



JOAG

JUNIOR
OFFICER
ADVISORY
GROUP

2017

Year in Review

Prepared by: JOAG
Communications and
Publications Committee
9/30/2017

JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP (JOAG)

UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



JOAG End-of-Year Report

2017 Membership Roster

2016-2017 JOAG Executive Committee

Chair: LCDR Samantha Spindel (*ENG, FDA*)

Vice-Chair: LCDR Kristie Purdy (*DIET, IHS*)

Chair-Elect: LCDR Mekeshia Bates (*NURSE, HHS/OASH*)

Executive Secretary: LCDR Chitra Mahadevan (*PHARM, FDA*)

Financial Liaison: LCDR Alice Shumate (*SCI, CDC*)

2016-2017 JOAG Committee Chairs

Committee	Officer	Category	Agency/OPDIV
Awards	LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian	HSO	HRSA
	LCDR Jonathan Whitehart	HSO	HRSA
Communications and Publications	LCDR Beth Osterink	EHO	USCG
	LCDR Katie Bante	EHO	IHS
Membership	LCDR Scott Eckhart	Dentist	USCG
	LCDR Christopher Sheehan	HSO	FDA
Outreach	LCDR Griff Miller	ENG	EPA
	LCDR Bic Nguyen	PHARM	FDA
Policy & Procedures	LCDR Mekeshia Bates	NURSE	HRSA
Professional Development	LCDR Brutrinia Cain	NURSE	DCCPR
	LCDR Jennifer Nelson	PHYS	CDC
Public Health and Community Service	LCDR Danielle Buttke	VET	NPS
	LCDR Margaret Caulk	HSO	FDA
Readiness and Deployment	LCDR Stephanie Magill	DIET	CMS
	LT Kevin Healy	THER	BOP
Recruitment and Retention	LCDR Linzi Allen	PHARM	IHS
	LCDR Ashley Burns	PHARM	FDA

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2016-2017 JOAG Senior Advisor and Liaisons

Senior Advisor/Liaison	Officer	Category	Agency/OPDIV
JOAG Senior Advisor	CAPT Sara Newman	SCI	NPS
Dental PAC	LCDR Scott Eckhart	DENTAL	USCG
Dietitian PAC	LCDR Stephanie Magill	DIET	CMS
Engineer PAC	LCDR Griff Miller	ENG	EPA
Environmental Health Officer PAC	LCDR Beth Osterink	EHO	USCG
Health Services Officer PAC	LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian	HSO	HRSA
Nurse PAC	LCDR Brutrinia Cain	NURSE	DCCPR
Pharmacist PAC	LCDR Ashley Burns	PHARM	FDA
Physician PAC	LCDR Jennifer Nelson	PHYS	CDC
Scientist PAC	LCDR Alice Shumate	SCI	CDC
Therapist PAC	LT Kevin Healy	THER	BOP
Veterinarian PAC	LCDR Danielle Buttke	VET	NPS
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)	LT Marriah Lombardo	HSO	HHS
Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB)	LCDR Cara Halldin	SCI	CDC
Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF)	LCDR Kristie Purdy	DIET	IHS
Minority Offices Liaison Council (MOLC)	LT Jay Wong	PHARM	FDA
PHS Athletics	LT Ryan Marie Smith	HSO	CMS
Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG)	LCDR Zewditu Demissie	SCI	CDC

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JOAG End-of-Year Report

JOAG provides advice and consultation and acts as a liaison to the Surgeon General, Chief Professional Officers (CPOs), Professional Advisory Committees (PACs), and other Commissioned Corps groups on issues and concerns specific to junior officers (JOs). JOAG fosters the development of JOs by providing leadership opportunities, promoting professional development, and serving as an information resource for JOs. JOAG also supports the initiatives of the Surgeon General and aims to increase the visibility of the Corps.

JOAG has nine committees, each led by at least one voting member. JOAG has 21 voting members, including at least one representative from every United States Public Health Service (USPHS) category. The JOAG voting membership represents a cross-section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of JOs from many agencies in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and non-HHS Operating Divisions routinely staffed by Corps personnel. Each committee has a liaison to the Executive Committee, which is involved in facilitating the execution of the vision, mission, and objectives of JOAG. In addition, JOAG designates liaisons to each of the PACs as well as liaisons to the Commissioned Corps Women's Advisory Board, the Minority Officers Liaison Council, and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group.



The top achievements of the Executive Committee this year include:

- Directed the *first* application and selection of a 'Junior Officer Project with a Flag Officer,' enabling flag officers to work with JOs on a yearlong project regarding communication, community engagement, or executive leadership;
- Developed a connection to the JOAG corollary of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Corps;
- Established and coordinated the *first* shadowing experiences of JOAG Voting Members at the Office of the Surgeon General;
- Established new voting member expectations, such as attendance requirements, guidelines for archiving documents, and a recusal policy for scoring awards;
- Sought and received buy-in from numerous senior leaders and CPOs regarding the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, developed by JOAG to recognize officers who volunteer in the communities in which they serve;
- Supported two JO Scholarships at the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium.

The subsequent pages of this report detail the mission, goals, and major accomplishments for each of JOAG's committees. These accomplishments were possible due to the dedication, teamwork, and creativity of our members, subcommittee leaders, and voting members. Thank you to all the JOAG members and supporters who have contributed to this year's set of achievements. Thank you to the JOAG Senior Advisor, CAPT Sara Newman, for her advice and mentorship. Thank you to the Office of the Surgeon General, CDR Christine Collins, and LCDR Yvonne Santiago for supporting JOAG. Thank you also to the CPOs and PAC Chairs for your encouragement. Lastly, thank you to the past JOAG Chairs and Senior Advisors for your continued care and enthusiasm for JOAG.

It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve as the 2016-2017 JOAG Chair. I cannot wait to see how JOAG contributes to the mission of our Service in the years to come!

Sincerely,

Samantha Spindel

LCADR Samantha Spindel

JOAG Chair 2016-2017



[@PHS JOAG](#)



[USPHS Junior Officer Advisory Group](#)

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JOAG End-of-Year Report

Awards Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian and LCDR Jonathan Whitehart

Mission: 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).

2017 Operational Goals

- Develop a nomination package and scoring criteria for the JOAG C. Everett Koop Award and award the first recipient during the 2017 Symposium.
- Develop additional processes to enhance the selection of highly qualified candidates for the JOAG VADM Richard H. Carmona Inspiration Award, Excellence Award, Junior Officer of the Year Award, and C. Everett Koop Award.
- Create a work plan for the awards review process for all Awards Subcommittee Leads.
- Create a template for one-time recognition certificate for use by all JOAG committees.
- Create a system to ensure accurate recording of all members' contributions and accomplishments.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Received Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) concurrence for the recipient of the first JOAG C. Everett Koop Award; presented the award during the awards luncheon at the 2017 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Chattanooga, TN.
- Established the JOAG Awards Guidance document which provides an overview of the levels of recognition (from lowest to highest) issued by all JOAG Committees.
- Created a “milestone” document which includes a step-by-step description of the awards review process for each individual award and timelines for processing award nomination packages.
- Developed templates for the Executive Committee Certificate and the Event Recognition Certificate.

Major Committee Changes

- Added the Strategic Plan Liaison role to the Awards Process Subcommittee responsibilities.
- Delegated the responsibility for ordering the awards plaques and gavel to the Awards Recognition Subcommittee.

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Communications and Publications Committee (CPC)

Committee Chairs: LCDR Beth Osterink and LCDR Katie Bante

Mission: To facilitate the dissemination of USPHS-related information to junior officers. The Communications and Publications Committee is responsible for providing junior officers with pertinent information in a timely and efficient manner.

2017 Operational Goals

- Identify all documents developed within JOAG and ensure they follow JOAG “branding” guidelines.
- Implement a Social Media Subcommittee to broadcast information to JOs and highlight JOs’ accomplishments.
- Create standard operating procedures (SOPs) in conjunction with the Policy and Procedures Committee for naming, storing, and archiving documents on max.gov.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Implemented an ad hoc group to assist JOAG Committees, ensuring their documents follow JOAG “branding” guidelines.
- Implemented a Social Media Subcommittee to post information to JOs through Facebook and Twitter.
- Answered JOs’ questions on topics including promotions, recruitment, health coverage, medical leave, DEERS enrollment, Post 9/11 GI Bill, and uniform regulations.

Major Committee Changes

- Restructured the Repository, Outreach, and SOP Subcommittees into Operations and Records Subcommittees.
- Added a Social Media Subcommittee and an ad hoc branding group.
- Renamed the JOAG Journal Subcommittee to the Junior Officer Chronicles Subcommittee.
- Removed JOAG recorder and transcriptionist positions.
- Removed Mid-year JOAG report, JOAG scrapbook, JOAG Brochure, and About JOAG presentation from CPC duties.

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Membership Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Scott Eckhart and LCDR Christopher Sheehan

Mission: To facilitate the annual selection of JOAG Voting Members through the nomination and appointment processes outlined in Article VI of the JOAG Bylaws and to increase the general membership of JOAG.

2017 Operational Goals

- Increase relevance of Meet and Greet programming by directly asking officers for suggestions and focusing on topics identified as areas of need by the JOAG survey, which was conducted at the request of the OSG.
- Increase participation in Meet and Greet events by exploring programming format, timing, and advertising strategies to ensure officers know about events in their area well in advance using social media, calendars, and other forms of outreach.
- Integrate communication efforts between the Membership Committee's Officer Involvement and Outreach, Listserv, and Meet and Greet Subcommittees with Outreach Committee efforts so communications from JOAG to Commissioned Corps officers are timely, consistent, and non-duplicative.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Conducted 28 Meet and Greet events in 12 regions and 14 states.
- Facilitated the new voting member application process, resulting in 24 applicants and 11 new selections.
- Sent over 500 letters and emails to welcome new officers, congratulate officers on promotions, and acknowledge one-year anniversaries.
- Sent over 220 welcome letters to new officers via the listserv.
- Modified and updated the voting membership process with the addition of the new, one-year term and removal of the non-concurrence form.

Major Committee Changes

- Added option of appointing Co-secretaries with a 50/50 division of duties.
- Reconstructed how the committee contacted officers for promotions, anniversaries, and thank yous for attending Meet & Greets due to the loss of the Blue Book.

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Outreach Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Griff Miller and LCDR Bic Nguyen

Mission: To connect and recruit newly commissioned and current junior officers to the activities of JOAG through JOAG-sponsored activities at events such as the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium and COTA open houses/graduations.

2017 Operational Goals

- Continue visibility of JOAG activities, services, and opportunities for JOs at events such as the Officer Basic Course (OBC) Open House and Graduation, annual PHS Awareness Day held at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) campuses, and the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Enhance advertisement and marketing of the JOAG online merchandise store.
- Increase opportunities to provide JOs scholarships to attend the Symposium.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Created and presented the first “How to Get the Most out of JOAG” presentation at the 2017 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Chattanooga, TN.
- Developed and completed a JOAG 15-Year Anniversary Slogan Contest; winning slogan was “JOAG: 15 Years of Shaping the Future.”
- Developed and offered two new merchandise products in 2017: a tumbler bearing the winning slogan and an insulated lunch bag.
- Total sales for FY 2017 from the online store, Symposium, and OBC was \$4981.20, the second-highest total in the last five years.
- Created a Senior Officer Flyer to help senior officers and civilian supervisors understand the value JOAG can bring to their JOs.
- Sent welcome emails to 143 newly commissioned officers in attendance at OBC.

Major Committee Changes

- Reorganized the OBC, Documents, and Call to Active Duty Email Workgroups to be part of the newly-created New Officer Subcommittee.
- Created an Advertising Workgroup as part of the Research & Selection Subcommittee.
- Established a Presentation Workgroup as part of the Symposium Planning Subcommittee.
- Created a Social Media Liaison position.

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Policy & Procedures Committee

Committee Chair: LCDR Mekeshia Bates

Mission: To establish and update guidance documents and operating procedures governing JOAG. The Policy and Procedures Committee is also responsible for providing junior officers with updates on USPHS policies.

2017 Operational Goals

- Receive input from the OSG regarding the proposed Code of Conduct.
- Ensure management of the JOAG Strategic Plan continues in each Committee.
- Forge stronger ties with the Readiness and Deployment Committee and the Communications and Publications Committee to disseminate and reinforce policy guidance.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Developed an operational plan for JOAG that provides clear annual objectives of JOAG's tasks and responsibilities in achieving JOAG's strategic goals.
- Developed the JOAG Organizational Chart and standardized all committee SOPs to include a committee organizational chart.
- Updated the JOAG General SOP to include max.gov operational guidance.
- Developed a comprehensive list of JOAG resources for voting members to reference resources JOAG provides to JOs; the list includes the purpose, type and frequency of each resource.
- Implemented a new style guide for the CyberGram publication that allows for policy awareness and testing of policy knowledge.

Major Committee Changes

- The Policy, Development, and Training Subcommittee was renamed the Policy Awareness and Notification Subcommittee.

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Professional Development Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Brutrinia Cain and LCDR Jennifer Nelson

Mission: To provide and promote opportunities for junior officers' professional growth and development.

2017 Operational Goals

- Have 40% of JOAG Executive Committee and Voting Members participate in the PDC Book Club and read *Leadership and Self-Deception*.
- Evaluate committee programs and activities to ensure they are beneficial to JOs and there is adequate return on investment.
- Continue impactful programs, such as the Journeyman Speaker Series and Peer-to-Peer Network.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Successfully launched the Koop Speaker Series, in collaboration with the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF); Important public health issues were highlighted at events in Washington, D.C. (the opioid epidemic), Atlanta GA (Zika Virus Disease), and Phoenix AZ (diabetes).
- Educated over 380 officers through six Journeyman Speaker Series presentations, including an introduction to the USPHS Tier I/II teams, USPHS and the legislative process, and an explanation of the blended military retirement system.
- The Peer-to-Peer Network made 22 matches as of August 2017, surpassing the yearly goal (20 matches).
- Developed, disseminated, and analyzed the 2017 JOAG Professional Development Survey, allowing JOAG to understand specific professional development needs of JOs; A summary report was created based on the responses of 86 JOs who completed the survey.
- Coordinated and provided the Officer's Impressions Panel for the 2016 AMSUS Meeting and the 2017 Commissioned Officer Association (COA)/COF Symposium; the Officer's Impressions Panel provided insight to JOs who were unable to attend these conferences.

Major Committee Changes

- Nothing to report.

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Public Health and Community Service Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Danielle Buttke and LCDR Margaret Caulk

Mission: To enhance health and wellness of junior officers in the USPHS and their communities by providing information and tools that promote health and wellness, and by implementing and supporting community service activities that will promote public health, enhance both the visibility of USPHS, and interact with other uniformed services.

2017 Operational Goals

- Expand the Uniformed Services Community Service Subcommittee's impact by organizing more events outside of the Washington, D.C. metro area and recruiting more officers to the subcommittee.
- Encourage Everybody Walk! Subcommittee to collaborate with other chartered public health service groups and create proposals for fall walking events, such as Walk to School Day.
- Support the Surgeon General's National Prevention Strategies through community engagement and outreach.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Completed multiple national long-term fitness events, such as the One Billion Steps Challenge and at the USPHS Symposium in Chattanooga.
- Partnered with multiple aid organizations and service entities with new and recurring events, including: Veterans Empowerment Organization Bedding Drive, Books for Kids, Honor Flight, National Trails Day, and Wreaths across America.
- Continued to work with community to improve awareness of fitness opportunities, including National Walk to School Day and Park Rx Day.
- Provided hours of community service to at-risk and disadvantaged populations, including So Others May Eat (SOME), St. Mary's Food Pantry, and Capital Area Food Bank.
- Continued to work with other Uniformed Service Volunteer groups at Historic Grant Hall and Day of Remembrance.

Major Committee Changes

- Changed name of the Everybody Walks! Subcommittee to the Step It Up Subcommittee.

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Readiness & Deployment Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Stephanie Magill and LT Kevin Healy

Mission: To promote officer fitness and readiness and provide opportunities to increase deployment-related knowledge, expertise, and training.

2017 Operational Goals

- Conduct a PHS Deployment Readiness Challenge virtual readiness exercise.
- Publish cross-category deployment training and exercise opportunities and ensure the list is up to date.
- Highlight training and exercise opportunities through the JOAG listserv, JOAG resources website, JOAG social media, and the Junior Officer Chronicles (JOC).
- Continue our monthly Get Fit-Stay Fit tips, quarterly U.S. Fitness Team Logs, and quarterly articles in the JOC; one article idea in draft form is on Go-Bags.
- Work in support of Corps Care to develop a behavioral health readiness and resilience resource repository.
- Develop the Remote Officer Locator Tool and leverage Google services, including Forms, Sheets, and Maps to help connect officers to complete their Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT).
- Enhance and promote JOAG Readiness & Deployment Calendar, including APFT events, Basic Life Support opportunities, other training and exercises.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Prepared a post-deployment suicide prevention article and submitted it for publication in the Junior Officer Chronicles.
- Hosted teleconference training on resilience through the deployment cycle.
- Promoted 26 events in operational year 2017 through JOAG calendar and monthly JOAG announcements.
- Established plan for reaching out to COA Presidents to share information about APFT group events, and a formal letter has been sent to all COA Presidents to promote and encourage group APFT events for each COA chapter;
- Promoted readiness through BLS class updates on JOAG Calendar, social media, and listservs on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.
- Prepared and presented a road show highlighting the resources available from the Officer Health and Fitness Promotion and APFT Subcommittees; solicited information from various Professional Advisory Committees/Groups to improve resources.

Major Committee Changes

- Nothing to report.

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Recruitment and Retention Committee

Committee Chairs: LCDR Linzi Allen and LCDR Ashley Burns

Mission: To develop projects and programs that aid in the recruitment and retention of junior officers in the United States Public Health Service.

2017 Operational Goals

- Complete the Commissioned Corps vs. Civil Service comparison, Agency Return Status, and the Retention Survey Reports.
- Publish articles in the Junior Officer Chronicles on Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSEP) and Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) programs.
- Examine survey data to determine how best to advocate for officers in Ready Reserve;
- Solicit feedback for improving information dissemination, committee meeting format and frequency from the 300+ Recruitment & Retention Committee listserv subscribers.
- Evaluate the continued need of the Agency Training Program (ATP) Subcommittee and assess need for continuation and/or reorganization.
- Initiate Mentor/Mentee Program for the Transitional Assistance (TAPs) Subcommittee.

Top Achievements in 2017

- Presented results from the 2016 Ready Reserve survey to USPHS leadership.
- Completed 2014 Retention Survey Report and presented to the JOAG Executive Committee and the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR) recruitment branch.
- Completed the Commissioned Corps vs. Civil Service recruitment document to compare similarities and differences in the personnel systems.
- Published 3 articles in the JOC: JRCOSTEP mentoring, SRCOSTEP application and selection time line, and the Ready Reserve retention survey.
- Developed a mentorship program to prepare JOs without prior military service for recruitment activities on military installations.
- Completed mentoring matches for 15 SRCOSTEPs (2017) and 23 JRCOSTEPs based on category, agency, and previous COSTEP experience; paired 11 SRCOSTEPs in next year's graduating class (2018).
- Made over 100 career fair contacts from sic career fairs attended.

Major Committee Changes

- Reduced committee meeting frequency to every other month.
- Deactivated the Agency Training Programs (ATP) Subcommittee.
- Changed the Social Media Monitoring Subcommittee to the PHS Application Openings Subcommittee.
- Added a Social Media Liaison position.
- Updated the Committee's mission statement.

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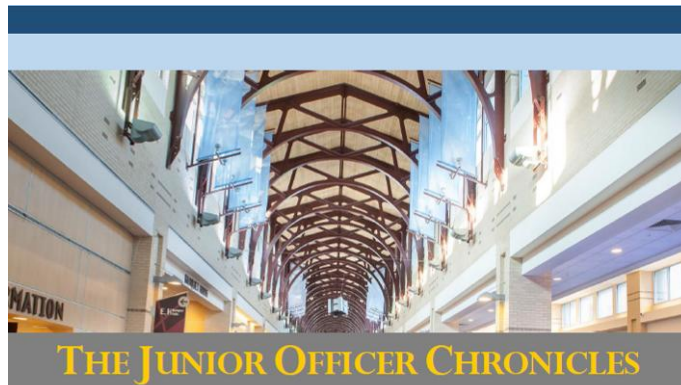


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Photos of 2016-2017 Operational Year



Tumbler with Winning Slogan



SYMPOSIUM EDITION

August 2017



EDITORS

LT Noah Buikema
LCDR Katie Bante

The Official JOAG Magazine
Designed for Junior Officers by Junior Officers

The Junior Officer Chronicles

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Junior Officer of the Year Award Winner, LCDR Tyler Sharpe (middle)



RADM C. Everett Koop Award Winner, LCDR Alyson Rose-Wood (middle)

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VADM Richard Carmona Award Winner, CAPT Brandon Tylor (middle)



Junior Officer Career Enhancement Booth at 2017 Symposium

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Uniform Inspection Booth at 2017 Symposium



"How to Get the Most Out of JOAG" Presentation at 2017 Symposium