

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN OFFICERS COMMITTEE
of the
 United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022

Executive Committee Members

Chair: LCDR Ruby Leong
Chair-Elect: LCDR Chaolong Qi
Executive Secretary: LCDR Vicky Hsu
Corresponding Secretary: LCDR Sophia Park
Treasurer: CAPT Teresa Ramson
MOLC Representatives:
 CAPT Simleen Kaur & LCDR Sally Doan
Leadership & Strategic Planning:
 CDR Lisa Lee

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APAOC Chair's Corner

Dear APAOC members,

Welcome to the APAOC 2022 Operational Year! It is my honor and privilege to serve as the APAOC Chair this year. On behalf of the APAOC members, I'd like to express my gratitude to the previous APAOC Chair, CDR Trang Tran, for her exceptional strategic leadership, innovative vision, support, and mentorship of APAOC officers, and most of all, her continued service and dedication to APAOC activities this year. In addition, I'd like to thank our outgoing Voting Members (VMs) for their service and contributions during their term and welcome the incoming VMs whom I'll be working alongside to continue the momentum in building APAOC to be a strong organization to support our members, the Office of the Surgeon General's (OSG) priorities, and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.

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APAOC issued a survey in October 2021 to solicit valuable input from our members on how we can better serve our members and support the OSG's priorities. Your voices were heard; the survey responses and the APAOC 3-year strategic goals established with the previous APAOC Chair, CDR Trang Tran, influenced the development of my vision for APAOC 2022. My vision consists of three pillars: professional development of APAOC officers, enhanced visibility of APAOC, and increased APAOC service within AAPI communities. There are three overarching goals that I would like to accomplish this year:

- Facilitate professional development of APAOC officers through training, mentoring, and opportunities to lead APAOC activities and initiatives
- Enhance visibility of APAOC through collaboration with other Chartered Advisory Groups and AAPI interest groups and organizations
- Promote resources for APAOC members to be force multipliers of the Surgeon General's priorities through community engagement and service, especially within AAPI communities

In order to achieve these goals, I have worked with LCDR Chaolong Qi (2022 APAOC Chair-Elect) on starting the following initiatives:

- Planning with the Senior Advisor, CAPT Juliette Taylor, and the Career Development/Advancement Subcommittee for improving the mentoring program
- Personalized outreach to new APAOC Officers/members
- Setting up an APAOC feedback inbox as an avenue for members to provide suggestions for improvement, questions/concerns for the OSG, and any other comments throughout the year
- Planning for the major annual APAOC events, including the Lunar New Year celebration, AAPI Heritage Month celebration, and Leadership Summit with the Public Relations and Education and Training Subcommittees
- Reaching out to the other Chartered Advisory Group Chairs to join and give a presentation at APAOC General Members meetings to facilitate diversity and cultural exchange
- Reaching out to the leadership of other AAPI interest groups and organizations such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) AAPI Health Scientific Interest Group, Federal Asian Pacific American Council

(FAPAC), and White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) for potential collaborations

- Working closely with Dr. Roula Sweis, the OSG contact, and the Community Engagement Workgroup to encourage initiation of community outreach events in AAPI communities
- Establishing an APAOC Health Equity Workgroup to focus on AAPI health disparities and promote AAPI health equity

APAOC has been busy planning and accomplishing events, despite deployments of many APAOC Officers. Thank you to those that deployed for your service, and the Officers who have stepped up in their absence to continue supporting the APAOC mission.

- On February 18th, 2022, APAOC hosted the second annual virtual Lunar New Year celebration to increase cultural awareness and showcase the diversity of different AAPI cultures. 59 officers attended, with representation from various Chartered Advisory Groups. Congratulations to LCDR Gayle Tuckett, the winner of the APAOC Lunar New Year celebration games. Many thanks to the Chairs of the Public

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Relations Subcommittee, LCDR Doan Singh and LCDR Kathleen Tisdale, their alternates, their team of volunteers, and everyone who attended for making the event fun and engaging with lots of cultural lessons.

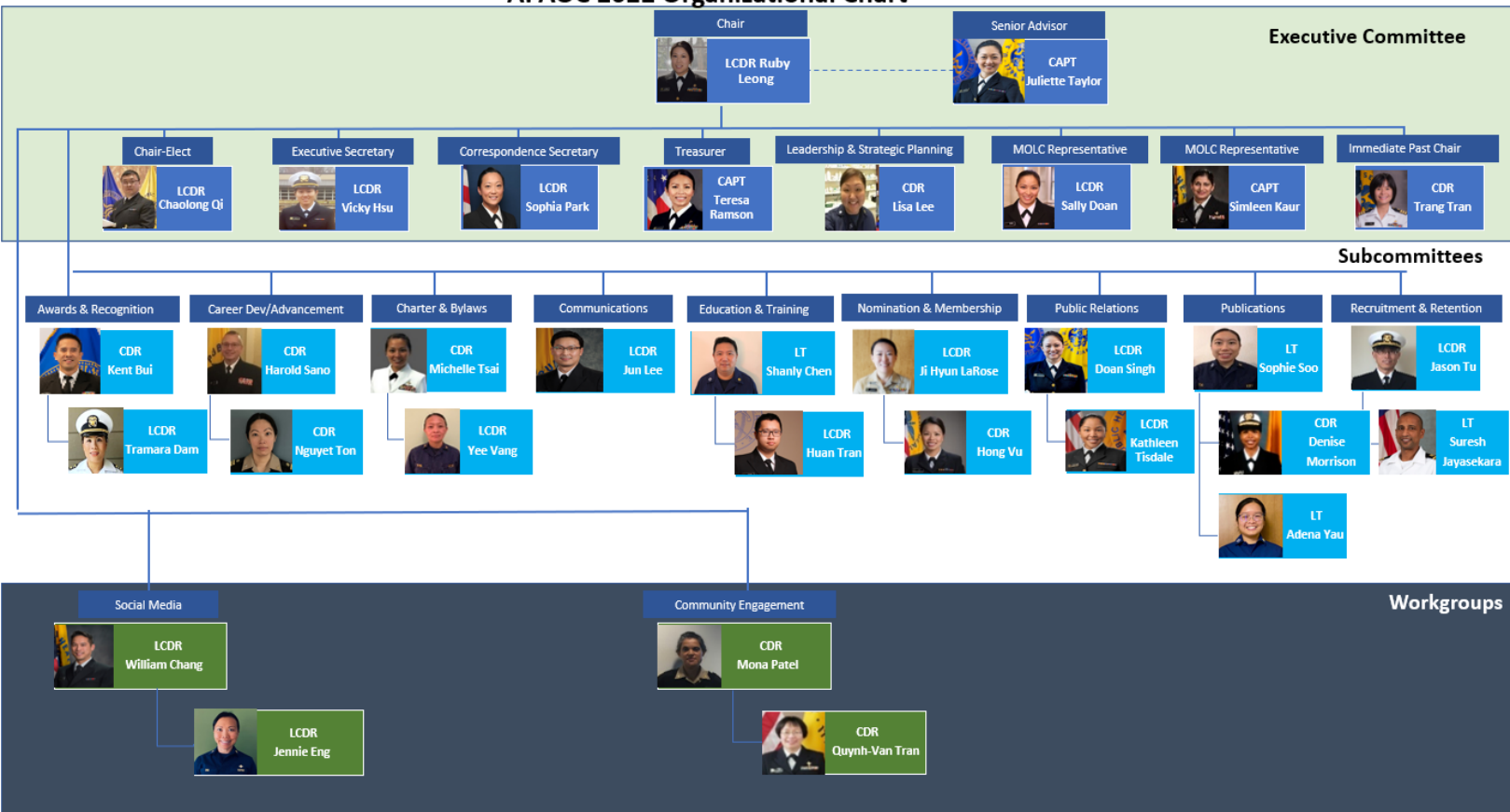
- On March 16th, 2022, RADM Emil Wang, the newly appointed Chief Professional Officer (CPO) for USPHS Engineers, joined the APAOC General Members meeting to share his personal career journey and success as an AAPI Officer with a flag rank and appointment to a CPO. He provided words of advice on career development, serving as an inspiration and resource to APAOC Officers as well as a connection to the AAPI community. In addition, the Community Engagement Workgroup presented an overview of OSG Guidance for Participating in Events Hosted by Third Parties to disseminate this new information from the OSG, and to encourage APAOC members to initiate community outreach events and service within AAPI communities.
- Members of the AAPI Cultural Support Workgroup, including CAPT Juliette Taylor, CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Tramara Dam, LCDR Sophia Park, and LCDR Nicole Pascua, presented virtually at the 2022 AMSUS meeting on “APAOC’s efforts in supporting AAPI community against racial discrimination, hate crimes, and mental health disparities.”

I’m grateful to have the opportunity to work with all the exceptional APAOC VMs, their alternates, and volunteers to accomplish another productive and beneficial year for our valuable APAOC members. Together, we can achieve the vision and goals for the 2022 operational year and continue to fulfill the APAOC mission.

In Officio Salutis,
LCDR Ruby Leong
2022 APAOC Chair



APAOC 2022 Organizational Chart



2022 APAOC Senior Advisor & Executive Committee

Senior Advisor



CAPT Juliette Taylor, PharmD, MBA, RAC, BCPP currently serves as the Senior Policy Advisor in the Division of Psychiatry at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). She has over 18 years of policy, clinical, and teaching experience with the FDA, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS), academia, and private sector. She has a proven track-record of leading teams in developing and implementing new policy and legislation, international harmonization, domestic and international stakeholder engagement, contractor management, and managed care consulting. She has represented FDA and CMS, presenting at large national and international conferences. She's led many process improvement initiatives and contributed to development of FDA Guidance for Industry in the areas of labeling and clinical trial design for psychiatric drugs. She served as the Associate Director of Labeling and Regulatory Project Manager in DP. Over the course of her career as a USPHS officer, she has served on multiple deployments in response to national emergencies as a mental health team pharmacist. She is trained as a clinical pharmacist, board-certified in psychiatric pharmacy and residency-trained in geriatric pharmacotherapy. She received an MBA from Thunderbird School of Global Management. She is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland and has guest lectured for the Master of Regulatory Science Program. She is passionate about advancing international public health and applying best business practices to strengthening partnerships with academia, industry, and global counterparts in promoting drug development.

Chair



LCDR Ruby Leong is the 2022 APAOC Chair. Her prior roles in APAOC included serving as a general member volunteer, alternate for the Social Media Workgroup, lead for the Healthy Minds Initiative, Executive Secretary, and Chair-Elect. LCDR Ruby Leong currently serves as a Clinical Pharmacology Team Leader in the Division of Cancer Pharmacology at the Food and Drug Administration in Silver Spring, MD. She supervises the workload of 25 reviewers and conducts secondary review of staff's evaluation of drug developers' submissions for approval of new oncology drugs. She also engages in research projects and develops policy and guidance for industry for underserved patient populations, and works on diversity and equity for oncology clinical trials. LCDR Ruby Leong has board certification in oncology pharmacy. She received a Doctorate of Pharmacy from the University of Michigan and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in oncology drug development at Rutgers University/Hoffmann-La Roche.

Chair-Elect



LCDR Chaolong Qi is the 2022 APAOC Chair-Elect. Prior to his current term, he served as the alternate to the 2018 MOLC Representative from APAOC and served a full term of APAOC Voting Membership in 2019-2021. He currently serves as a Senior Research Engineer and Project Officer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He is stationed in Cincinnati, Ohio where he holds a license of Professional Engineer. LCDR Qi manages multiple research projects developing scientific instruments and engineering solutions to protect vulnerable workers against workplace health hazards. He has published 35 peer-reviewed journal articles and 24 government reports. LCDR Qi also holds two U.S. patents, both of which are licensed by leading manufacturers of aerosol instruments. LCDR Qi is a member of APHT-4 and has served eight tours of deployments since 2020 on responses to COVID-19, Operation Artemis and Operation Allies Welcome.



2022 APAOC Executive Committee



Executive Secretary

LCDR Vicky Hsu is APAOC's executive secretary for this year. LCDR Hsu is a clinical pharmacology reviewer of new oncology and hematology drugs as well as imaging agents at the FDA. As the lead clinical pharmacology reviewer, LCDR Hsu is responsible for optimizing the use of drugs in patients by identifying the best dose for each individual patient or specific patient population. During her time at the FDA, she has led the clinical pharmacology approval review of many new drugs, most of which are indicated to treat cancer. LCDR Hsu is also involved in a number of USPHS groups, including serving as an alternate voting member for EPAC, CCWIAB liaison to JOAG, lead judge for the annual Frederick County Science & Engineering Fairs for DC COA, and co-lead flag folding faculty instructor at OBC. LCDR Hsu looks forward to furthering the mission of APAOC through strategic and collaborative initiatives.

Corresponding Secretary



LCDR Sophia Park, PharmD, BCACP, RAC is a board-certified pharmacist who brings over 11 years of clinical pharmacy and regulatory expertise. She currently serves as a Program Coordinator in the Division of User Fee Management in the Office of Management, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). She reviews requests for waivers, exemptions, and refunds of prescription drug user fees assessed under the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. These various waivers or reduction in user fees are granted for certain orphan drug products, drugs that protect the public health, and innovative drug products where the fee would present a significant barrier due to limited resources. Previously, LCDR Park served as a Consumer Safety Officer in the Compounding Incidents Team within CDER's Office of Compliance where she investigated adverse events associated with compounded drug products and coordinated appropriate regulatory actions. Prior to FDA, she spent 5 years as a clinical pharmacist at the Acoma-Canoncito-Laguna Service Unit, Indian Health Service. LCDR Park received her Doctor of Pharmacy Degree from University of Maryland, School of Pharmacy and was commissioned into the U.S. Public Health Service in 2012. Since then, she has deployed multiple times in response to national public health emergencies including hurricane Harvey/Irma/Florence responses in 2017 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

Treasurer



CAPT Teresa Vu Ramson, PharmD, MBA, RAC is a professional with leadership experience, knowledge in Congressionally mandated User Fee programs, process improvement, policy development, strategic planning, and implementation of high-level initiatives. In her current role as a Division Deputy Director, CAPT Ramson supervises and provides leadership to over 60 employees in managing Congressional mandates, national and international policies for five major FDA User Fee programs: Prescription Drugs User Fee Program, Generic Drugs User Fee, Biosimilar User Fee, Over-the-Counter Drug User Fee, and Compounding User Fees. CAPT Ramson is the key implementation leader in these programs to assist FDA achieves its annual target User Fee collections of \$1.9 billion. The annual user fee revenue supplements Congress's appropriation to FDA and is a critical resource for FDA to meet legislative mandates, retain and augment skilled personnel, and ensure the timely availability of safe and effective drugs and biologics for the American public.



2022 APAOC Executive Committee



MOLC Representative

CAPT Simleen Kaur was commissioned in January 2012 and has been stationed in Food and Drug Administration, under Center for Biologics and Evaluation and Research, Office of Compliance and Biologics Quality. She has a Masters in Biotechnology from Johns Hopkins University and Bachelors in Biology from the University of Delhi (India). She serves as a Team Leader where she manages production and distribution of CBER Reference materials used in potency testing of biological products such as vaccines prior to release to public. In addition, she reviews microbiological test methods used in the lot release of biological products as submitted in Biological License Applications and Supplements to ensure they are validated in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations and different pharmacopeia requirements. As a Team Leader, she ensures that her laboratory functions are performed in accordance with ISO accredited quality-controlled requirements.



MOLC Representative

LCDR Sally Doan is currently serving as one of the MOLC Representatives for the 2022 operational year. This is her second year serving as a Voting Member. She previously served as the APAOC Executive Secretary in 2021, and an Alternate Voting Member for the Awards & Recognition Subcommittee in 2020. She is in the pharmacy category, and currently serves as a Senior Regulatory Health Project Manager, in the Office of Nonprescription Drug, within the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in Silver Spring, MD. Previously, LCDR Doan worked in the Office of Generic Drugs, within the FDA, as a civil servant. LCDR Doan joined the USPHS in 2017 and was stationed at Indian Health Service (IHS) in Fort Defiance, AZ. She received her pharmacy degree from the University of Connecticut.



Leadership & Strategic Planning

CDR Lisa Lee is a pharmacist assigned to ICE Health Services Corps as a program management officer within the Health Records and Technology Office. She began her uniformed services career as a pharmacist with the United States Air Force after graduating from pharmacy school and then started her career with PHS being assigned to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Prior to being the Leadership and Strategic Planning Chair, she was a co-chair for the Charter and Bylaws Subcommittee and was an alternate for the Communications subcommittee and MOLC subcommittee. CDR Lee loves spending time with her family at the Jersey shore and going to amusements parks with her son.



2022 APAOC Voting Members



CDR Kent Bui
Chair, Awards & Recognition Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles:
Communications SC Chair

Current Duty Station: Senior Analyst, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

PHS Category: Pharmacist

LCDR William Chang
Chair, Social Media Workgroup

Previous APAOC Roles:
Publications SC Chair & Co-chair

Current Duty Station: Consumer Safety Officer, FDA, Parsippany, NJ

PHS Category: Engineer



LT Shanly Chen
Chair, Education & Training Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles:
Alternate VM

Current Duty Station: Senior Regulatory Reviewer, FDA

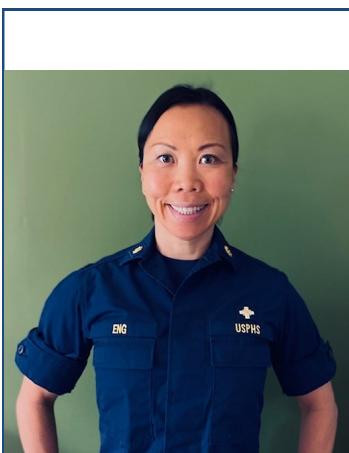
PHS Category: Pharmacist

LCDR Tramara Dam
Co-chair, Awards & Recognition Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles:
Alternate VM, Leadership Summit volunteer, Cultural Awareness and Social Media WG member, Mentor

Current Duty Station: Program Manager, FDA

PHS Category: Pharmacist



LCDR Jen Eng
Co-chair, Social Media Workgroup

Previous APAOC Roles:
Recruitment & Retention SC

Current Duty Station: Consumer Safety Officer with Imports, FDA, Baltimore, MD

PHS Category: Health Services Officer

LT Suresh Jayasekara
Co-chair, Recruitment & Retention Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Lead, Healthy Mind Initiative lesson plan development for PACE, Alternate VM, Community Engagement WG

Current Duty Station: Program Management Officer, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

PHS Category: Scientist





**LCDR Ji Hyun LaRose
Chair, Nomination &
Membership Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles:
Chair, Nomination &
Membership SC

Current Duty Station: Senior
Program Management
Officer, FDA, Silver Spring,
MD

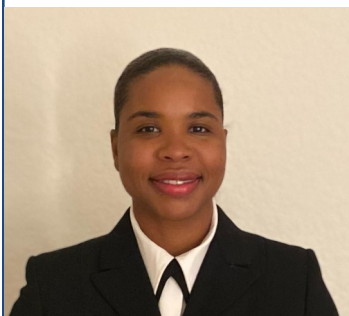
PHS Category: Pharmacist

**LCDR Jun Lee
Chair, Communications
Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles:
Alternate VM, Awards &
Recognition SC

Current Duty Station: Program
Coordinator

PHS Category: Scientist



**CDR Denise Morrison
Co-Chair, Publications
Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles:
Awards & Recognition SC Co-
chair, VM

Current Duty Station: ICE
Health Service Corps Chief,
Miramar, FL

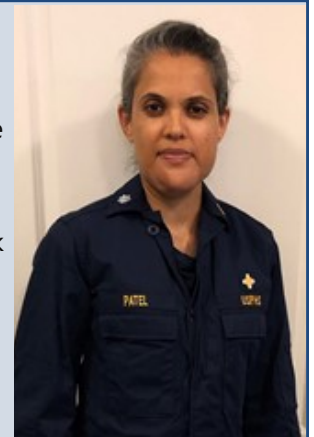
PHS Category: Health
Services Officer

**CDR Mona Patel
Chair, Community Engagement
Workgroup**

Previous APAOC Roles: Alternate
VM, Co-chair Community
Engagement

Current Duty Station: Senior Risk
Management Analyst, FDA, Silver
Spring, MD

PHS Category: Pharmacist



**CDR Harold Sano
Chair, Career Development &
Advancement Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles:
Publications SC Co-chair,
Publications & Recruitment SC
Volunteer, General Member

Current Duty Station: Team
Lead (acting), Regulatory Project
Manager, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

PHS Category: Pharmacist

**LCDR Doan Singh
Chair, Public Relations
Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles: APAOC
Lead for 2021 AAPI Cultural
Support Group, Alternate VM

Current Duty Station: Compliance
Officer, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

PHS Category: Pharmacist



**LT Sophie Soo
Chair, Publications
Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles:
Co-chair Publications SC,
Alternate VM

Current Duty Station:
Preparedness Program
Coordinator, OS, Rockville, MD

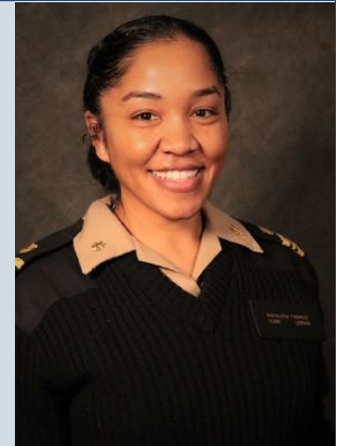
PHS Category: Pharmacist

**LCDR Kathleen Ferguson Tisdale
Co-chair, Public Relations
Subcommittee**

Previous APAOC Roles: Social
Media WG Chair, Public Relations
SC Co-chair, Charter & Bylaws SC
Co-chair

Current Duty Station: Quality
Assurance Specialist, Atlanta, GA

PHS Category: Environmental
Health Officer





CDR Nguyet Ton
Co-chair, Career Development & Advancement Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Charter & Bylaws SC member, Healthy Minds Initiative member, Volunteer, Mentor

Current Duty Station: Senior Advisor, Silver Spring, MD

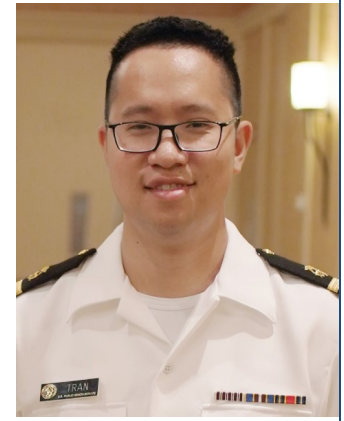
PHS Category: Pharmacist

LCDR Huan Tran
Co-chair, Education & Training Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Publications SC Chair, Executive Secretary

Current Duty Station: Consumer Safety Officer/Investigator, FDA, Seattle, WA

PHS Category: Pharmacist



CDR Michelle Tsai
Chair, Charter & Bylaws Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Public Relations SC Co-chair, Leadership & Strategic Planning Chair

Current Duty Station: Service Chief, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital

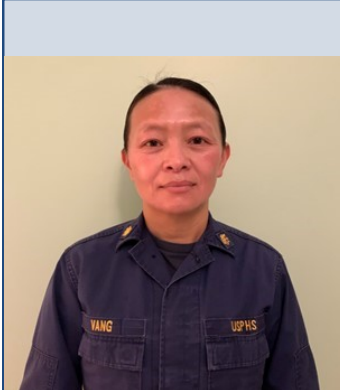
PHS Category: Scientist

LCDR Yajun Jason Tu
Chair, Recruitment & Retention Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Chair, Recruitment & Retention Subcommittee

Current Duty Station: Branch Chief, Silver Spring, MD

PHS Category: Pharmacy



LCDR Yee Vang
Co-chair, Charter & Bylaws Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Nomination & Membership SC Co-chair

Current Duty Station: Forrest City, AR

PHS Category: Health Services Officer

CDR Quynh-Van Tran
Co-chair, Community Engagement Workgroup

Previous APAOC Roles: Education & Training SC Co-chair

Current Duty Station: Team Lead, CDER Officer of Compliance/Office of Scientific Investigations

PHS Category: Pharmacist



CDR Hong Vu
Co-chair, Nomination & Membership Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Career Development SC Co-chair

Current Duty Station: Supervisory Regulatory Project Manager, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

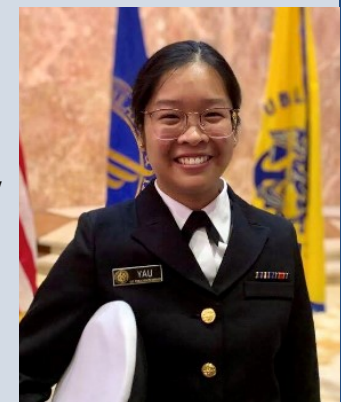
PHS Category: Pharmacist

LT Adena Suk Wai Yau
Co-chair, Publications Subcommittee

Previous APAOC Roles: Alternate VM, Volunteer

Current Duty Station: Pharmacist, Crownpoint Service Unit, Crownpoint, NM

PHS Category: Pharmacist



AAPI Cultural Support Workgroup Presents at 2022 AMSUS Annual Meeting

By LCDR Nicole Pascua, CAPT Juliette Taylor, CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Tramara Dam, and LCDR Sophia Park

The Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Cultural Support Workgroup (WG) presented “*Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) Efforts in Supporting AAPI Community Against Racial Discrimination, Hate Crimes, and Mental Health Disparities*” at the 2022 virtual Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) Annual Meeting which was held from February 22nd to 25th, 2022.

APAOC established the WG in April 2021 in response to the increase in violence and hate crimes against the AAPI community, which began with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The group was initially led by LCDR Doan Singh during its inaugural year. The WG is currently led by LCDR Nicole Pascua for the 2022 operational year and consists of ten officers from various Asian American and Pacific Islander backgrounds and professional disciplines, including pharmacy, social work, medicine, and dental hygiene. The group’s mission is to bring awareness about racial discrimination and hate crimes against the AAPI community, provide education and resources, and share informed actions on how to address racial discrimination and hate crimes.

The recorded presentation was conducted by a small subset of the WG members that included CAPT Juliette Taylor, CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Tramara Dam, LCDR Sophia Park, and LCDR Nicole Pascua. The presentation was featured as part of the Public Health track and was made available to 1,103 participants from 16 countries.

During the presentation, officers spoke on the AAPI demographics and the history of AAPI racism in the United States (U.S.), which dates back to the late 1800s with the Chinese Massacre of 1871, the Rock Springs Massacre of 1885, and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Officers cited a correlation between the rise in COVID-19 cases and a 145% increase of anti-Asian hate crimes in 16 of the largest U.S. cities in 2020, with the first surge occurring around March to April 2020.

The officers also described APAOC officers' experiences with hate crimes/racial discrimination by discussing the results of their April 2021 *Survey on Racial Discrimination*, which asked respondents to an-

swer eight questions related to personal encounters of racial discrimination and hate crimes and their utilization of behavioral health services. Based on the survey results, the WG planned and executed three Roundtable Discussions, wrote the resource paper titled [Hate Crimes and Discrimination Against AAPI is a Public Health Issue](#), and collaborated with the Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group, Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group, Hispanic Officers Advisory Committee, American Indian/Alaska Native Commissioned Officers Advisory Committee, and Minority Officers Liaison Council regarding their activities to build an inclusive and diverse Corps.

Lastly, the officers spoke on the impact of social determinants of health on mental health disparities in the AAPI community, shared APAOC’s efforts in addressing this issue, and provided recommendations for improving cultural sensitivity in healthcare settings. These recommendations included increasing awareness of mental health, learning about traditional AAPI cultural beliefs, being open to alternative treatment options, and becoming familiar with ethno-psychopharmacological research. The presentation reiterated the importance of improving cultural sensitivity in healthcare settings as it can improve treatment adherence, patient satisfaction, and patient health outcomes.

If you would like to learn more about the AAPI Cultural Support Working Group, please contact LCDR Nicole Pascua at Nicole.Pascua@samhsa.hhs.gov.



2022 APAOC Virtual Lunar New Year Social

By LCDR Kathleen Tisdale, LCDR Doan Singh, and CDR Hai Lien Phung

On February 18, 2022, the Public Relations Subcommittee kicked off 2022 with the 2nd Annual APAOC virtual social event celebrating the Lunar New Year: Year of the Tiger. The event was a great success with 59 participants in attendance from different organizations and backgrounds across the country. This year, the Public Relations Subcommittee's focus is to increase cultural awareness and showcase the diversity of various Asian American and Pacific Islander traditions. During this fun-filled social event, APAOC members presented Lunar New Year celebration traditions from represented countries including China, Vietnam, Korea, and Thailand. Each cultural presentation showcased the ways in which each country celebrates Lunar New Year with their unique traditions, customs, and best of all, their food. Educational information was provided about the creation and meaning of the lunar calendar, the Chinese zodiac and their elements, and various countries that celebrate Lunar New Year around the world. The presenters kept the audience engaged by incorporating trivia questions throughout the presentation and conducted a fun Lunar New Year word scramble. At the end of the social event, participants were asked to tally up their points in hopes to be crowned the winner. CDR Gayle Tuckett was declared the winner and earned herself a one-of-a-kind APAOC challenge coin.

APAOC Senior Advisor CAPT Juliette Taylor provided closing remarks and thanked all the organizers for putting together this educational event to celebrate the new Lunar New Year and for making it so interactive! CAPT Taylor commended the presenters: LCDR Doan Singh, LCDR Kathleen Tisdale, LCDR Chaolong Qi, LCDR Evelyn Hong, LCDR Ruby Leong, LCDR Sophia Park, LCDR Tramara Dam, and CDR Trang Tran. She noted that she was happy to see a very diverse group of people with lots of attendees from within and outside of APAOC celebrating with us that day. She stated that diversity is one of our biggest assets in the U.S. Public Health Service, and learning about different cultures is not only a great way to be more culturally competent as healthcare providers, but also to strengthen understanding and bonds between USPHS officers. Although each country celebrates the new year a little differently, there are some universal messages that APAOC hopes all USPHS officers will embrace:

1. Renew and plant seeds of positive change for the spring
2. Make time to reach out to friends and family and grow strength from their love and friendship
3. Wish those around you good health and prosperity

The 2022 virtual Lunar New Year celebration was a true success. The Public Relations Subcommittee hopes to see everyone at the 2023 APAOC 3rd Annual Lunar New Year celebration.



L to R: LCDR Kathleen Tisdale, LCDR Chaolong Qi, LCDR Tramara Dam, LCDR Sophia Park, LCDR Doan Singh, LCDR Ruby Leong, CAPT Juliette Taylor



Celebrating Social Work Month: Officers Highlight the Role of Social Workers on USPHS Missions During HSPAC Readiness Lecture

By LCDR Nicole Pascua, LCDR Marie P. Cetoute, and LCDR Candice T. Karber

Annually, March is designated as Social Work Month to commemorate over 100 years of professional service and national impact. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) 2022 theme is "The Time is Right for Social Work." During the month, social workers across the United States recognize and celebrate the profession with in-service activities, lectures, and gatherings.

In recognition of Social Work Month, the authors presented a Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC) Readiness Subcommittee Lecture on 23 March 2022. The presentation highlighted social workers' professional contributions during Commissioned Corps deployments. The title of the presentation was "Behavioral Health Officer Deployment Roles: How Social Workers Serve During USPHS Missions." 46 officers from around the country attended the session.

During the presentation, attendees learned how United States Public Health Service (USPHS) social workers perform a variety of clinical and leadership roles to promote the well-being of those they serve. These roles include force health protection, clinical social work, and case management duties. Additionally, social workers can perform non-clinical tasks in the areas of community outreach, program and administrative management, and resource and logistics coordination as needed.

The authors emphasized the professional competencies and values that have provided USPHS social workers a solid foundation to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of their deployment teams and host communities. They shared details of specific deployment experiences with attention to highlighting the commonly used competencies. Additional information on the social work profession and the roles that social work officers fill during deployments are on the following websites: <https://www.socialworkers.org/> and <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/hso/pags-swpag-deployment-roles.aspx>.

Between them, the authors have a combined 17 USPHS deployments. During the discussions of specific deployment experiences, the authors underscored important points to support an overall positive and successful deployment. For example, they advised officers to remain flexible when changes to mission objectives arise. They

also provided specific mind, body, and spiritual strategies to build resilience. Specifically, they highlighted the importance of having a self-care plan to cope, setting personal boundaries to reduce stress, and discussed ways to remain emotionally and physically healthy. Lastly, the authors reminded attendees to note their professional impact during their deployment experience to support personal resilience and track for USPHS curriculum vitae revisions, award write-ups, and content for presentations.

The authors reminded attendees to utilize their social support system pre, during, and post-deployment. Specifically, the discussion included ways to stay spiritually healthy by remaining connected with loved ones. Additionally, they highlighted resources to help process feelings, thoughts, and emotions after demobilization. The resources included: USPHS Corps Care at 240-276-9616 or PHSCorpsCare@hhs.gov. The National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-8255, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services located at each agency, and mental health services at military treatment facilities (MTF).

The presentation qualified for HSPAC Advanced Readiness Program (ARP) credit. The ARP requirements include receiving 50 hours of pre-approved advanced readiness training within two years. Additionally, there is an annual 120 clinical hour requirement for those in clinical disciplines. For more information, officers are encouraged to visit: https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/hso/advanced_readiness.aspx. Also, officers can find the presentation recording and slides from www.max.gov.

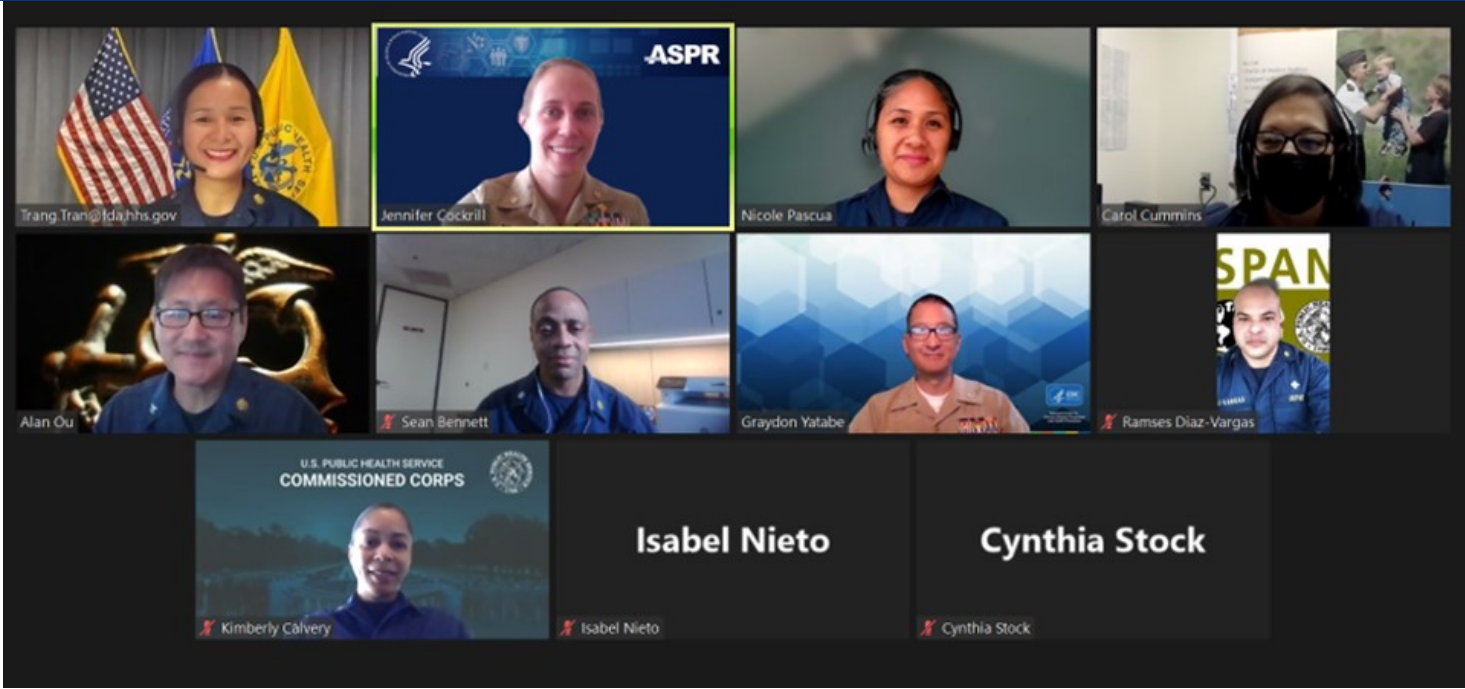


From top row, L to R: HSPAC presenters LCDR Candice Karber, LCDR Marie Cetoute, LCDR Nicole Pascua, and HSPAC Lecture Series Team, Readiness Subcommittee LT Valerie Favela



Roundtable Discussion on “Addressing Discrimination and Hate Crimes in Minority Communities”

By CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Ruby Leong, LCDR Nicole Pascua, LCDR Doan Singh, and LCDR Kathleen Tisdale



From top row, L to R: CDR Trang Tran, CDR Jennifer Cockrill, LCDR Nicole Pascua, CDR Carol Cummins, CAPT Alan Ou, CDR Sean Bennett, CAPT Graydon Yatabe, LCDR Ramses Diaz-Vargas, LCDR Kimberly Calvery

On December 8, 2021, the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Cultural Support Workgroup successfully hosted a roundtable discussion on “Addressing Discrimination and Hate Crimes in Minority Communities” for a panel of seven officers representing the four Chartered Minority Advisory Groups (CMAGs) including CDR Carol Cummins from the American Indian/Alaskan Native Commissioned Officers Advisory Committee (AI/ANCOAC), CAPT Alan C. Ou and CAPT Graydon Yatabe from the Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC), CDR Sean K. Bennett and LCDR Kimberly Calvery from the Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG), LCDR Ramses Diaz-Vargas from the Hispanic Officers Advisory Group (HOAC); and CDR Jennifer A. Cockrill from the Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG). This unprecedented event provided a venue for all the groups to come together and share perspectives related to discrimination, discuss negative effects on health and wellbeing, and provide ideas to foster inclusivity and diversity within the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps.

CDR Trang Tran, the 2021 APAOC Chair, provided the opening remarks to welcome distinguished guests and attendees, and set the stage for the invaluable discussion among the CMAGs. It was a great honor and privilege for APAOC to have RADM Aisha K. Mix, Senior Advisor for the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC), attend and provide the closing remarks for the memorable event.

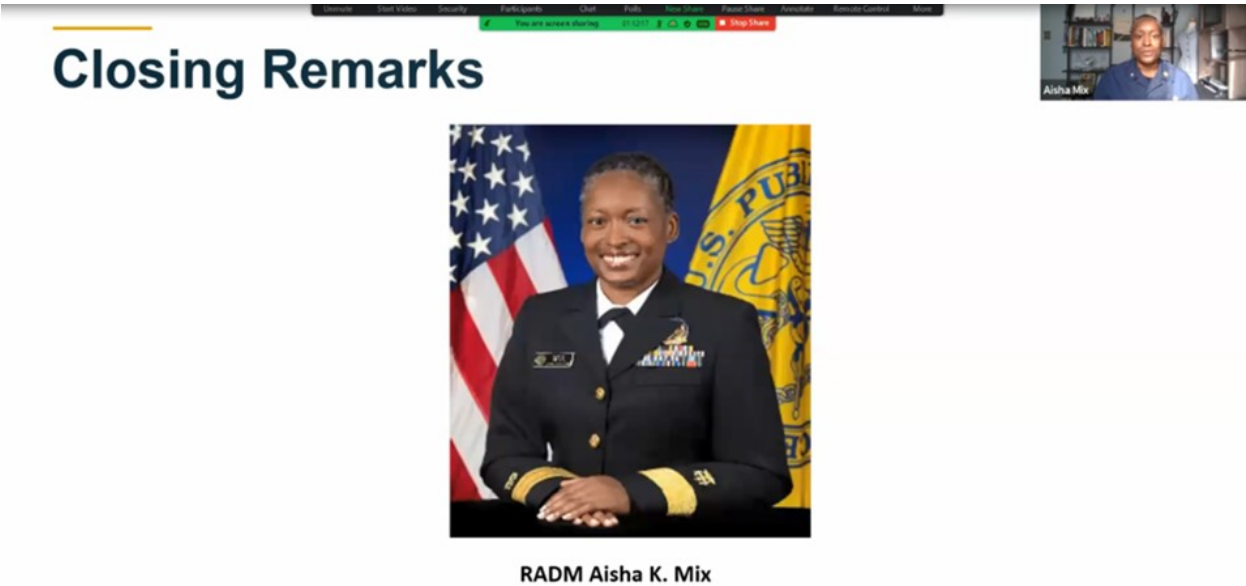
During the discussion, LCDR Nicole Pascua moderated and asked the panelists to respond to questions that included the following: what types of discrimination and hate crimes were experienced by their respective minority group over the last 2-3 years; how have hate crimes and racism affected morale; what types of support have been given to the community and USPHS officers to increase morale; what resources have been shared with USPHS officers and the community to combat discrimination and hate crimes; and lastly, how can an inclusive and diverse culture be built within the USPHS community.

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Roundtable Discussion on “Addressing Discrimination and Hate Crimes in Minority Communities” *continued*

The roundtable discussion concluded with RADM Mix providing the closing remarks. She encouraged attendees to continue to work within their respective advisory groups to bring about positive change and to include those, who would otherwise not be part of conversations about racism, discrimination and hate crimes into the discussion. She also urged attendees not to lose sight of their individual experiences and unique perspectives when developing pathways and initiatives addressing racism. Furthermore, RADM Mix asked attendees to take care of themselves emotionally and physically to better serve others.



RADM Aisha K. Mix

APAOC and the AAPI Cultural Support Workgroup look forward to pursuing future collaboration efforts with MOLC, other CMAGs, and SOAGDAG in supporting an inclusive and diverse culture within the USPHS community.

Special thanks to the Planning Committee led by LCDR Rebecca Wong for their outstanding contributions to make this pioneering roundtable discussion a great success.

For more detail about the roundtable discussion, please refer to the recording link provided below:

<https://fda.zoomgov.com/rec/share/dXUSQh9NOKpcgyXQdo9wiAGMaCS56osgDiOvaveoSjt0xKVqQrDXTTo7gJlbRMpU4.5d3lrpX3DCjATCvU>

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APAOC on Twitter

By LCDR William Chang



The Asian Pacific American Officers Committee now has a presence on Twitter! APAOC has had a presence in social media with a Facebook and Instagram profile, but on February 2022, the Social Media Workgroup Chairs LCDR Jennie Eng and LCDR Will Chang launched the latest APAOC endeavor when they started a Twitter account. Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Tweets are limited to 280 characters while audio and video tweets are limited to 140 seconds for most accounts.

Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year. Today the social media site boasts approximately 330 million users, including the President of the United States (@POTUS), the Assistant Secretary for Health (@HHS_ASH), the US Surgeon General (@Surgeon_General), and The Department of Health and Human Services (@HHS.gov).

Come check us out at [@USPHS_APAOC](https://twitter.com/USPHS_APAOC) and become a follower or tag us with a hashtag!



Call for Article Submissions and Volunteers

2021 APAOC Newsletter

The Publications Subcommittee is seeking article submissions for the 2021 APAOC Newsletter. Please consider submitting articles highlighting any newsworthy activities of APAOC members, whether you are a general member or a voting member.

Interested in submitting an article or volunteering?

Please forward your submissions to
CDR Denise Morrison, Denise.C.Morrison@ihs.dhs.gov,
LT Sophie Soo, Sophie.Soo@hhs.gov,
LT Adena Yau, Adena.Yau@ihs.gov

General Guidelines

- Please submit articles in Microsoft Word (.doc or docx format), using Times New Roman 12-point font.
- Editor(s) will be assigned to each article and they will work with the authors to edit/modify the content as necessary.
- When emailing your article, please include the following subject line: **APAOC Newsletter – [Article Title]_[Author Last Name(s)]**

Agency Clearance (if required for your article)

- Please obtain appropriate clearances for any agency-specific or agency-sensitive information prior to submission to APAOC.
- Before sending the article to your Agency, we encourage the primary author to contact CDR Denise Morrison, LT Sophie Soo and LT Adena Yau via email once you have your preliminary draft for an initial review.

Photography Guidelines

- Photographs are strongly encouraged to be submitted with articles. Please ensure that the submitted pictures meet the following guidelines:
- Photographs in .JPG or .PNG format are preferred. High quality resolution is strongly recommended.
- Please embed photo(s) into the Word document and include original file(s) as an attachment for better resolution.
- Uniformed officers must follow the USPHS uniform specifications and related policy uniform (e.g., conference name tags should not be visible over the uniform).
- Uniformed officers must follow general military etiquette when including different ranks (e.g., officers should be ordered in lowest to highest rank, left to right).
- A caption is required for each picture; in the caption, please include the rank and full name for each PHS officer present in the picture.
- If there is a civilian in the photo, please obtain their written authorization to publish the photo.

