

As a reminder, all editions of the Junior Officer Chronicles are written for junior officers, by junior officers. Therefore, all officers are welcome to write an article and contribute to our publication! I encourage you to submit your own article for the next edition to xks5@cdc.gov and roseline.boateng@ihs.gov.

As my term as Chair comes to a close, I'd like to say that it has been an incredible honor to serve as your JOAG Chair and to represent the junior officers of PHS across all categories, agencies, and duty stations. Thank you for this opportunity. My experience as a Voting Member and on the EC has helped my leadership skills grow immensely, and I highly encourage and recommend higher leadership in JOAG to anyone who is interested.

I'd like to express my deepest sincere gratitude and appreciation to each and every member of JOAG, including the Executive Committee, Voting Members, Subcommittee Leads, and general members. Your hard work, dedication, passion, and team work this operational year allows JOAG, an all-volunteer organization, to continue to move forward in accomplishing our goals and stay on course to fulfill our mission. Your dedication to the Corps and your fellow junior officers is unrivaled. We couldn't do this without all of our volunteers making the vision and mission of JOAG a reality. So, thank you for your service to JOAG and for helping shape the future of the Corps. Thank you for exhibiting the core qualities of leadership, integrity, service, and excellence in all that you do on a daily basis for JOAG and PHS.

In closing, thank you to JOAG's Senior Advisor, CAPT Sara Newman, for her support, wisdom, and guidance throughout this operational year. I am also very appreciative of the support of the Office of the Surgeon General, the CPOs, and the PAC Chairs. Good luck to incoming JOAG Chair, LCDR Christopher Sheehan, and to all of the JOAG Voting Members serving next year. I cannot wait to see what new initiatives and ideas our members present next operational year to help the junior officers and contribute to the mission of our service. I hope to cross paths with you all in the future!

In Service,

LCDR Lindsay Hatch, MPH

JOAG Chair

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

Name: LCDR Lindsay Hatch

Category: Health Services

Agency: Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself: interests, position, family, hobbies.

I am a Consumer Safety Officer at FDA in Rockville, MD. In my position, I plan and coordinate the inspections of foreign medical device manufacturers that import medical devices to the U.S. Prior to starting this position in October 2014, I worked at FDA in Jacksonville, FL as an Investigator, conducting inspections and investigations of domestic medical device manufacturers. My Bachelor's degree is in Nutritional Sciences and I have my Master's degree in Public Health, both from the University of Florida. Go Gators!

I am a born and raised Floridian, and lived in FL until we relocated to the DMV area for my position with FDA in October 2014. My husband and I have been happily married since 11/11/11, and have had our 4 pound fur baby Mojo since September 2009. Last November we welcomed our beautiful identical twin girls, Braelynn and Makaela, into the world. They are the happiest little chunky babies ever, and are the light of our lives! Life with the twins is pretty crazy, so I don't have much time for anything else, but I wouldn't have it any other way. I love to spend any time I can outside, including at the beach in the Outer Banks, and enjoy trying new restaurants.

2. How did you get involved in Public Health?

After I graduated with my Bachelor's degree, I went back to school to get my Master's degree in Public Health. My first experience in the public health world was when I completed my internship at the Florida Department of Health working in Cryptosporidiosis research. After I graduated with my MPH, I applied for a variety of jobs in the field of public health, and was hired at FDA as an Investigator. I worked as a civilian for about 9 months, then transitioned from civil service and was commissioned into PHS in September 2009.



Continued on next page

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

3. How long have you been involved with JOAG and what is the most interesting aspect of your involvement with JOAG and/or serving the mission?

I first became involved in JOAG in 2009 as a member of the Recruitment & Retention Committee (R&R). After being the Secretary for R&R for a couple of years, my involvement in JOAG moved into Voting Membership and my election to the Executive Committee (EC). The most interesting aspect of my involvement with JOAG has been my terms serving on the EC. This year I had the opportunity to first serve as Acting Chair of JOAG while the Chair was on extended leave, and I recently transitioned into the role of permanent Chair. Holding this new role and higher level of responsibility has been challenging, but very rewarding, because I can see, at a whole new level, what the dedicated junior officers do to make JOAG a success. I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from so many junior officers around the country, and know that JOAG and my terms on the EC have afforded me this incredible opportunity.

4. What committee do you liaise with and what is that committee doing this operational year?

I am the EC Liaison to the Recruitment and Retention Committee (R&R), as well as the Public Health and Community Service Committee (PHCS). The mission of R&R is to develop projects and programs that aid in the recruitment and retention of junior officers in PHS. This year, R&R has furthered their mission by performing many exciting activities, including, but not limited to, creating mentorship and networking opportunities for COSTEPs by assigning junior officers to guide them. The mission of PHCS is to enhance health and wellness of junior officers in the Commissioned Corps and their communities by providing information and tools that promote health and wellness and by implementing and supporting community service. The committee coordinates community service events which directly support the initiatives outlined in the National Prevention Strategy, as well as coordinates walking events that support the Surgeon General's Call to Action to promote walking and walkable communities.

5. What do you hope to accomplish/achieve in this position (Vice-Chair) for the operational year?

As the JOAG Vice Chair and Commissioned Officers Association (COA)/Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Liaison for JOAG, I hope to build upon the positive relationship that JOAG has developed with COA/COF in an effort to advance the interests and concerns of junior officers in PHS, including, but not limited to, JOAG's presence at the annual USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium, the C. Everett Koop Living Legacy Fund, and the JOAG/COF Speaker Series. The Symposium is vital in promoting and developing the careers of the junior officers in the Corps, and one of the Vice Chair's responsibilities is to ensure that effort is successful. As Vice Chair, I collaborate with COA to facilitate open communication, so as to enhance the voice of our junior officers.

6. What's your favorite piece of advice to share with fellow junior officers?

My advice for my fellow junior officers is to not count yourself out before you've tried. As a LT and first year JOAG Voting Member, I applied to be on the Executive Committee, and was selected. I would have never been given this amazing leadership opportunity if I hadn't applied, even though it may have been a long shot. You'll never know what you are capable of, if you don't give yourself the chance. So, apply for the big job or nominate yourself for the position on the Board, and don't let your fear get in the way of your future, because you never know what amazing things lie ahead!

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the Summer/Symposium Edition of the Junior Officer Chronicles. Despite the sweltering setting at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, JOAG booths and events were successful and well attended. Record turnout by USPHS Commissioned Corps officers was reported for the 2018 Symposium in Dallas, Texas, with a strong junior officer (JO) presence. From the JOAG meeting to the uniform inspection booth, JOs from across the Nation volunteered and networked with one another. The Symposium is always an exhilarating environment as officers reconnect with others they have met or worked with through deployments, the Officer Basic Course, JOAG contributions, PAC participation, COA events, and other PHS activities. As you peruse through the JOC, officers will share their experiences and stories about their involvement with JOAG and PHS activities in various roles during the Symposium.

First, meet two of our subcommittee members who serve as editors:



LT Joellen Friedman: I am a pharmacist originally from New Jersey. I went to pharmacy school at the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and completed my PGY-1 residency with the Indian Health Service at Tsehootsooi Medical Center in Fort Defiance, Arizona, where I have been fortunate to remain as a clinical pharmacist! I work in our HIV-prevention (PrEP), diabetes, and primary care clinics as well as our pediatric satellite pharmacy, emergency department, and inpatient unit. In my free time, I like to drink tea, travel, and see Broadway musicals.



LT Colin Smith: I am a Medical Officer in the Indian Health Service completing my residency in Internal Medicine and Psychiatry at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, NC. I am a graduate of the Uniformed Services University (USU) of the Health Sciences F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine. At USU, I trained across the Military Health system and completed temporary assignments at Northern Navajo Medical Center in Shiprock, NM, and Mulago Hospital in Kampala, Uganda. I am interested in the integration of medicine and psychiatry.

We are honored to share the stories of leadership, service, integrity and excellence of the junior officers. Thank you to everyone who played a part in the compilation of the 2018 Summer/Symposium Edition.

We welcome your feedback for ways we can better serve you. Submissions to be included in the 2018 Fall Edition can be sent to both xks5@cdc.gov and roseline.boateng@ihs.gov with the subject line: "2018 Fall Edition JOC."

We appreciate your support and thank you for your contribution to JOAG's premier magazine by junior officers for junior officers.

Happy reading!

JOC Co-Leads,

Beth and Roseline

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Outreach Committee: Reaching for the Stars with Pride

LT Lusi Martin-Braswell & LCDR Linzi Allen, Outreach Committee Co-Chairs

Committed junior officers actively serving in key leadership roles and dedicated volunteers on the Outreach Committee were instrumental in ensuring JOAG's high visibility with informational booths, presentations, and new initiatives at this year's COF annual Symposium.

Without a doubt, JOAG's merchandise was proven to be the most popular attraction for attendees. Merchandise sales began at the JOAG's only in-person General Meeting, and throughout the Symposium at the Junior Officers Career Enhancement Booth (JOCEB). JOAG launched two new exciting items for sale at the 2018 COF Symposium:

- ◆ A heather navy T-shirt featuring the USPHS logo on the front with 7 white stars to signify the seven uniformed services. The new T-shirts sold out before the last day of Symposium.
- ◆ A black license plate with the USPHS logo and "US Public Health Service" written in bright yellow.

JOAG has been committed to providing junior officers with activities and resources to enhance knowledge and understanding of officer expectations, as well as pride in service. One way JOAG offers these activities and resources is through the JOCEB. The JOCEB provides junior officers with resources and advice on career and professional development opportunities at the annual Symposium, Officer Basic Course Open Houses, and CDC and FDA Commissioned Corps Awareness Days. Information is available about each of the JOAG committees as well as JOAG initiatives such as the JOAG Job Shadowing Program and the JOAG Peer to Peer Network. For the first time ever, the Outreach Committee launched the Junior Officers CV Exchange Program at the JOCEB. The Junior Officers CV Exchange Program provides fellow junior officers with an opportunity to share best practices, provide feedback, and tips for writing an effective CV. During the 2018 COF Symposium, twenty-two officers signed up at the JOCEB to participate in this new initiative. The twenty-two officers have been paired with another officer in the same category to provide each other with comments and feedback. We look forward to hearing feedback about this new initiative, and hope participants will find it to be a worthwhile experience.

Other JOAG events coordinated and led by junior officers during this year's Symposium included the JOAG's Community Service Event at Anderson Bonner Park, the Uniform Inspection Booth, and the Back to Basics uniform presentation, which you will read more about on subsequent pages.

It has truly been an incredible experience, and a tremendous opportunity to work with highly intelligent, motivated, and enthusiastic junior officers. If you are not involved with JOAG, I highly recommend that you get involved early, and surround yourself with positive officers that will inspire and challenge you to be the best officer you can be. See you in Minneapolis, Minnesota in May 2019!



Junior Officers Career Enhancement Booth at the 2018 Symposium

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Beautifying Anderson Bonner Park

LT Kodilichi Echeozo, Pharmacist, FDA

Clad with bottles of water, gloves, and comfortable shoes, ten USPHS officers set out to assist the Dallas Park and Recreation Department in their beautification efforts of Anderson Bonner Park during the 2018 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.

Anderson Bonner Park is 44.1 acre community park, established in 1976 and is home to walking, running, and biking trails as well as soccer fields. In support of the Surgeon General’s National Prevention Strategy’s tenant of Healthy and Safe Community Environments, JOAG organized this volunteer event to improve the land quality in the Addison-Dallas area.

The weather was pleasantly warm and sunny on Thursday morning, June 7th. At 0800, we rallied in front of the Renaissance Dallas Addison Hotel. Although the park was 12 minutes away, four of the local officers volunteered to shuttle us both to and from the community service event. We were all appreciative for their help. Once a couple officers joined us after completing the Surgeon General's 5K Run/Walk, we left for the park.

When we arrived, the Dallas Park and Recreation Department provided some tongs and trash bags. We then paired up and set out to work! Our mission was to clean up the park by picking up litter, especially around the tree lines which were not covered by the Park’s contractor. After two hours, we had filled several bags with refuse.

USPHS officers made a difference at Anderson Bonner Park, one wrapper and bottle cap at a time. We were very grateful for the opportunity to give back to the community. As Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. once said, “The most patriotic thing you can do is to take care of the **environment**.”

From left to right: CDR Ericka Murray, CAPT LaQuitha Mohair, LCDR Clayton Myers, LT Kodilichi Echeozo, LCDR Steven Herrera, LT Matthew Geiger, LCDR Negassi Bire, LT Sandra Herrera, LT Alesha Harris, CAPT (ret.) Shawneequa Harris.

September 12
#dayofencouragement



REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Uniform Inspection Booth Highlights Pride and Distinction

LCDR Carlos Gonzalez-Mercado, Emergency Coordinator, FDA and LCDR Tenzin Jangchup, Consumer Safety Officer, FDA

A uniform inspection within the uniform services is considered one of the most valuable educational experiences an officer can have to learn how to represent their service branch in proper uniform regulations. JOAG, leading the way for all officers, has found a novel way to better assist its officers on this task. The Uniform Inspection Booth (UIB) gives junior officers the opportunity to teach officers of all ranks the latest regulations which we abide by while wearing our USPHS uniforms.

Since 2004, the annual offering of the UIB has been an effective tool to promote the most accurate information available to outstanding officers looking to advance their uniform pride when representing the USPHS. The 2018 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Addison, Texas was no exception. JOAG members had the privilege of volunteering alongside 27 other USPHS officers to help staff the UIB. We signed up knowing the importance of proper uniform wear and learned a great deal from the experience itself. We were able to have open discussions with officers of all ranks on the importance of proper uniform wear and changes various officers have seen throughout their career.

During the three days at the symposium, over 172 people stopped by and the UIB once more accomplished its goal of providing in-person and up-to-date uniform regulation knowledge. Officers came to the booth in a wide variety of uniforms, from the more common service khaki or summer white to the more rarely seen Full Dress uniforms worn by the Surgeon General's Honor Guard. We offered device measurement and verification of ribbon and name tag placement for all visitors. We even had a guessing game with visitors that allowed them to be the "uniform police" and identify common uniform mistakes on our "wrong" uniform set up at the booth. The officers inspected at the UIB ranged from LTJGs to Admirals verifying their uniform and insignias were up to date with the latest guidelines.

No matter who you are, you can always benefit from a second person check to ensure proper wear of USPHS uniforms. This time, the UIB had a very important guest validate our efforts and contributions to help represent our service to the rest of the country. The Assistant Secretary for Health, ADM Brett P. Giroir, stopped by the UIB during the afternoon of Tuesday, June 5th, 2018. Not only was he impressed by our commitment to proper uniform wear, but he also shared his wisdom and pride when referencing the extreme importance of always looking our best as USPHS officers when in the public eye. It is a privilege and honor to wear our uniforms and we must do so with pride and distinction.



ADM Brett Giroir, LCDR Jonathan Leshin, LCDR Kimberly Jones, CDR Samanta Spindel, LCDR Tenzin Jangchup, LCDR Carlos González-Mercado

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Back to Basics Uniform Presentation

LCDR Rhonita Culver, Nurse, Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE); LT Mark Jones, Nurse, ICE;
LT Paul Jones, Nurse, ICE; LCDR Dwayne David, Pharmacist, IHS

Junior officers were in full force at the 2018 USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium presenting on uniforms and imparting knowledge on proper uniform wear. This new presentation, titled “Back to Basics Uniform Presentation,” was created by the Presentations Workgroup of the JOAG’s Outreach Committee. This workgroup consisted of co-leads, LCDR Rhonita Culver and LCDR Dwayne David, and members, LT Laura Enos, LT Mark Jones, LT Paul Jones, LCDR Natasha Colmore, and LCDR Loquita Roberts. The presentation was proposed by LCDR Rhonita Culver to supplement efforts of the JOAG Uniform Inspection Booth and to reinforce knowledge of required uniforms and correct wear of other uniforms less frequently worn by junior officers. The Presentation

Workgroup plans to continue presenting this information each year at the Symposium with modifications as needed.

The material was delivered in one hour, with each member speaking for five to ten minutes on the specific requirements and components of the various uniforms. Each of the workgroup members were actively involved in the presentation and discussed the required components of the Operational Dress Uniform (ODU), Dinner Dress, and Service Dress uniforms. In addition to this, they provided recommendations and tips on uniform maintenance and upkeep.

While it is important to reinforce wearing uniforms correctly, the goal of the presentation was for officers to become agents of change at their local duty stations to ensure uniforms are worn with precision. The group solicited the help of male and female volunteers to wear and display all presented uniforms. Senior officers, CAPT Esan Simon and CAPT Beverly Dandridge, graciously volunteered to assist with the presentation by wearing the dinner dress uniforms. Both Captains candidly discussed the importance of appropriate wear of the uniforms and the need for officers to represent the USPHS Commissioned Corps with pride and distinction.

Junior officers in attendance were also provided with directions to CCMIS to review uniform policies or to seek clarification on the correct wear of required uniforms, prescribable uniforms, and optional items. Positive feedback was received including comments from attendees stating the presentation was informative, thorough, and that their knowledge of uniform wear increased.



Officers participating in a Back to Basics Uniform Presentation at the 2018 Symposium

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Physician Category Innovates Mentoring Session with Promotion Board Simulations

LCDR David Shih, Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer, CDC

At this year's mentoring session, the physician category tried something new – a promotion board simulation. The aim was to provide mentees feedback under review conditions similar to that of an actual promotion board — a half dozen or-so USPHS Captains reviewing promotion documents of scores of candidates of the same category over several hours. Promotion board members might not spend more than five minutes reviewing all promotion documents for an individual officer. Therefore, promotion materials must convey key information the promotion board can identify quickly and understand easily. The promotion board simulation review afforded the mentees the opportunity to understand the reviewer's perspective of a promotion board review's challenges. After all, the key to good writing is to know your audience.

The session began with opening comments from the Chief Medical Officer, CAPT Brian Lewis, who emphasized the importance of avoiding modesty in officers' statements and CV bullet points. Next, Bureau of Prisons regional medical director, RADM TeCora Ballom, delivered an inspirational talk about her career – how she advanced through the ranks to eventually become a flag officer. This was followed by the promotion board simulation. Eight lieutenant commanders and commanders participated as mentees, as did eight captains and admirals as mentors. The simulated promotion board chair, CAPT Paul Jung, stated the ground rules.

The mentors did not receive materials in advance. When the chair began the timer and said “go,” mentees handed the mentor hard copies of the CV, Promotion Information Report, officer's statement, reviewing official's statement, and COERS from the past five years. Only then were the mentors allowed to begin review. The mentors had exactly five minutes to review the entire promotion packet. When the promotion board chair called time, the mentors summarized the mentees' career in three minutes and provided feedback on how the mentee might improve the presentation of the promotion materials and plan future accomplishments to increase the chances of successful promotion. The mentees rotated one chair clockwise and repeated the process with a new mentor.

Individual review of a promotion packet was the only aspect of the promotions process under simulation. Simulating an actual promotion cycle from start to finish was beyond the scope of the session. The mentor's feedback was a single officer's opinion. A real promotion score is a consensus opinion among the entire promotion board. Furthermore, because a predetermined number of officers will advance to the next rank in each promotion cycle, a candidate's chances of promotion depends heavily on the competitiveness of the other candidates. Therefore, all mentees received a disclaimer that feedback received might not reflect the actual chances of promotion in an actual promotion cycle.

Did you miss this opportunity to participate? Due to the limited reach, I will draft instructions for individual candidates to conduct their own one-on-one promotion board simulations without having to travel to a national conference. Stay tuned for progress updates.



CAPT Brian Lewis, USPHS Commissioned Corps Chief Medical Officer, delivered opening comments and advice on how to prepare your CV and OS for promotion.

UNIFORM CORNER

A History of the JOAG Uniform Inspection Booth

CDR Carolyn Oyster, Environmental Health Officer

As a Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC) instructor, I spent a significant portion of my time teaching officers about appropriate uniform wear. These lessons morphed into one of the things I became known for during my assignment at the Commissioned Officer Training Academy (COTA). During my first USPHS Symposium, many proud BOTC graduates continuously approached me as a uniform instructor to point out all the uniform errors they now recognized on other officers. I suggested they gently inform the officer regarding the situation, but no one wanted to breach the subject. Therefore, I informed officers about the errors and how to correct their uniforms. I always informed officers regarding uniform discrepancies. I did this for two reasons. First, to demonstrate to BOTC graduates THEY could and should instruct their fellow PHS officers about appropriate PHS uniform wear. And second, I always wanted to correct uniform discrepancies to help OUR Service look better to the public and our sister services. Anyone who has ever served our country will be able to recognize if a PHS officer has not bothered to iron a uniform that arrived to a conference packed inside a suitcase. We need to display the PHS respectfully by presenting ourselves at our best by honoring OUR uniform.

These reasons led me to action. I approached CAPT Frank Behan (pictured with CDR Oyster in the photo to the right), prior COTA Director, for guidance and we brainstormed how to get officers to want to have their uniforms inspected and corrected. As a result, I created a Uniform Inspection Station (now known as the JOAG Uniform Inspection Booth), which debuted at my next Symposium, to address uniform malfunctions. At first, it was a huge challenge to recruit officers to come “be inspected.” No one wanted to participate or be found with uniform errors. So, I made graduation certificates for officers to place in their eOPFs. When I stepped into the JOAG Professional Development Chair position, the then-JOAG Chair LCDR Claudine Samanic, fully supported me in making the Uniform Inspection Station even bigger as a JOAG project. I recruited my officer friends who were also passionate about proper uniform wear, and we improved and grew the Uniform Inspection Booth. We created pocket inspection cards with the PHS logo for measuring appropriate ribbon placement, we hung uniforms with errors for officers to identify, and we had uniform challenges where we gave away shoe-shining kits. These exercises excited officers about inspections and gave JOAG a long-standing space and time at future Symposiums. Through JOAG, we had more people involved, we generated more interest, and had a broader impact than just one person teaching uniforms through COTA. I loved watching the increased span and enhanced influence of the JOAG Uniform Inspection Booth.



I would like to think this project started a discussion about appropriate uniform wear outside of BOTCs and now OBCs. I hope it continues to help officers feel empowered to wear their uniforms appropriately. I still observe officers with discrepancies, but

Continued on next page

UNIFORM CORNER

they are much smaller items and usually not more than one per officer. These errors are items such as wearing the COA and/or Reserve Officers Association (ROA) ribbon(s) outside of those respective conferences or hair out of regulation. When I first started the Uniform Inspection Booth, I noticed the opposite; I would typically see multiple errors on the same officer and they were much more obvious. JOAG should be very proud of the legacy we have left these last 14 years. Of course, there is still room for improvement. I do not think the Uniform Inspection Booth should ever stop, as we all need reminders on how to wear our uniform properly. No one is perfect. It's ok for minor course corrections. Be proud to represent the USPHS. When I taught in COTA, we used to say "each USPHS officer is wearing the ultimate public health business suit, representing centuries of service to our Nation." Please spend some time learning the uniform regulations. Know what is authorized and what is not authorized. We all represent each other. The world around you makes a snap assessment about you in a few seconds. People assess OUR Service branch by how well you wear your uniform. You can do this!

A Call to Action: Know our Uniform Regulations

- Take the time to iron your uniform. Every time you take it out of a suitcase, especially.
- Measure those ribbons and nametags. ¼ inch above pockets please.
- Place rank on the right collar and your PHS insignia on the left collar.
- You earned your awards by hard work. You wouldn't minimize the effort you put into those projects. If the ribbons are old, ragged or dirty, get new ones. They represent your work.
- Watch what size of earrings you wear with your uniforms. Gold ball earrings are 7 mm maximum diameter. And, you can't wear hoops!
- Know the authorized hairstyles. Some of the hairstyles female officers wear are NOT regulation (i.e., ponytails). Also, your hairstyle must allow for proper wear of your cover.
- Check your gig line. It may be broken because your belt is on backwards. And, men and women have opposite gig lines.
- Make sure you purchase and wear SEA SERVICE rank, not LAND SERVICE. If you buy your rank from an Air Force or Army installation, unless the shop has a Navy/USPHS/Coast Guard section, you are purchasing the incorrect size/shape rank for officers at the O-1 through O-5 grades.

Pointers for future uniform inspectors:

- Know the regulations. Ask for help if you want to know where to look for resources to learn.
- Wear your uniform properly.
- Don't be afraid to say you don't know and then learn the correct answer. No one can remember everything ALL the time.
- Always, always, always be polite and friendly. There is a right and a wrong way to point out uniform errors. Let's all try and be positive, but not shy away from doing the right thing.

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

No More Excuses: Invest in Your Career

LT Traci M. Murray, Clinical Nurse, IHS

This year was my first time attending the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. It was also my first time serving as an Aide-de-Camp for a flag officer. My experiences will certainly have a profound impact on me – both professionally and personally. Always one to share, I felt obligated to write about my experiences to encourage other junior officers to explore such opportunities.

As a clinical nurse with Indian Health Services (IHS), it can be difficult to take extended leave for professional development. Many of our service units use limited resources to serve large patient populations who often have multiple healthcare needs. *We're too short staffed for me to go anywhere or do anything, right?* Wrong. IHS leadership prioritized professional development and designated funding for 150 of their officers to attend this year's Symposium. I recently transferred to my current service unit when this announcement came. *I'm too new here to be considered for this opportunity, right?* Wrong. I discussed the opportunity with my supervisor including how it would impact my career to network and meet other officers. As a fellow officer, she understood and encouraged me to submit my name for funding consideration.

Once approved for funding, the real fun began! How many activities do I register for? And what are these scientific tracks?! I chose the Developing and Implementing an Outward Mindset pre-conference workshop. It was a two-day commitment, but a senior officer highly recommended it based on his experience in the associated book circles. This workshop was well worth the time and financial investment. We discussed work and personal challenges and explored how we contribute to the very behaviors we want to stop. We also employed several tools to begin seeing others as people whose goals and objectives are as important as our own. At work, I already started implementing the lessons learned with positive results.

Leading up to the Symposium, there were several emails requesting volunteers to be Aide-de-Camp for flag officers. I wasn't completely clear what it involved, but I was prepared to meet the challenge. I responded and was selected to serve as Aide-de-Camp for Acting IHS Director RADM Michael Weahkee. My responsibilities were fairly simple – keep him on time for his agenda and ensure he has everything he needs when he needs it. I expected to be his shadow, someone who is barely seen and definitely not heard among senior leadership. Quite the opposite! He took interest in my opinions, experiences, and career goals. He introduced me to other senior IHS leadership and invited me to tour an urban health center in Dallas. Despite our marked difference in rank, we were really just two people with a shared commitment to serving IHS and improving the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Attending the Symposium exposed me to opportunities and experiences that I will not soon forget. There's more to the Symposium than Commissioned Corps updates and continuing education. The Symposium is a whirlwind showcase of Commissioned Corps at its best. Officers are growing personally and professionally, displaying their accomplishments, and building their networks for future endeavors. Don't let "We're short staffed" or "I'm still new here" keep you from attending – I didn't. It is time to invest in yourself. See you in Minneapolis...



RADM Michael Weahkee and LT Traci Murray at the end of her day as his aide-de-camp during the 2018 Symposium

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

USPHS Officer's Perspective on Graduating from the United States Naval War College

LCDR Alexander Varga, Pharmacist, IHS

I had first heard of the US Naval War College (USNWC) by virtue of reading a fellow USPHS officer's CV. It stood out as quite the accomplishment, and I decided to research it further. Given that the USPHS is a sea service, officers are indeed eligible to enroll and complete their diploma and Joint Professional Military Education Phase I requirements there. As a pharmacist in rural New Mexico, I was thankful that all courses were both free and offered completely online.

The first course I took was called Strategy and War. The course analyzed war strategy by studying seminal texts, such as *On War* by Carl Von Clausewitz and *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. What I quickly learned was that the lessons from both texts could be applied to everyday situations, not just those on the battlefield. I then studied the American Revolution, the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, and the Pacific theater of World War II. I delighted in poring over each text and drawing analogies back to strategy texts earlier in the course. Papers were expected at the end of each unit, and though they were challenging, they were straightforward. Overall, I enjoyed learning about the history lessons offered in this course.

After a small break, I waited for the second course to begin called Joint Maritime Operations, which was completely different from my previous class. I was not prepared for the level of detail that the course demanded. Of all three courses, this was the one I struggled with the most. The final capstone for the class was a group project, in which we had to construct an operational order for a fictional scenario; this involved U.S. aid to a friendly nation in Southeast Asia under attack from a violent neighbor. We were tasked with taking stock of all the military assets available and desired, the joint operational area, the rules of engagement, and the 5 D's (deploy, defer, defend, dominate, develop and depart) of our plan. It was a massive undertaking, and each week a new piece of the puzzle would unfold and we would be forced to tweak our plans based on the new events. It kept us on our toes and in constant communication with our fellow group members.

The final course was called Theater Security Decision Making. We analyzed leadership theories, ethics, geopolitical regional awareness and various security threats. I found this course to be the most beneficial to my everyday practice and my career because the course offered topical, complex scenarios with no right answers and asked us to make informed decisions based on the limited data we had. These decisions were based on a process known as ADIA (assess, decide, implement and assure), which required critical thinking and the use of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis, and is useful when making any sort of informed decision. I found this process relevant for making difficult decisions on a daily basis in my professional career.

After two years of classes, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the graduation ceremony in Newport, Rhode Island, in 2018. The USNWC campus was beautiful, consisting of an island surrounded by the Narragansett Bay. To my surprise, the commencement speaker was Secretary of Defense James Mattis. It was truly an honor to hear him speak, and his words were both thought provoking and entertaining. I would recommend this course of study to any USPHS officer who is looking for an academic challenge and the opportunity to exchange ideas with our sister services.



LCDR Varga standing outside the US Naval War College, Newport, RI

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

8th Annual Pre-Conference Leadership Workshop: “Lead From Where You Are”

LT Tiffany Pfundt, Project Manager Team Lead, FDA

The 8th Annual Leadership Workshop was held on June 4, 2018, as part of the USPHS Symposium Preconference in Dallas, TX. This year’s Workshop featured an inspiring opening keynote address by Deputy Surgeon General RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams, a distinguished panel of CPOs, and an interactive, facilitated afternoon session. The planning committee was delighted to have RADM Trent-Adams speak at this year’s conference, given her personal connection with the theme, “Lead from Where You Are,” and long-standing support of the Leadership Workshop.

The CPO Panel was comprised of a flag officer and four senior officers, including RADM Edward Dieser (Engineer), CAPT Mercedes Benitez-McCrary (Therapist), CAPT John Eckert (Scientist), CAPT John Gibbins (Veterinarian), and CAPT Suzan Gordon (Dietitian), with CAPT Brian Lewis (Physician) serving as moderator. Each CPO shared their interpretation of the theme, personal triumphs, and in some cases “stumbles” relating to how they have led from where they were throughout their careers.

The afternoon session was facilitated by Jim Ferrell, best-selling author and managing partner of the Arbiniger Institute. Through discussion, case-study videos, and interactive group and individual exercises, Mr. Ferrell demonstrated the importance of an “Outward Mindset” and how it can aid individuals in leading from where they are. Participants walked away with a plethora of leadership tools, including those to increase self-awareness, facilitate mindset change, improve accountability, and enhance collaboration.

Since its inception, the Workshop has been designed with junior officers (JOs) in mind, but until this year had not showcased JOs. The idea of creating a JO Panel was proposed by first-time planning committee member, LCDR Mark Liberatore, and was accepted with resounding enthusiasm. He took the lead and with support from LCDR Chitra Mahadevan, LCDR Katie Watson, and LT Tiffany Pfundt, with oversight from CDR Andrew Fine, he solicited applications, evaluated and selected panelists, conceptualized the format, and organized day-of logistics for the panel.

The committee received nearly 50 applications from officers demonstrating exceptional leadership qualities. The final six panelists, LCDR Kathryn Jacques (Therapist), LCDR Chinyelum Olele (Pharmacy), LCDR Carrie Schuler (Nurse), LCDR Jessica Schultz Fischer (HSO), LT Steven Merritt (EHO), and LT Tanesha Tutt (Scientist), and two alternates, LCDR Kristie Clarke (Physician) and LCDR Matthew Palo (Engineer), were selected for their compelling stories which exemplified “Leading from Where You Are.” During the session, panelists shared personal experiences, as well as practical leadership attributes and challenges to leading early in their careers as JOs.

LCDR Mateusz Karwowski and CDR Diana Solana-Sodeinde drafted and analyzed post-workshop surveys, in which workshop respondents (n=90) indicated the JO panel was of great value. Most attendees thought the session identified essential leadership attributes (89%), provided strategies to overcome barriers (80%), and presented information applicable to

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REPORT FROM THE RANKS

their work (85%). Suggestions for next year’s workshop included translating the experiences of JOs into general leadership principles and providing more time for the question-and-answer session.

Stay tuned for more information on next year’s Leadership Workshop, which is tentatively slated for Monday, May 6, 2019, as part of the 2019 USPHS Symposium Preconference in Minneapolis, MN.



Junior Officer Panelists (From left to right): Front row: LCDR Kathryn Jacques (Therapist), LCDR Chinyelum Olele (Pharmacy), LT Steven Merrit (EHO). Back row: LCDR Matthew Palo (Engineer), LCDR Carrie Schuler (Nurse), LCDR Jessica Schultz Fischer (HSO), LCDR Kristie Clarke (Physician), LT Tanesha Tutt (Scientist), LCDR Mark Liberatore (Pharmacy)

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September 14 #kisscancergoodbye

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

Name: LCDR Griff Miller

Category: Engineer

Agency: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself: interests, position, family, hobbies.

I work for the Corrective Action program in EPA Region 3 as a Remedial Project Manager ensuring hazardous waste sites get cleaned up. Outside of my official duties, I'm a musician at heart and have played several instruments for many groups, including an indie-pop group, various community orchestras and opera companies, an EPA group that performs at retirements, award ceremonies, holiday parties, and other sundry functions, and – of course! – “The Surgeon General’s Own” PHS Music Ensemble. Other hobbies include surfing, soccer, and snowboarding – I love being active! My interests seem to change every few years, but one constant of late has been a keen interest in how the world works, both at the quantum and large scales (I’ll watch or read anything from string theorist Brian Greene or astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson). I never started a family of my own, but remain close to my parents and brother – in fact, we’re all taking a trip later this year to celebrate my mom’s 70th birthday.

2. How did you get involved in Public Health?

Almost by accident: while in the Army, I was looking for different ways to continue my public service if I decided to leave the military. I somehow learned about the NOAA Corps and thought it would be a great way to use the newly-honed engineering skills I’d have once I finished my master’s degree and my second enlistment was up. However, upon speaking with a NOAA Corps officer who told me that a third of your career is typically onboard a ship, I decided that wasn’t for me and somehow later discovered the PHS Commissioned Corps, which seemed a perfect fit with its own Engineer category and no sea duty requirement. As a fairly staunch environmentalist for most of my life, though, I had always wanted to help maintain as safe and clean an environment as possible for the world’s denizens, so I’m grateful to PHS and EPA for allowing me to do my small part in helping protect public health in this way.

3. How long have you been involved with JOAG and what is the most interesting aspect of your involvement with JOAG and/or serving the mission?

I came to JOAG rather late – 4 years after commissioning (I encourage all junior officers not to wait this long to get involved in JOAG!), starting in Policy & Procedures in 2013 by helping out with the redevelopment of the 5-year Strategic Plan, which gave me rather unique insight into many of JOAG’s activities. Throughout my JOAG involvement, the most interesting aspect has always been the other officers I’ve worked with, learned from, and gotten to know. JOAG has helped my development as an officer and leader immensely by giving me a chance to work with other officers to effect change – something I’m not usually able to do locally.



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

4. What committee do you liaise with and what is that committee doing this operational year?

I liaise with the Readiness & Deployment (R&D) and Outreach committees. Despite some growing pains attributable to being the newest of JOAG's committees, R&D has been busy this year with both regular duties like collecting joint APFT, BLS, and other training opportunities to list on their calendar and the JOAG Listserv for the benefit of officers nationwide, plus more specific initiatives such as a list of deployment resources, website updates to make R&D's information more accessible, and a retooling of the US Fitness Events Log into a more dynamic program similar to PHS Athletics. Outreach has just come off another wonderfully successful Symposium filled with all the typical JOAG events (JOAG General Meeting, Career Enhancement and Uniform Inspection booths, community service event), plus new initiatives for this year such as the Uniform Basics presentation and the CV Exchange Program. Additionally, a new T-shirt and license plate frame were developed this year, Outreach continues to introduce JOAG to new officers attending OBC, and JOAG's New Officer Guide was revised a second time this year (under a tight deadline just prior to Symposium, of course) in anticipation of its use as the standard orientation guide for the entire Corps. Needless to say, it's been quite a year for both committees!

5. What do you hope to accomplish/achieve in this position for the operational year?

As Financial Liaison, my primary duty is to manage JOAG's financial matters, so I want to ensure that JOAG procures quality merchandise so officers are able to display their pride and spirit for the Corps, which also helps increase the visibility and awareness of the PHS in general. JOAG uses proceeds from sales to support junior officer scholarships to the Symposium; this year, JOAG funded two junior officer scholarships. Sales at Symposium this year were a resounding success, with the newly-designed T-shirt selling out by the second day (they've been reordered and are available online, so don't fret if you haven't gotten yours yet!). As a member of JOAG's Executive Committee, I hope to be able to use my knowledge and experience to steer JOAG in new and exciting directions, as well as increase JOAG's influence within the Corps.

6. What's your favorite piece of advice to share with fellow junior officers?

Get involved in JOAG! JOAG has so many activities and projects that you're bound to find something of interest to you. If you go about it the right way, your JOAG activities, in addition to helping advance the state of the junior officer corps, will also help your own career and provide you with a resource and support network that will be there for you and help guide you throughout your time as a PHS officer and beyond: although your time with JOAG may end with becoming a senior officer, the relationships you make don't have to!



REPORT FROM THE RANKS

JOAG Awards 2018

Contributed by LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian and LCDR Chitra Mahadevan, JOAG Awards Committee Co-Chairs

The JOAG Awards Committee provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General for new awards and other methods of recognition for junior officers. It is the mission of the Awards Committee to facilitate the awards process and recognize junior officers for their accomplishments and commitment to the mission of the United States Public Health Service (USPHS).

During the JOAG General Meeting held on June 5, 2018, in Dallas, Texas, all of the 2018 JOAG awards recipients were recognized and awarded for their exceptional performance and contributions to USPHS and the public health field in general.

JOAG Excellence Award



From left to right: CAPT Sara Newman (JOAG Senior Advisor), LCDR Patrick Harper (Excellence Award Winner), LCDR Chitra Mahadevan (Awards Committee Co-Chair), LCDR Christopher Sheehan (JOAG Chair-Elect)

The JOAG Excellence Award recognizes a junior officer for demonstrating outstanding, dedicated effort, leadership ability, and commitment to JOAG through active committee participation. This year's JOAG Excellence Award recipient, **LCDR Patrick Harper**, serves as a Senior Public Health Analyst for the Division of Regional Operations in HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce. LCDR Harper supports junior officers through such roles as Vice President of the Chicago COA Chapter. He serves on the Policy Review Committee of the American Pharmacists Association to help shape policy that impacts national pharmacy practice. He currently serves as the Strategic Planning Liaison for the JOAG Recruitment & Retention Committee, developing specific deliverables to ensure the committee's goals, plans, and activities are in line with JOAG's Strategic Plan. Since commissioning, he has served in the following Recruitment & Retention Committee roles: Career Fair Subcommittee Member, COSTEP Mentor, Publications Subcommittee Co-Lead, and COSTEP Connection Subcommittee.

Junior Officer of the Year Award

The Junior Officer of the Year Award recognizes an active duty junior officer who has made a significant contribution to the mission of the U.S. Public Health Service. The 2018 Junior Officer of the Year, **LCDR Nancy Tian**, currently serves as a statistician in the Office of Regulatory Affairs, FDA.

Continued on next page

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

LCDR Tian demonstrates commitment to the core values of our service, shows leadership within her field, and serves her agency by making a unique contribution. She serves as the 2018 Chair for the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) and 2018 MOLC Liaison as Asian Pacific American Officer Committee Voting Member. In response to the Surgeon General's (SG) request on how to identify and alert PHS officers regarding SG-initiated opioid community outreach initiatives, she developed a first-of-its-kind Geographic Information Systems (GIS) platform that enabled the SG and ASPR to identify 6,800 PHS officers in real-time nationwide, thus ensuring PHS deployment readiness for public health emergencies. She was directly appointed by the DCCPR Policy Group to streamline the evaluation process of the existing PHS hardship sites. The comprehensive review and evaluation of the 337 current sites led to the development of new and updated criteria for hardship sites requiring special pay and awards.



From left to right: CAPT Sara Newman (JOAG Senior Advisor), LCDR Nancy Tian (Junior Officer of the Year Award Winner), LCDR Chitra Mahadevan (Awards Committee Co-Chair), LCDR Christopher Sheehan (JOAG Chair-Elect)

VADM C. Everett Koop Junior Officer Award



From left to right: CAPT Sara Newman (JOAG Senior Advisor), LCDR Charles Darr (Koop Award Winner), LCDR Scott Steffen (Koop Award Subcommittee Lead), LCDR Chitra Mahadevan (Awards Committee Co-Chair), LCDR Christopher Sheehan (JOAG Chair-Elect)

The legacy of VADM C. Everett Koop is realized through his contributions that culminated in changes in national policy and healthcare reform. Dr. Koop's life and legacy are most notable for issuing a warning on the dangers of smoking, taking an aggressive stance on AIDS, and advocating for the rights of children with special needs. The 2018 VADM C. Everett Koop Junior Officer Award recipient, **LCDR Charles Darr**, currently serves as a Senior International Health Officer within the Office of Global Health, HRSA. LCDR Darr demonstrates exceptional leadership and outstanding capability by undertaking highly visible special assignments. He has led U.S. government interagency technical and policy coordination in

preparations for governance meetings at the World Health Or-

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REPORT FROM THE RANKS

ganization, Pan-American Health Organization, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. He served as Chair of the technical review panel for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Key Populations Investment Fund leading to successful completion and review of twenty-two proposals, representing efforts in seventeen countries, and over \$105 million in funding requests to support global HIV/AIDS epidemic control. He helped implement the Presidential Executive Order on Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance by leading the HRSA Steering Committee responsible for the impact, implementation, and compliance reporting of the Presidential Executive Order representing approximately \$50 million in HRSA program funds.

The VADM Richard Carmona Inspiration Award



From left to right: CAPT Sara Newman (JOAG Senior Advisor), CDR Jennifer Adjemian (Carmona Award Winner), LCDR Chitra Mahadevan (JOAG Awards Co-Chair), LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian (JOAG Awards Co-Chair), LCDR Christopher Sheehan (JOAG Chair-Elect)

During his tenure as Surgeon General, VADM Carmona exemplified qualities that junior officers throughout the Commissioned Corps have come to admire. These qualities include outstanding leadership by example, mentorship of junior officers, and overall inspiration to the PHS community. This award recognizes a senior officer in the Commissioned Corps who exhibits the qualities ascribed to VADM Carmona. The 2018 VADM Richard Carmona Inspiration Award was presented to **CDR Jennifer Adjemian**. In addition to the plaque, Dr. Carmona provided his coin and a personalized letter to the award recipient. CDR Adjemian has over ten years of experience across three federal agencies leading advanced epidemiologic research, managing public health programs, and overseeing infectious disease surveillance and outbreak responses. She has served as a Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) voting member since 2012, including most recently as the SciPAC Chair. She has also been an active member of the USPHS Applied Public Health

Team (APHT)-1 since 2011 and served as the Deputy Team Commander for a three-year term. Her work includes groundbreaking research on the epidemiology of nontuberculous mycobacterial lung disease and numerous studies on high-priority pathogens, including ebola and lassa viruses, lyme disease, and antimicrobial resistance. She was recently awarded the USPHS Outstanding Service Medal for her work as a National Institutes of Health (NIH) infectious disease researcher. She has responded on numerous deployments, including with the CDC for outbreaks of Marburg hemorrhagic fever in Uganda, murine typhus in Texas, unknown neurological illnesses in Indiana, Rocky Mountain spotted fever in Arizona, and zika virus in Puerto Rico.

September 21-#peaceday

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Celebrating 24 Years of Excellence: CAPT Mark Feltner's USPHS Career Interview and Narrative by LT Fengyee Zhou, Pharmacist, IHS

How were you first introduced to the USPHS, and what made you pursue a career with the Corps?

In February of 1993, I came to Whiteriver Service Unit (WRSU) as a pharmacy student. The Director of Pharmacy at that time was CAPT Alvin Lee (now: CAPT [ret.] Alvin Lee). What I enjoyed most about the rotation was the breadth of patient interaction and the availability of the entire patient chart for clinical decision-making. I was also drawn to the Apache culture, such as Sunrise dances and sweat lodge ceremonies. From a more personal perspective, I have always been committed to serving the underserved population, and my father was a retired Marine, so to me serving in the uniformed services is meaningful. I have this sense of service to the country, regardless of which branch of service.



Prior to your current position, what previous PHS assignments did you have?

I have been at WRSU for my entire career. Prior to my current position as Acting Director of Pharmacy Services (O-6 billet), I was the Deputy Director (O-6 billet), an Advanced Practice I Pharmacist (O-5 billet), a Senior Pharmacist (O-4 billet), and Staff Pharmacist (O-3 billet). When I started, pharmacists started as O-2s!

Over the course of your career, you have engaged in many experiences and accomplished much, but let's go back to where it all began. Tell me about the very first award you received or first major accomplishment.

In 1998, I earned an Achievement Medal for the establishment of the dialysis clinic here. It was the facility next door, and we would round with the nephrologist. I developed a template for the tractor-feed paper, where the template would be printed on that paper, and we would use this printout during our rounding. The pre-printed template sections included things like the SOAP (subjective, objective, assessment, and plan) note and medication list. The different copies of the tractor-feed paper would go to different people. Throughout the month, we would also conduct chart reviews to see if the patient had any updates like new lab results or emergency department visits. Remember, all of this was before having an electronic record, so having a standardized template for rounding was a pretty big deal!

Can you pick out a small handful of your most rewarding professional experiences and tell me about them?

Honestly, the most impactful memories of my times here were in the emergency room (ER). I really felt a part of the team in the ER when we would literally be saving someone's life. I remember everything (including name and age of patient) about the very first pediatric code to which I responded. I also think it has been incredibly rewarding to see all the changes in the pharmacy department. Look at all the clinics that have been established here in the last few decades. Consider the advancement of pharmacy practice that WRSU has been a part of. As Deputy Director, it's a great feel-

Continued on next page

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

ing being recognized at the regional and national levels, such as at QUAD (IHS Southwest Regional Continuing Pharmacy Education Meeting). And though this is minor, I do pride myself with organization. Look at these binders and recordkeeping. I cannot imagine being in this role without being organized.

I anticipate this interview being shared through multiple forums. There will be many junior officers who are reading this interview who aspire to one day hold a similar rank to you and to accomplish as much as you have. On the eve of your retirement, what advice do you lend to these junior officers?

The most important thing is to stay active with the profession. Pursue activities beyond your department and service unit, and make an impact at the area level and even national level. I think it is important to get your name out there and make yourself relevant in what you do. I was one of the founding members of Team 10, which was the IHS recruitment team. In doing so and working on this team, I made myself visible. When you go to meetings and conferences, network. As a junior officer, meet your senior officers, introduce yourself, and get to know what they are doing and where they have worked. Find your niche in the profession, your passion, and run with it. Definitely don't just stay in the status quo. Always explore avenues for change, and keep making yourself relevant – to the Corps and to your profession.

Is there anything you would change about your career? As in, if you had the chance to do your PHS career over again, would you approach it differently a second time through?

No. I've honestly had an incredibly satisfying career. Being at WRSU and seeing all the services offered at WRSU by pharmacists has enabled me to maintain a level of personal satisfaction and gratification. It's hard to imagine working someplace else.

You have served in a leadership role at WRSU for multiple years. In terms of being Acting Director of Pharmacy Services and Chief of Outpatient Pharmacy, what is your biggest challenge, and how do you overcome it?

Definitely the biggest challenge, here or anywhere, is working with all the personnel. We have a large number of staff, and this gives rise to things like different personalities and healthy conflict. It's so important to maintain a healthy work environment, so I'm always transparent to staff and exercise fairness in treatment. And I think we have a good foundation: we have a good management core that works well together and can lead by example. The other challenging part in terms of personnel management is to maintain interest in job duties through a variety of work activities. Leadership is always thinking of ways to expand existing clinics and implement new clinics, such as our upcoming mental health clinic.

On behalf of WRSU, I think we are all sad to see you retire. Share with us what a typical day in Mark's retired life will look like.

I still intend on working in the near future. I'll probably start full-time and transition to part-time. I definitely look forward to spending more time with my family. My family has a proud tradition of woodworking, so when I have more time, I want to go back to that.

What other parting words would you like to share with the pharmacy or with any readers?

I've really enjoyed my time serving as a Commissioned Officer in the Public Health Service and serving the White Mountain Apache Tribe. This has truly been an experience of a lifetime.

Congratulations, CAPT Feltner, on retiring after 24 years of service! Thank you for all your service to WRSU, to IHS, to the Commissioned Corps of the USPHS, and to this Nation. On behalf of everyone, I wish you a happy retirement!

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Pirate “Doc” Ahoy

LCDR Katherine Demers, Dive Medical Officer, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

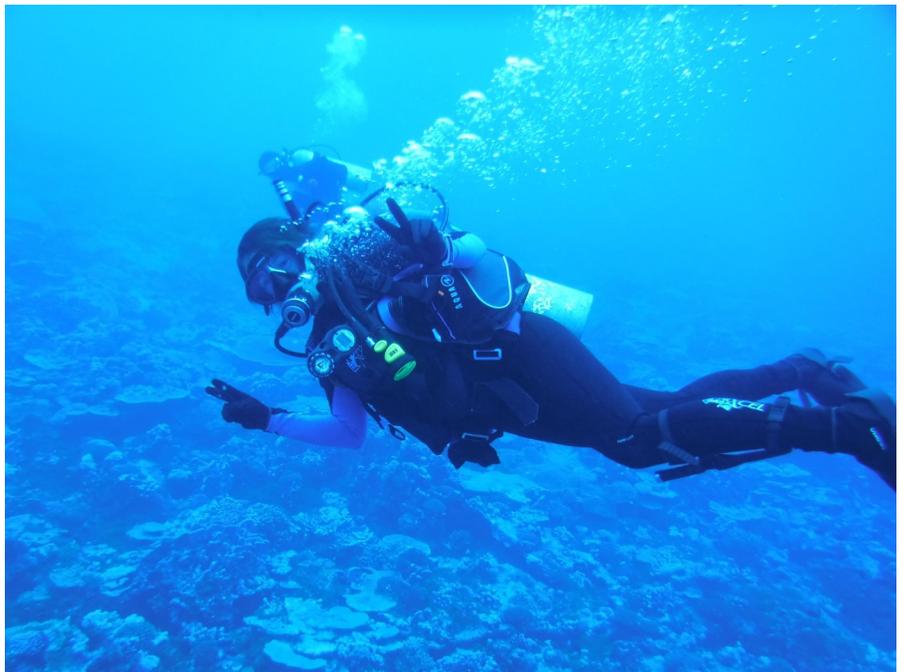
When I began Physician Assistant School, I intended to practice medicine. However, when I chose to serve in the USPHS, I knew in order to advance I would likely have to give up clinical medicine and take on an administrative role. This was not a bad thing. I gladly served in the BOP for nine years as a practitioner and as an administrator, both of which were uniquely amazing and full of positive experiences. I learned a lot and was able to accomplish the mission of serving the underserved.

I then made the difficult decision to leave a place I love and transferred to NOAA to work on their premier dive boat, the Hi’ialakai (Hee Eee Al Eh Ky), where I am known as “doc.”

One of the reasons for my transition is that I have always had an adventurer’s heart and this transfer has taken me to Hawaii, and currently American Samoa through the high seas. The other reason was to get back to clinical medicine. Because I am the only provider on the ship, sometimes four days from any other medical help, I am positioned in an O-5 billet. Therefore, NOAA offers me the opportunity to practice medicine and encourages me to take the steps needed to further my USPHS career.

My friends joke that I decided to become a “pirate doc.” Well, here I am, sitting offshore the beautiful island of Ta’u (part of American Samoa) on a two-month mission to explore strange new underwater worlds, to seek out new life and new coralizations, and to boldly go where no man has gone before. Today, I am running a dive chamber drill and looking forward to diving as a NOAA diver in one of the most remote settings in the world. My patients are the 47 scientists and crew aboard the NOAA ship, Hi’ialakai. Here, on the high seas, I get to practice evidence-based care and hone my physical exam skills, as there is not an x-ray available for days.

Because of my duty stations, I have had opportunities to work in great places with great people, and I have been given the ability to practice clinical medicine, while also furthering my career. Can a provider, educator, and officer ask for anything more?



LCDR Demers (above) prescribes 2 dives a day for that peaceful feeling. Picture taken by NOAA Divemaster Katie Mahaffey during the American Samoa Reef Assessment Mission (ASRAM)

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

A Former Military Officer's Perspective

LT Jesse McAllister, Staff Medical Officer

I would like to briefly share my prior military service as an officer of the United States Air Force (USAF) and experience with the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) as it pertains to recruitment and retention. I was a direct commission into the USAF after obtaining my Master's Degree (Physician Assistant) in 2010. I served three years on active duty and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012. The USAF trains its officers for four weeks at Officer Training School with a primary focus on leadership. Additionally, the USAF prepares its officers for O-4 promotion by providing advanced leadership training in Squadron Officer School. My deployment was both physically and mentally exhausting. Civilian contractors, other uniformed services, and enlisted personnel rely heavily on officers' leadership skills. They look to officers for answers, guidance, encouragement, and realistic optimism in moments of chaos. Although the training for the USAF did not specifically train me to be a Commissioned Corps officer, it did provide advanced leadership training and enhanced interpersonal skills that are paramount to our global public health mission.

I first read about the USPHS while researching the Public Health Student Loan Forgiveness program five years ago. I was not officially recruited by the USPHS, nor do I recall any resource being given to me during separation from the USAF. There were not any specific recruiting events, materials, or contacts for USPHS. We were given informational lectures on interservice transfers, as well as options with the reserves and guard, and I considered several of these career paths. Ultimately, I was recruited by a patient of mine, an active USPHS officer, while still on active duty with the USAF. One of the challenges I faced when commissioning with the USPHS was the extensive application and on-boarding process, which made it very difficult to provide proper notification and professional courtesy to my current employer. In my opinion, USPHS recruitment was essentially non-existent. Many top recruits are missed because qualified separating service members do not know we exist. It seems imperative that we reach out to separating officers and recruit in the same manner that the other uniformed services do upon separation, which requires service members to sit through informational lectures for about a week. Nonetheless, not being recruited did not deter me. I had a keen interest in the USPHS because the mission was unique, and I had extensive leadership training that could be utilized within the uniformed service and public health mission. I gained valuable experience in medicine and acquired important perspectives on life through my time with the USAF, but I wanted to transition my focus to public health.

A career serving as an officer in the USPHS allows one to pursue personal public health interests while serving the American public. I think this is what remains most valuable regarding retention. Assignments are incredibly versatile and many opportunities within the USPHS remain at the forefront of what I can only assume draws most candidates to the USPHS. Additionally, time away from family during TDY assignments and deployments are shorter and are focused on humanitarian efforts. I gained a wealth of insight, mental resilience, and fortitude from my time with the USAF, which better prepared me for moments of high stress. Despite the arduous on-boarding process, I felt USPHS was where I was supposed to be from the moment I heard about the mission, and I am honored to serve as a Commissioned Corps officer.

The next featured article in Recruitment and Retention Matters will feature the R&R's TAP (Transitional Assistance Program) Subcommittee and how it can help improve recruitment of prior service members.

SENIOR OFFICER COMMENTARY

Writing Tips for U.S. Public Health Service Officers

CAPT John Iskander, Senior Medical Consultant, CDC and CDR Neelam Ghiya, Training Unit Lead, CDC



CAPT Iskander

“Why Do You Write Like You’re Running Out of Time?” -From the musical Hamilton

As USPHS officers, we sometimes feel like we are running out of time, especially if we are facing promotion deadlines. Because our promotion file consists entirely of written documents, it can feel like the promotion process is mainly a “paperwork exercise.” Rather than seeing this negatively, in our view, the written file presents an opportunity for officers to use established principles of good writing to improve their chances for pro-



CDR Ghiya

motion. The recommendations we present here are based on reviewing many Curriculum Vitae (CVs) and other documents, as well as experience teaching writing and guidance from widely used style guides. While our focus in this article is on the promotion process, keep in mind many of these recommendations apply to PHS award narratives as well.

Plain Language and Clear Communication Principles

Because your promotion folder will be reviewed in under ten minutes, it is important for your writing to be brief and clear. Whenever possible, limit sentence length to less than 20 words. Eliminate words that are redundant or unnecessary. Limit the number of clauses in each sentence, and place the most important information at the end of the sentence. Do not waste words stating that you wear your PHS uniform at your duty station every day, fulfill all readiness standards, or met your category/profession’s continuing education requirements. Because these are all conditions of service and they will not distinguish you from other PHS officers up for promotion.

Use the active voice. If you directed something, write “the officer directed the project” instead of “the project was directed by the officer”. Use strong verbs, such as direct, lead, coordinate, implement, manage (as in managing a budget), and strengthen. Avoid unclear verbs like “leverage”.

Do not “bury the lead” meaning if you have a unique accomplishment, especially a recently achieved one, put it front and center, and repeat it in multiple documents. Specifically, put it at the beginning of a paragraph, or at the top of a page (or do both and have it be the first sentence in the first paragraph at the top of

Continued on next page

SENIOR OFFICER COMMENTARY

the page). Limit jargon; make sure your board members can clearly understand the type of work you do on a daily basis. Remember that your board members, while in your category, may be doing very different work than you are. Your reviewers should be able to quickly and clearly understand whether you primarily work as a clinician, an epidemiologist, a health educator, an informatics specialist, etc.

Recommendations for your CV

Think of a CV as not just a list of your qualifications and accomplishments, but also as a writing sample. Follow the CV format for your category as you do not want to stand out as one of the few PHS officers up for promotion who did not follow instructions provided. For the rest of your CV, incorporate anything you consider to be very important on the first one and one half pages. Again, think of a promotion board member having to read your CV, Officer Statement (OS), Reviewing Official's Statement (ROS), Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report (COER), and Promotion Information Report (PIR) within a few minutes.

In all documents, write truthfully, and do not falsify or exaggerate. If you not only implemented a new program or process, but recognized the need for it in the first place, say so clearly without equivocation. Because promotions often come down to slim margins, a better written file can give you an advantage.

Reference: Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*. (available for free on some eReader platforms)



Do you know a junior officer that has a unique duty station? Is the officer a super star at work? Do they work tirelessly to support community endeavors, or just have a story to tell? We want to hear from you! Submit the officer's name and a short (50 words or less) narrative on why you think this officer's story should be shared. Submissions should be sent to: [LCDR Beth Wittry and LT Roseline Boateng](#). All submissions will be reviewed and one junior officer will be selected and showcased in the Fall 2018 Edition of the JOC.

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

PACE Officers at University of Maryland's 20th Annual Maryland Day

LT Zavera Brandon, Physical Therapist, NIH and LT Theresa Yu, Nurse Specialist, NIH

Each year, the University of Maryland at College Park welcomes thousands of visitors to celebrate learning and discovery. The event offers free family-friendly exhibits, presentations, and demonstrations throughout their entire campus. This year was their 20th annual celebration and it is the fifth year that the PACE (Prevention through Active Community Engagement) has participated in this wonderful community event. The mission of PACE is to engage the community through education to create a healthier nation. LCDR Leshin and 13 officers interacted with approximately 600 visitors at the USPHS Commissioned Corps booth this year.

As newly commissioned junior officers, this event gave us an excellent opportunity to use our expertise to provide education to hundreds of people. We met other officers from different agencies and categories and learned how officers are making contributions at community events such as Maryland Day. We were able to engage with adults, as well as children, while providing them with information on the opioid epidemic, fitness, healthy eating, and nutrition.

The booth had age-appropriate games, stickers, and coloring worksheets, which attracted young children to get involved in health promotion. Older children had the opportunity to participate in exercise challenges with officers, such as timed planks and squats, which was exciting for everyone involved (with officers occasionally losing to some very active kids). Teens and adults were interested in the opioid information and received an abundant amount of education on the opioid epidemic and preventing opioid overdose. In collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), a DEA educator discussed the importance of keeping naloxone on hand, which is one of the U.S. Surgeon General's initiatives. This year's event was a huge success. We are looking forward to next year's event and future events with PACE.



LTs Theresa Yu (left) and Zavera Brandon (right) at the USPHS booth

September 5 #Charityday

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

USPHS and HOSA-Future Health Professionals Collaboration

LCDR Karly Lucero and LCDR Reed Grimes, JOAG HOSA Co-Leads

HOSA-Future Health Professionals (formerly the Health Occupations Students of America) is an international student organization with a mission of promoting career opportunities in the healthcare industry and advancing the delivery of quality healthcare to all people (www.hosa.org). The organization has over 200,000 members and 51 chartered associations in 49 states, three territories, Canada and Mexico. All students are interested in pursuing careers in the health professions.

The JOAG HOSA-Future Health Professionals Subcommittee is composed of officers stationed in 18 states, represented by the following categories: Environmental Health, Medical, Pharmacy, Nursing, Scientists, Health Services, and Veterinary.

The HOSA Subcommittee seeks to support HOSA's goal to mentor the next generation of healthcare leaders, by providing opportunities for knowledge, skills leadership, and career development in health science and public health. Additionally, the subcommittee has focused on building capacity to foster collaboration between USPHS officers and HOSA students. The HOSA Subcommittee has grown from two members to 31 members since November 2017. For Operational Year 2018, goals were aligned with those of the Surgeon General, emphasizing education on public health initiatives, such as the Nation's opioid crisis and tobacco cessation, and increasing visibility for the Corps in the community.

HOSA holds numerous events for its students, varying from local high school presentations, to state-level and international conferences. The subcommittee identified State Leadership Conferences as the ideal venue for distributing information about the work of Corps officers. Subcommittee members have worked with local Commissioned Officers Associations and other national stakeholders to establish local connections and market HOSA opportunities to all USPHS officers nationally. To date, USPHS officers have participated at 15 state conferences and two high school events; they interfaced with over 23,000 students, all potential future leaders in the USPHS! HOSA officials have expressed their enthusiasm for enhanced collaboration and have asked for USPHS officers to contribute at additional state venues and other potential events in the following capacities:

- Participation at State Leadership Conferences through:
 - Judging competitive events, including events on Public Health, Health Education, etc. -
 - Hosting exhibition booths on the USPHS
 - Providing presentations on careers in USPHS
 - Facilitating presentations on public health topics
- Outreach and presentations at high schools
- Identifying further areas of opportunity for partnership and collaboration

The JOAG HOSA Subcommittee is always looking to grow and diversify. For more information, please contact [HOSA Co-Leads](#): LCDR Karly Lucero (Karly.A.Lucero@ice.dhs.gov) and LCDR Reed Grimes (ggrimes@cdc.gov).

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

Junior Officer Professional Development 2017 Survey Results

LCDR Michelle Locke, Clinical Pharmacist, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; LCDR Ameer Schwitters, Senior Technical Advisor for HIV Prevention, CDC; LT Kimberly Davis Public, Health Advisor, CDC

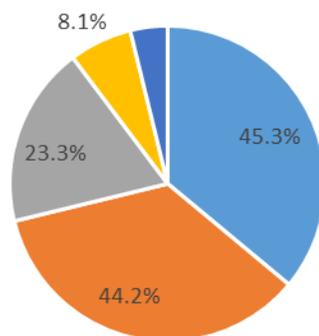
PURPOSE and BACKGROUND: Every two years, the Professional Development Survey (PDS) Subcommittee, part of the JOAG Professional Development Committee, designs a survey and administers it to junior officers to assess their professional development needs, interests, and concerns. JOAG then uses the survey results to gain insight into junior officers' needs to address any identified gaps. The PDS administered the most recent survey in the summer of 2017. In addition to the information listed above, the survey also asked questions about basic officer demographics. The majority of the respondents were Lieutenant Commanders (62.8%). The most common respondents by category were: Pharmacists (33.3%), Health Services Officers (20.2%), and Environmental Health Officers (13.1%).

KEY FINDINGS: Survey findings indicated 44.2% of respondents are members of a JOAG committee, and 45.3% of respondents actively participated in a JOAG committee (Figure 1). Of those who indicated they were not currently active in JOAG, the majority stated their lack of involvement was due to current demands of their agency assignment (46.5%), not knowing enough about JOAG committees (18.3%), and/or they recently joined the Commissioned Corps (12.7%).

Whether respondents identified as active participants or not, 97.6% subscribed to the JOAG listserv, 56.6% attended or called into JOAG General Membership Meetings, 37.3% called into a Journeyman Speaker Series presentation, and 32.5% utilized the JOAG website. The Recruitment and Retention Committee (18.8%) and the Communications and Publications Committee (12.5%) were the most active committees for involvement among officers who responded to the survey. The U.S. Surgeon General, VADM Jerome Adams, recently reinforced that Corps officers are required to be basic ready for deployment. To assess junior officer's deployment related needs, the survey asked if officers felt they had the information necessary to join deployment/response teams or respond to public health emergencies. Approximately half of respondents stated they did not have the information required to join a deployment/response team (48.8%) or respond to a public health emergency (45.3%) (Figure 2). Officers stated they would like more information regarding deployments, including: how to join a deployment team/who to contact to join (27.8%), notifications of position

Figure 1

Participation in JOAG



- Not an active participant in a JOAG committee
- Active Participant in a JOAG committee
- Current and/or former JOAG subcommittee lead or co-lead
- Current and/or former JOAG Voting Member
- Other (Occasional Participant, Former Participant, Volunteer)

Continued on next page

REPORT FROM THE RANKS

openings and team information (25%), and information on deployment teams and their respective requirements (16.7%).

The survey also captured key findings related to professional development opportunities, leadership, and involvement in the Corps. The majority of junior officers learned about professional development opportunities from the JOAG listserv (74.1%), Professional Advisory Committee (PAC)/

Professional Advisory Group (PAG) (55.3%), their respective Agency/Operating Division (38.8%), senior officers (37.6%), and other junior officers (37.6%). Most officers preferred learning about professional development opportunities through the JOAG listserv (81%) followed by PAC/PAGs (42.9%) and Commissioned Corps Agency Liaisons (33.3%). The Journeyman Speaker Series remains of interest to junior officers. In the future, junior officers would like to see topics relating to awards (38.6%), professional/leadership development (31.8%) and promotion (25%).

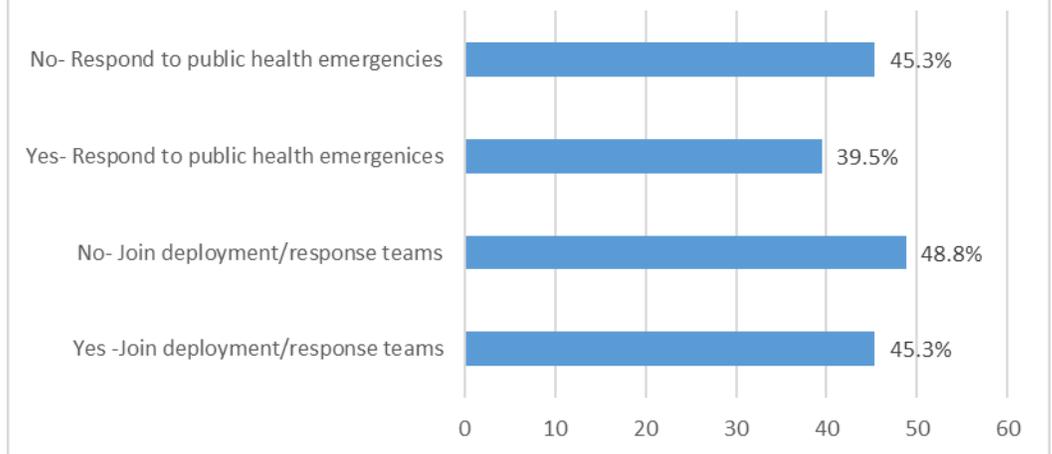
OPPORTUNITIES: Overall, the majority of junior officers feel JOAG is meeting its mission to advocate for junior officers (88.5%) and that they had adequate opportunities to get involved in Corps activities (76.3%). Future Professional Development Committee offerings should provide information on how to have a successful career in the Corps despite having busy assignments or being in remote locations (25%), work/life balance (20%), and opportunities for involvement (15%). For officer's seeking growth in their careers, interest included leadership trainings (16%) and opportunities/information tailored to those in remote locations or at busy assignments.

Launched in 2015, the Professional Development Book Club offers officers an opportunity to recommend books to read and discuss through on the JOAG Bookshelf at the Goodreads.com website (<https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/119893-joag-professional-development>). The survey found that the majority of officers did not know about the JOAG bookshelf (77.6%), but were interested in learning more (69.4%). For more information on the Professional Development Book Club, please contact LCDR Ron Milam (rondorus.p.milam.mil@mail.mil) or LCDR Kathi Murray (Kathi.Murray@ihs.gov).

CONCLUSION: This survey provides feedback from junior officers and serves as a way for JOAG leadership to develop and/or modify current programs based on junior officer's needs and concerns. Continuing to communicate with junior officers through the JOAG listserv, hosting the Journeyman Speaker Series, and utilizing social media more are a few ideas on how to best address the findings from the survey. Officers interested in learning more about the survey results or the JOAG PDS Subcommittee, please contact LCDR Ameer Schwitters (efn6@cdc.gov) or LCDR Michelle Locke (mrlocke@anthc.org).

Figure 2.

Information Necessary to Join Deployment / Response Teams or Respond to Public Health Emergencies



REPORT FROM THE RANKS

A Lesson on Adopting Healthy Lifestyles

LCDR Andrea Gormley, Pharmacist, FDA; LT Folaremi Adeyemo, Pharmacist, FDA; LT Adesola Adejuwon, Pharmacist, FDA

Bring Your Child to Work Day (BYCTWD) is an annual event hosted by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This event helps inspire children to start thinking about their future careers. It exposes them to public health and work life, while expanding their knowledge in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related careers. BYCTWD creates a platform for FDA employees to share what they do with children of ages 8 and up. The 2018 theme was “Service Force-Agents of Positive Change”. The take home message of this event hinged on sharing qualities of positive change agents and encouraged children to strive for a future brighter community.



The all-day program is usually held on the main White Oak campus with laboratory experiences, tours, and interactive sessions to include Emergency Response Training, Kids Fitness, STEM Careers Bingo, Having Fun with Science and Handwashing Presentations, Mass Spectroscopy and Bioreactor Labs tours and much more.

LCDR Gormley, LT Adeyemo and LT Adejuwon are in the Pharmacy category. They work in the Hillandale building, which is an FDA satellite office. Due to last year’s success with hosting this event, they held a second BYCTWD annual event at Hillandale. Parents were excited to learn that there was a BYCTWD session being conducted in the building they work in.

The officers utilized the Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG’s) *Lets Move!* Program, which is part of the JOAG Public Health and Community Service, National Prevention Strategy (NPS) Subcommittee. The subcommittee is responsible for coordinating community service activities which directly support initiatives outlined in NPS and enhances the visibility of PHS officers in the community.

There were two 1-hour sessions held. The total attendance was nine adults and ten children, whose ages ranged from 6 to 12 years old. The event started off with two videos, one on healthy eating and the other on fitness. Afterwards, there was a power point presentation about the role of PHS Officers in the Nation, upholding positive attitudes and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The session ended with the officers providing the participants with plastic food items of different nutritional content in the different food groups and sectioned plates. In small groups of two, each team was asked to create a healthy plate while demonstrating portion sizes according to the nutritional content of food as recommended by My Plate.

The goals were to create a healthy start for children, empower parents and caregivers by advocating for increased physical activity, and encourage healthy eating choices.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Boy Scouts of America Public Health Merit Badge

CDR Joseph W Morris, Medical Evaluations Officer

Are you aware that the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has a Public Health Merit Badge? Helping Scouts earn this Badge is a great way for PHS officers to get involved in their local community, teach today's youth about public health issues, enhance the public visibility and image of the USPHS and, most importantly, plant the seed in today's youth for a future career in this exciting field.

The Public Health Merit Badge was one of the original 57 merit badges issued by the BSA in 1911, and was last revised in 2018. As noted in the BSA Public Health Merit Badge book, "The field of public health deals with maintaining and monitoring the health of communities, and with the detection, cure, and prevention of health risks and diseases. Although public health is generally seen as a community-oriented service, it actually starts with the individual. From a single individual to the family unit to the smallest isolated rural town to the worldwide global community, one person can influence the health of many."

There are eight requirements, which range from: explaining what public health is; discussing diseases and conditions, immunizations, and vectors; visiting wastewater or solid waste management facilities, a food service facility, and a public health agency; and describing health dangers from disease, pollution, alcohol and drug abuse as well as illegal and prescription drugs. For further information, go to the 2018 Boy Scout Requirements which can be found on the internet.

Once the Scout completes these requirements, they meet with a Merit Badge Counselor to verify knowledge of each of the listed requirements. The Counselor will then sign a merit badge application card, available from their local Scoutmaster. This is forwarded to the local BSA Council headquarters for processing and awarding of the merit badge by the local Scout Troop.

To qualify as a merit badge counselor, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old and of good character.
- Be registered with the Boy Scouts of America (position code 42).
- Complete Youth Protection training.
- Be recognized as having the skills and education in the merit badge subjects covered and hold any required qualifications and training as outlined in the Guide to Safe Scouting or the Guide to Advancement—or use others so qualified.
- Be able to work with Scout-age boys.



So what are you waiting for? Get involved and support our youth and our profession!

#####

UPCOMING EVENTS

4 Sep | National Wildlife Day

10 Sep | Work Suicide Prevention Day

11 Sep | 911 Day

13 Sep | National Celiac Disease Awareness Day

18 Sep | National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day

22 Sep | Fall Prevention Awareness Day

24-28 Sep | Malnutrition Awareness Week

24 Sep | Family Health & Fitness Day

27 Sep | National Women's Health & Fitness Day

28 Sep | World Rabies Day

29 Sep | World Heart Day

1-5 Oct | National Primary Care Week

7-13 Oct | Mental Illness Awareness Week

11 Oct | National Depression Screening Day

13 Oct | Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day

14-20 Oct | International Infection Prevention Week

16-20 Oct | National Health Education Week

16 Oct | World Food Day

19 Oct | World Pediatric Bone and Joint Day

21-27 Oct | National Healthcare Quality Week

21-27 Oct | Respiratory Care Week

21 Oct | National Check Your Meds Day

September 3
#laborday



Get Ready Day
September 18, 2018

Share your photos and ideas with the rest of your junior officers across all social media platforms with the #hashtag #JOAG throughout the year! There is a new PHS-themed #hashtag every month! Check out the monthly #hashtags scattered throughout JOC.



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**THE OFFICIAL JOAG MAGAZINE
DESIGNED FOR JUNIOR OFFICERS BY JUNIOR OFFICERS**

