

## **Junior Officer Advisory Group**

**"Protecting, promoting, and advancing the health  
and safety of the Nation"**



### **Readiness and Deployment Committee – Behavioral Health Team Practicing Wellness-NOV 2020**



## **IT'S THE PERFECT TIME TO GIVE THANKS**

**Submitted by:**

**LCDR L.E. Carlton, DNP, PMHNP-BC, RN, CCHP**

It is November and we are well aware of the approaching holiday season. Typically, we are planning trips, booking flights, shopping and managing our to-do lists in preparation of routine holiday get-togethers! None of us anticipated on January 1, 2020 that we would have the year we have experienced thus far.

Travel plans are being altered and family gatherings are being called into question due to safety concerns and social distancing. Many are struggling with pandemic fatigue as we try to balance family, kids at home and career. In addition, the Corps is going through changes and each day there seems to be another email with more updates and policy changes. With all the uncertainty, stress, anxiety and frustration we are all trying to manage, you may ask: "how could this be a perfect time to give thanks?". I am not trying to paint a deceptive picture or minimize the pain we as officers and our society are experiencing.

As Commissioned Corps officers, we have the unique opportunity of being front-line workers in public health. For this opportunity, I give thanks. We are uniquely represented by eleven professional categories and we are a family of 6,100 and growing. I give thanks. We deploy to various communities across the nation and throughout the world to unselfishly meet the needs of others. I give thanks. Some of us have lost loved ones this year for various reasons, and yet we have wonderful memories and pictures of times past. I give thanks. The social distance and inconvenience that has been created, has forced us to communicate differently. I give thanks. Though it has been stressful, we have maintained our health and met the requirements of maintaining officership. I give thanks. We may have a hiccup in our usual holiday routine, but as Officers we choose to remain optimistic about the future and the outcome for the current pandemic and any other challenge we face in the future...for this and for all of you, I give thanks.