

# ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN OFFICERS COMMITTEE

of the

United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023

## Executive Committee Members

**Chair:** LCDR Chaolong Qi

**Chair-Elect:** CDR Sophia Park

**Executive Secretary:** LCDR Sophie Soo

**Corresponding Secretary:** LCDR Jen Eng

**Treasurer:** LCDR Doan Singh

**MOLC Representatives:** LCDRs Sally Doan & Tramara Dam

**Leadership & Strategic Planning:**  
LCDR Huan Tran

## APAOC Chair's Corner

Dear APAOC members,

Welcome to the start of the APAOC 2023 Operational Year! I am humbled and honored to serve as your APAOC Chair this year. I want to begin by congratulating all of you for concluding a superior year in 2022. On behalf of the APAOC members, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our immediate past Chair, LCDR Ruby Leong, for her exceptional leadership and unwavering dedication to APAOC. Her efforts have resulted in countless achievements, setting a high bar for continued success. Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to our outgoing Voting Members (VMs) for their service and contributions during their tenure and extend a warm welcome to the incoming VMs with whom I am excited to collaborate with this year. I am confident in our ability to continue the momentum of building APAOC to be a strong organization to support our members, Office

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of the Surgeon General's (OSG) priorities, and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.

I had the privilege of benefiting from LCDR Leong's guidance and mentorship, as well as the support and inspiration of all our members in 2022, which has helped shape our shared vision for APAOC 2023. During the APAOC General Member Meeting on February 1st, I outlined three overarching goals for the year ahead:

- Support professional development of APAOC officers with resources in the time of change through training, career mentoring, and opportunities to lead APAOC activities and initiatives.
- Enhance community engagement and cultural awareness to directly address Surgeon General's priorities in AAPI communities.
- Promote health equity for AAPI communities through building partnership and raising awareness on AAPI health disparities.

The Commissioned Corps is currently undergoing significant changes, making officer support and development more important than ever before. APAOC has a great reputation in this area, demonstrated by our successful leadership summits over the years. We are committed to continuing this focus on education and training sessions, mentoring

programs, and developing resource documents that help officers succeed in their public health careers. As a chartered advisory group in the OSG, we will empower members to step up and take lead on various officership activities. Whether it's volunteering at a subcommittee or a workgroup, leading community events, or bringing up your ideas and perspectives, every contribution makes a difference. APAOC's success relies on our collective leadership and dedication. Just in short few months into 2023, we have already accomplished the following:

- Education and Training Subcommittee (SC) successfully held the first educational session on March 3rd on the "Overview of CDC's International Experience and Technical Assistance (IETA) Program". LT Jiali He, alternate to the SC Chair LCDR Jason Tu, did a masterful job on planning and moderating the session with 68 participants eager to expand their public health expertise globally.
- Career Development and Advancement SC launched the 2023 APAOC mentoring program with a new survey tool to help match suitable mentors and mentees.
- APAOC held our first ever Virtual Connect Session on March 31st to engage in an open dialog to share experiences and learn about recent USPHS

deployments. This will be a series to engage officers in sharing experience on various topics.

APAOC's commitment to community engagement has been one of our greatest strengths. Our position allows us to represent both our communities in the Corps and the Corps in our communities. Thanks to the hard work of our Community Engagement Workgroup (CEWG), we have established a robust process and structure that empowers APAOC officers to lead community-based public health initiatives under the OSG's umbrella. The Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC) Health and Community Service Fair in Gaithersburg, Maryland (see pages 13-14 for further details) and the Out of Darkness Walk Resources Fair in Washington DC in collaboration with PACE-DC (see pages 18-19 for further details) are two examples in which they set a great precedence for us to follow. Since the start of 2023, CEWG has already completed four community outreach events in four different regions, including two events in celebration of the lunar new year and community wellness (a community 5K in Shoreline WA and a health booth at a community event organized by the Dallas Chinese Community Center, see pages 16-17 for further details).

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With the recent success of the Healthy Mind Initiative Lesson Plan, APAOC is again influencing the Corps at large and is well positioned to continue spearheading the community outreach activities covering various OSG priorities such as addressing youth mental health, disseminating health information, conducting USPHS recruitment, and providing clinical services to communities with language barriers.

Our efforts also extend to enhancing diversity and AAPI cultural awareness within the Corps. The Public Relation SC hosted the third annual virtual Lunar New Year celebration event on February 17th, with an impressive turnout of 114 registrants and 90 live attendees from various professional categories and agencies (see page 15 for further details). We are currently planning multiple events for the upcoming AAPI Heritage Month in May, as we continue to serve as a vital resource for our communities and the Corps.

Since the establishment of the AAPI Health Equity Workgroup in 2022, we have been making significant progress including:

- Topic in Public Health lecture in the Conversations in Equity Series on January 20<sup>th</sup> on the topic of “[Health Disparities among AAPI Populations: An Overview and Examples in Cancer Health](#)” by CAPT (ret.) Graydon Yatabe and LT Jin Qin, with over 350 attendees.

- Two presentations at the 2023 AMSUS Annual Conference on February 15th
  - a) “It Takes a Village: Changing the Narrative of Youth Mental Health in Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Populations” by LCDR Doan Singh and LCDR Ruby Leong.
  - b) “APAOC’s Efforts in Promoting Youth Mental Health in Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Populations” by LCDR Evelyn Hong and LCDR Doan Singh.
- Development of a partnership with the NIH AANHPI Health Scientific Interest Group in supporting the planning of its Health Research Conference in May to directly address one of the [HHS’s five goals](#) under the [National Strategy of the White House Initiative on AANHPI](#).

We all embark on unique journeys throughout our careers, whether it's a short-term project, a job assignment, a deployment, or a collateral duty, like what we do in APAOC. As we progress, we aspire to grow from where we are now to become the best versions of ourselves. I am incredibly grateful to work alongside the exceptional members of APAOC, whose expertise and passion from their own journeys enrich our collective

experience. Together, we have the power to make a profound impact, not just in the Corps, but in the communities we serve. Let us embrace this journey with open hearts, unwavering commitment, and a steadfast resolve to support and elevate one another. Let us make APAOC a place where every member can chart their own hero's journey and fulfill their fullest potential. I am excited to embark on this journey with all of you and make this year another one for the books, where we continue to fulfill the APAOC’s mission with leadership, service, integrity, and excellence.

*In Officio Salutis,*  
LCDR Chaolong Qi  
2023 APAOC Chair



# 2023 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 (DP). She has over 18 years of policy, clinical, and teaching experience with the Food and Drug Administration (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 has also served as the Associate Director of Labeling and Regulatory Project Manager in DP.

Over the course of her career as a United States Public Health Service 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 Chaolong Qi** is the 2023 APAOC Chair. Prior to serving as the Chair-Elect in 2022, he served as the alternate to the APAOC's MOLC Representative in 2018 and served a full term of APAOC Voting Membership in 2019-2021. He currently serves as a Senior Research Engineer and Principal Investigator 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 workers against workplace health hazards. He has published 41 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 has served multiple tours of deployments on responses to COVID-19, Operation Artemis, Operation Allies Welcome, and Ebola 2022 mission, including five tours serving at leadership roles.

## Chair-Elect



**CDR Sophia Park** is the 2023 APAOC Chair-Elect. Prior to her current term, she served as Corresponding Secretary and as alternate voting member to CDR Trang Tran during her tenure as Chair-Elect and Chair. Currently, CDR Park is stationed in Silver Spring, MD, and serves as a Program Coordinator in the Division of User Fee Management, Office of Management, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, where 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 and drugs that protect the public health. CDR Sophia Park received her Doctor of Pharmacy Degree from University of Maryland, School of Pharmacy, in 2010. She commissioned as an officer in May of 2012 and has deployed to help support hurricane Harvey/Irma/Florence responses in 2017 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

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# 2023 APAOC Executive Committee



## Executive Secretary

**LCDR Sophie Soo** is the 2023 APAOC Executive Secretary. She was previously the Chair and Co-Chair of the APAOC Publications Subcommittee and an Alternate Voting Member. She is the Preparedness Program Coordinator within the Readiness and Deployment Branch of Commissioned Corps Headquarters. She is a pharmacist and graduated from the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Pharmacy in 2017. She began her USPHS career as a Postgraduate year-1 pharmacy resident with Indian Health Service on the Navajo Nation and was subsequently a staff pharmacist and New Mexico licensed Pharmacist Clinician at the same facility.



## Correspondence Secretary

**LCDR Jen Eng** is originally from Seattle, Washington, and currently reside in Pikesville, Maryland. LCDR Eng first learned of PHS when she was practicing Dental Hygiene as a direct hire in Tuba City, AZ located on the Navajo/Hopi/Southern Paiute Reservation. She commissioned in 2017 and have enjoyed every minute of it. LCDR Eng is passionate about public health, community engagement, protecting the health and wellbeing of our people and everything in between. She is currently a Consumer Safety Officer for FDA's imports division and soon will be transitioning to a Regulatory Project Manager at FDA's Center for Drugs and Evaluation Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology.



## Treasurer

**LCDR Doan Singh** currently works as a Compliance Officer in the Office of Compliance at FDA. She has previously served at various locations, including Alaska, California, Kentucky, and Maryland for Indian Health Services and FDA. Her previous roles have been a drug regulatory officer with domestic & international oversight, IHS clinical pharmacist and project manager. She has been an active member in nationwide COA chapters (DC COA, Bluegrass, Aurora Borealis, & SoCal). She has been involved with the mentoring programs (PharmPAC, APAOC, FDA, & JOAG) and volunteer with public outreach programs for Vietnamese American Uniformed Services Association.

LCDR Singh's service to APAOC include: founding member of the APAOC Cultural Support Committee, published papers in APAOC & COA newsletters, presented with HHS officials, planned and hosted the 2nd annual virtual Lunar New Year and the 2nd annual AAPI Heritage Month celebrations, presented APAOC poster at COF 2022, led the planning committee on "Surgeon General's Advisory Call to Actions Series", lead developer/presenter at the AMSUS 2023 conference. LCDR Singh has held several roles in APAOC, including alternate voting member for the Education and Training Committee, APAOC Public Relations Subcommittee Chair and currently the APAOC Treasure (External Liaison).

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# 2023 APAOC Executive Committee



## Leadership & Strategic Planning

**LCDR Huan Tran** currently serves as the lead for APAOC Leadership and Strategic Planning. Previously, he served on the APAOC's Education and Training Subcommittee as the Co-Chair in 2022, Corresponding Secretary in 2021, and on the Publication Subcommittee as the Chair in 2020 and as Alternate in 2019. LCDR Tran is a pharmacist who is currently stationed in Seattle, Washington, working as an Investigator at FDA's Office of Regulatory Affairs, Office of Enforcement and Import Operations, Division of West Coast Import. LCDR Tran received his PharmD from the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in 2017. He was commissioned into the USPHS through the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP) in 2016 through sponsorship from the Federal Bureau of Prisons. He worked as a staff pharmacist at Federal Correctional Complex Hazelton for three years before transferring to his current duty station.



## MOLC Representative

**LCDR Sally Doan** is currently serving as the APAOC MOLC Representative for the 2023 operational year for a second term. This is the third year she is serving as an APAOC Voting Member. She previously served as Executive Secretary in 2021 and 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.



## MOLC Representative

**LCDR Tramara Dam** is the current MOLC Co-Liaison/APAOC Representative. Since 2017, she has been actively involved with APAOC by volunteering on various subcommittees. Subsequently, she served as an Alternate Voting Member for the Leadership and Strategic Planning committee (2017), APAOC Minority Office Liaison Council representative (2018), and APAOC Executive Secretary (2019). In addition, she served as the "luncheon" logistics lead for the 2nd and 3rd Annual APAOC Leadership Summit and authored multiple APAOC articles. Furthermore, she was a member of the APAOC Cultural Awareness Work Group, the Social Media Work Group, and the Community Engagement Work Group (Healthy Mind Initiative) and an active participant of the Mentoring Program. She has volunteered and represented these committees in numerous events. In 2022, she served as the Awards & Recognition Subcommittee Co-Chair and DMV Regional Co-lead for the APAOC Community Engagement Workgroup.



# 2023 APAOC Voting Members



**CDR Kent Bui**  
Chair, Awards & Recognition  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Awards  
& Recognition SC Chair

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

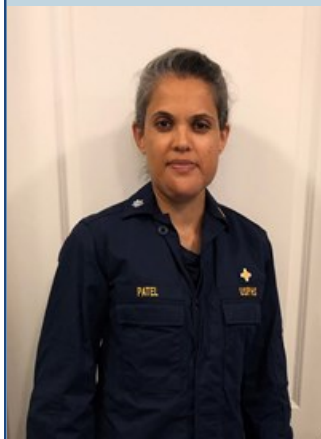
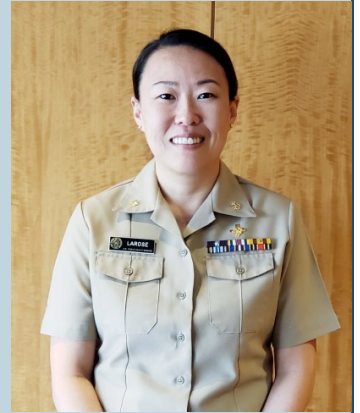
**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**LCDR Ji Hyun LaRose**  
Co-Chair, Awards &  
Recognition Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:**  
Nomination & Membership SC  
Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Senior  
Regulatory Program Manager,  
FDA, Silver Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist



**CDR Mona Patel**  
Chair, Career Development &  
Advancement Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:**  
Community Engagement WG Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Associate  
Director of Labeling, FDA, Silver  
Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**CAPT Simleen Kaur**  
Co-Chair, Career Development  
& Advancement Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** MOLC  
Co-Chair/APAOC MOLC Liaison

**Current Duty Station:** Biologist/  
Team Lead, FDA, Silver Spring,  
MD

**PHS Category:** Health Service  
Officer



**CDR Michelle Tsai**  
Chair, Charter & Bylaws  
Subcommittee

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

**Current Duty Station:** Region 3  
Clinical Psychologist, OS/CCHQ/  
PHERST, Rockville, MD

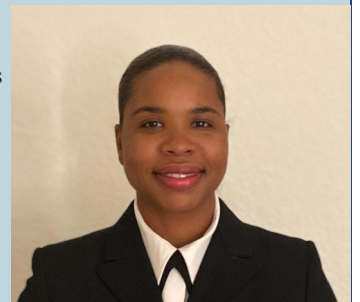
**PHS Category:** Scientist

**CDR Denise Morrison**  
Co-Chair, Charter & Bylaws  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Awards  
& Recognition SC Co-Chair,  
Publications SC Co-Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Chief of  
IHSC Investigations Unit,  
Miramar, FL

**PHS Category:** Health Service  
Officer



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# 2023 APAOC Voting Members



**LCDR Evelyn Hong**  
Chair, Communications  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:**  
Alternate VM, Public Relations  
and Social Media WG Member

**Current Duty Station:** Team  
Lead/Program Manager Officer,  
FDA, Silver Spring, MD

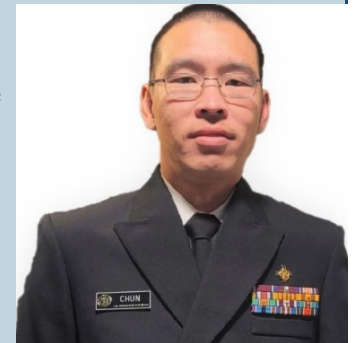
**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**LCDR Garrett Chun**  
Co-Chair, Communications  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Website  
Editor

**Current Duty Station:** Design &  
Construction Branch Chief,  
Yosemite National Park, El Portal,  
CA

**PHS Category:** Engineer



**LCDR Yajun Jason Tu**  
Chair, Education & Training  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:**  
Recruitment & Retention SC Chair

**Current Duty Station:**  
Management Analyst, FDA, Silver  
Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**LT Ying Lin**  
Co-Chair, Education &  
Training Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Alternate  
VM

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

**PHS Category:** Scientist



**CDR Hong Vu**  
Chair, Nomination &  
Membership  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:**  
Nomination and Membership SC  
Co-Chair

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

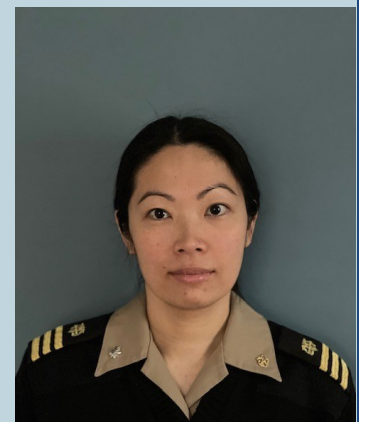
**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**CDR Nguyet Ton**  
Co-Chair, Nomination &  
Membership Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Career  
Development and Advancement  
SC Co-Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Senior  
Advisor, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

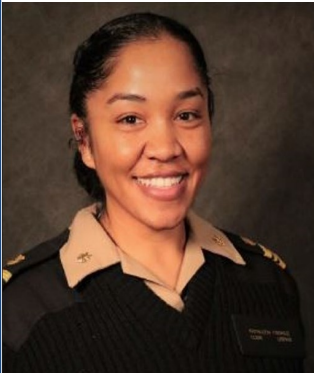


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# 2023 APAOC Voting Members



**LCDR Kathleen Tisdale**  
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, ASPR, Atlanta, GA

**PHS Category:** Environmental Health Officer

**LCDR William Chang**  
Co-Chair, Public Relations  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Social Media Workgroup Co-Chair, Publications Co-Chair and Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Medical Device Specialist, FDA, Parsippany, NJ

**PHS Category:** Engineer



**LT Adena Yau**  
Chair, Publications  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Alternate VM, Publications SC Co-Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Pharmacist, IHS, Crownpoint, NM

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**LCDR Jun Lee**  
Co-Chair, Publications  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Communications SC Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Program Coordinator, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist



**LT Suresh Jayasekara**  
Chair, Recruitment & Retention  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Healthy Mind Initiative lesson plan development Lead for PACE, Alternate VM, Community Engagement WG-Sri Lankan community

**Current Duty Station:** Program Management Officer, FDA, Rockville, MD

**PHS Category:** Scientist

**LCDR Vicky Hsu**  
Co-Chair, Recruitment &  
Retention  
Subcommittee

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Executive Secretary

**Current Duty Station:** Clinical Pharmacology Reviewer, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Engineer



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# 2023 APAOC Voting Members



**CDR Lisa Lee**  
Chair, Social Media Workgroup

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Leadership & Strategic Planning SC Chair, Charter & Bylaw SC Co-Chair, Alternate VM, APAOC volunteer HMI and Charter & Bylaw SC, Mentor

**Current Duty Station:** Program Officer, DHS-IHSC, New York, NY

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**CDR Harold Sano**  
Co-Chair, Social Media Workgroup

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Career Development & Advancement SC Chair, Publications SC Co-Chair, APAOC volunteer editor for publications, recruitment at OBCs, and Lunar New Year(s)

**Current Duty Station:** Team Leader, Regulatory Project Manager, FDA, Silver Spring, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist



**CDR Quynh-Van Tran**  
Chair, Communication Engagement Workgroup

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Community Engagement WG Co-Chair, Education & Training SC Co-Chair

**Current Duty Station:** Team Lead, FDA, CDER, Office of Compliance, Office of Scientific Investigations, Silver Spring, MD

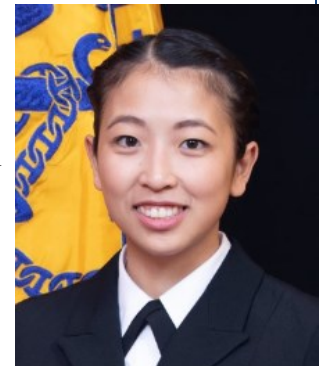
**PHS Category:** Pharmacist

**LT Miaka Huynh**  
Co-Chair, Communication Engagement Workgroup

**Previous APAOC Roles:** Alternate VM

**Current Duty Station:** PHERST HR Specialist, CCHQ, Rockville, MD

**PHS Category:** Pharmacist



# TDY Experience at Crownpoint Healthcare Facility

By CDR Yvon Yeo, PharmD, MPH, CPH, CCHP

Public Information Officer Coordinator, Commissioned Corps Headquarters

The Indian Health Service Crownpoint Health Care Facility serves a population of 20,000 Navajo people. The Crownpoint Pharmacy Department consists of a main pharmacy department, two satellite pharmacies, and an inpatient pharmacy which supports a small inpatient unit and an Emergency Department. There are several pharmacist-led clinics which cover management of substance abuse, hypertension, anticoagulation, diabetes, hyperlipidemia, pain, and tobacco cessation. The Pharmacist Clinician credential (PhC), held by several pharmacists at Crownpoint, is unique to New Mexico pharmacists. The PhC credential allows pharmacist clinicians to collaborate with physicians to provide certain primary care and specialty care services, including prescribing medications, diagnosing certain disease states, performing physical exams and ordering lab tests. Furthermore, New Mexico Pharmacist Clinicians can register for DEA licenses. Currently, there is one Pharmacist Clinician at Crownpoint managing the pharmacist-run pain clinic who can prescribe controlled medications.

## TDY Pharmacist Responsibilities:

From February 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, I completed a pharmacy TDY at Crownpoint Healthcare Facility in Crownpoint, NM. My primary responsibilities included:

1. Verifying prescriptions: I verified medication orders reviewing for the correct patient's name, medication (via pill image), directions, quantity, and dosing for pediatric, adult, and those with renal- or hepatic-impairment.
2. Counseling patients: I counseled patients on newly prescribed medications and changes in dose and dosing frequency to current medications. In the Indian Health Service, patient counseling is required for all new medications or changes to current medications. There are two dedicated counseling rooms in Crownpoint pharmacy which provide patient privacy.
3. Filling controlled medications: Crownpoint pharmacy utilizes ScriptPro, Pyxis, and Eyecon to label, fill, count, verify, and store controlled medications. All narcotic prescriptions are double counted. Patient's prescription bags are stored in the Pyxis and recorded on a log sheet.
4. Dispensing controlled medications: When patients or their proxies show up at the pharmacy, their prescription bags are retrieved from the Pyxis and logged out from the log sheet. Patients and their proxies must present their driver's license to the pharmacy staff; their driver's license numbers and expiration dates are recorded in ScriptPro.

## Staff Housing:

TDY pharmacists are typically housed in facility quarters. These houses are simple, but offer basic furnishings and appliances.

## Places to Visit:

I visited the Gallup flea market in Gallup, NM. Vendors sold local cuisine such as fry bread, mutton stew, posole, tamale, blue corn mash, Navajo cake, etc. I was delighted to partake in trying as much food as my stomach would allow! There were many artisans selling Native American paintings, pottery, turquoise and beaded jewelry, clothing, blankets and leatherwork. Needless to say, I bought some souvenirs to take home with me.

For those who enjoy photography and beautiful landscapes, I recommend the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. I took the Cascade Canyon winter train and experienced magnificent views of the Animas River and snowclad peaks of the Rocky Mountains as I traveled from Durango, CO to Cascade Canyon, CO.

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# TDY Experience at Crownpoint Healthcare Facility

*Continued*

The Sandia Peak Tramway in Albuquerque, NM, is another attraction not to be missed. I took the tram which ascended up to the 10,378-foot crest of the Sandia Mountain to experience breathtaking views. For those who enjoy skiing, you can also ski down the Sandia Mountain.

Overall, I had an enjoyable time during my TDY at Crownpoint. The pharmacy staff were welcoming and patient as they showed me the ropes. The pharmacy director and assistant chief pharmacist hosted a dinner party to show their appreciation. There were many attractions to visit during the weekends which kept me busy. The staff housing was definitely more comfortable in comparison to staying at a hotel.

The Crownpoint pharmacy department continues to solicit TDY pharmacists for the rest of the calendar year. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact LCDR Keith Warshany at [Keith.Warshany@ihs.gov](mailto:Keith.Warshany@ihs.gov). Pharmacists may volunteer for assignments of various lengths but a two-week TDY is strongly recommended and will fulfill practice hour requirements. Also, TDY pharmacists may opt to work 8- or 10-hour shifts with half or one-hour lunch breaks. I hope USPHS pharmacists will consider doing a TDY at Crownpoint pharmacy.



CDR Yvon Yeo at Crownpoint Healthcare Facility



# Collaboration with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community to Promote the Surgeon General's Health Initiatives

By LCDR Trami Nguyen, Pharm.D., BCSCP, LCDR Tramara Dam, Pharm.D., BCSCP, LT Kerui Xu, Ph.D., and CDR Emily Baker, Pharm.D., MS

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, LCDR Tramara Dam and LT Kerui Xu led a diverse team of 12 United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps Officers from different professional categories to support the 2022 Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC) Health and Community Service Fair in Gaithersburg, Maryland. This is an annual event that is organized by CCACC to provide free clinical services to members of the community. CCACC is a non-profit organization serving the greater Washington community to improve the quality of life and well-being of the Chinese American community. CCACC hosts health fair events to help disadvantaged residents with low income, no health insurance, and no access to healthcare due to language barriers or cultural differences. USPHS officers, state and federal government agencies, health fair vendors, sponsors, local healthcare providers, community partners, and CCACC volunteers participated in the event to provide health services to the community.

The goal of the CCACC Health and Community Service Fair was to provide free preventative care to members of the community. The event offered free vaccinations, Hepatitis B screening, blood pressure screening, body mass index screening, body fat testing, fasting glucose testing, bone density testing, eye exams, hearing exams, and mental health screening. Additionally, some attendees received complimentary blood work which included a complete blood count, a comprehensive metabolic panel, and a lipid panel. USPHS officers provided public health education, clinical services as well as USPHS recruitment materials to over 350 members of the community. The officers presented on public health topics impacting the community such as mental health awareness and the Surgeon General's priorities, including safety in the sun and healthy, active living.

Suicide is the leading cause of death in Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANHPI) youths between the ages of 15 to 24 years old and the suicide rate continues to increase in this population. The Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) established the Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) in 2018 to promote youth mental health awareness in AANHPI communities, decrease the stigma around mental health, and inspire parents and youths to seek help. Through the collaborative efforts of APAOC and Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE), another chartered group in the Office of the Surgeon General, a HMI Lesson Plan was developed and approved by the Surgeon General in the Fall of 2022, making this a nationwide initiative to support and educate AANHPI communities. During the CCACC event, the APAOC team presented the HMI Lesson Plan to the public and introduced the new 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, specifically, the purpose of the lifeline and how it can save lives. LCDR Dam was the lead presenter of the HMI Lesson Plan and this was her first HMI event using the newly approved Lesson Plan.

Many attendees stopped by the USPHS booth to express their gratitude and appreciation for the services provided by the USPHS officers. The CCACC Health and Community Service Fair allowed officers to have a direct impact in improving public health and building relationships with the local Chinese American community while also increasing visibility of the USPHS. The USPHS officers look forward to supporting more health fairs in the near future!

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# Collaboration with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community to Promote the Surgeon General's Health Initiatives

*Continued*



From left to right: LCDR Theresa Yu, CDR Trang Tran, CDR Jung Lee, LCDR Ruby Leong, LCDR Tramara Dam, LT Kerui Xu

From left to right: LT Kerui Xu, LT Jiali He, LT Jia Leo, LCDR Veronica Pei, LCDR Theresa Yu, LCDR Tramara Dam, LCDR Ruby Leong, CDR Jung Lee, CDR Hong Vu, CDR Trang Tran, CAPT Lei Xu



LCDR Theresa Yu administers immunization to a member of the community





# 2023 APAOC 3rd Annual Virtual Lunar New Year Event

By LCDR William Chang

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Public Relations Subcommittee kicked off the 2023 Lunar New Year with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual APAOC virtual social event. The event was a great success with over 91 participants in attendance from across the country, organizations, and backgrounds. This was an increase of 52% compared to last year's event. This year, the Public Relations' focus was to increase cultural awareness and showcase the diversity of various Asian American and Pacific Islander traditions. They learned about Lunar New Year traditions in India, Vietnam, China, Japan, South Korea, and Myanmar (also known as Burma). India showcased the ways they celebrate Lunar New Year with their unique traditions, customs, and, best of all, their food. Educational information was provided on the creation and meaning of the lunar calendar, Chinese/Japanese/Myanmar zodiacs and their elements, as well as sharing the various countries that celebrate Lunar New Year around the world. The presenters kept the audience engaged by incorporating trivia questions at the end and conducted a fun Lunar New Year "I Spy" game. At the end of the social event, participants were asked to tally up their points in hopes to be crowned the winner. The winners were CDR Jung Lee (FDA), CDR Vandna Kishore (FDA), and Nehal Patel (ASPR).

APAOC Senior Advisor CAPT Juliette Taylor provided closing remarks at the event and thanked all the organizers for putting together this educational event to celebrate the new Lunar New Year and making it so interactive! CAPT Taylor applauded the presenters, LCDR Kathleen Tisdale, LCDR William Chang, LCDR Chaolong Qi, LCDR Cathy Arnatt, CDR Hai Lien Phung, LCDR Theresa Castellanos, LCDR Jennie Eng, LT Jenny Sung, and Nehal Patel. She also thanked those behind the scenes of the presentation, LT Morgan Lee, LT Jamie Williams, and LT Domika Kinman who made it all possible. She indicated that she was happy to see a very diverse group of people – lots of members from in and outside of APAOC celebrating that day. She stated that diversity is one of our biggest assets in the 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 we learned each country celebrates the New Year a little differently, there are some universal messages that APAOC hopes all PHS officers will embrace:



1st Row: LCDR William Chang, LT Jenny Sung, LCDR Chaolong Qi  
2nd Row: CDR Hai Lien Phung, Nehal Patel, LCDR Kathleen Tisdale  
3rd Row: LCDR Theresa Castellanos, CAPT Juliette Taylor, LCDR Jennie Eng

1. Hopes of renewal and to 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 2023 virtual Lunar New Year was a true success. The Public Relations Committee hopes to see everyone at the 2024 APAOC 4th Annual Lunar New Year celebration.



## Workgroup Events Starting the Year Off Right!

By: CDR Amos Chen, MS, ARNP, MLS(ASCP)CM, FNP-BC; LCDR Quynh Anh Tran, PharmD, MPH, CPH

Editors: CDR Jessica Steinert, PharmD, MHA, BCGP; LT Miaka Huynh, PharmD, BC-ADM, BCACP

Lunar New Year is one of the most significant holidays in the Asian culture. In honor of the Asian American tradition and heritage, the Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC) and the Greater Texas Commissioned Officers Association (GTCOA) collaborated with the Dallas Chinese Community Center (DCCC) to organize a community outreach event at the Richardson Chinatown Plaza on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Richardson, Texas. The event was conducted as an opportunity to jointly celebrate the 2023 Lunar New Year, as well as a venue to reach the Dallas Asian American community at large.

The community outreach event included dissemination of healthy diet tips and cooking recipes, written literature about diabetes, dyslipidemia, hypertension, and consultation about healthy lifestyle techniques and strategies. However, the main highlight of the booth was providing blood pressure screenings and explaining each blood pressure category based upon results. In addition to blood pressure screenings and health education (e.g., importance of routine follow up with healthcare providers and maintaining/establishing a healthy diet and exercise plan), the team provided “goodie” bags filled with healthy crackers, reduced fat cheese dips, and water bottles to promote smart-choice snack options. The USPHS education booth was staffed with six USPHS officers, divided into two 3-hour shifts, providing coverage for the event from 10 AM through 3 PM. The officers assisted a total of 53 visitors, with 18 signing up for blood pressures readings. The officers engaged 45 additional visitors by providing health information, sharing cooking resources or answering health-related questions.

In addition to providing community health outreach at the event, the officers enjoyed the festivities and learned more about the culture. The event’s agenda included various traditional Chinese/Vietnamese performances, including Origami, Chinese Yo-Yo, and Red Envelopes Giveaway. The event was a great success, with a fun-filled lion/dragon dance, and over 20 vendors offering diverse yet authentic food and beverage options. The officers were grateful for an amazing opportunity to immerse themselves in the pride and heritage of the Asian community, while carrying out the ultimate mission of advancing and promoting public health.



From left to right - LT Tamika Finch-Hall, LT Robert Brant, LCDR Quynh Tran, LCDR Stephanie Chiang, LT Kristin Longfellow

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## Workgroup Events Starting the Year Off Right!

*Continued*

On Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, three USPHS officers answered the call of action to support International Community Health Services (ICHS), a regional community health clinic system located in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District and the suburbs.

ICHS provides primary care, vision, dental, and behavioral health services to the Asian community residing in the Greater Seattle area, including immigrants and those with language barriers. To support its mission to provide care to those with low income, ICHS hosts a fund-raising 5k-run event during the month of the Lunar New Year celebration. After two years of hiatus due to the pandemic, ICHS resumed its ninth annual running event in person. CDR Amos Chen and LCDR Melody Sun, the co-leads from the APAOC Community Event Workgroup (CEWG) in Washington State, gathered local USPHS officers to assist the fundraising efforts for the ICHS mission. On the day of the event, despite the cold weather and the light snow from the previous day, three USPHS officers were able to attend the event at the Shoreline City Hall in Shoreline, Washington. LCDR Peter Jaeger, a clinical pharmacist for the Cowlitz Tribe, represented the US Public Health Service team and ran the 5k course on the Shoreline Interurban Trail. CDR Amos Chen and CDR Rhonda Martinez-McFarland, two nursing officers from the Seattle area, volunteered at the event as pathway guides wearing bunny ears in the spirit of “Year of the Rabbit”. Shortly after the run started at 08:00, LCDR Jaeger finished the 5k run, earning 4<sup>th</sup> place! CDR Chen and CDR Martinez-McFarland continued to cheer on the other 500 registered participants in the cold weather before the event was concluded at 12:00. After the event, all USPHS volunteers expressed their appreciation in having the opportunity to support the local Asian American community.



From left to right – CDR Amos Chen, CDR Rhonda Martinez-McFarland, and LCDR Peter Jaeger.

The APAOC CEWG is starting the year off right with two Lunar New Year events! Thank you so much to all the regional leads and event volunteers for your dedication to raising visibility for USPHS and carrying out the mission of APAOC. More to come from APAOC CEWG!



*This newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not reflect official views of the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps or USPHS leadership.*



# USPHS Officers and D.C. Community Members United to Support the Out of the Darkness Community Walk and Resource Fair to Bring Mental Health and Suicide Awareness

By LCDR Tramara Dam, Pharm.D., BCSCP, CDR Emily Baker, Pharm.D., MS, LCDR Trami Nguyen, Pharm.D., BCSCP, LCDR Sylvia Park, Pharm.D., LT David Chon, MPH, RQAP-GCP, LT Kerui Xu, Ph.D., MPH

In the United States, suicide attempt rates have increased over the years, especially among Asian American populations. Suicide is a serious public health problem that has lasting harmful effects in our communities. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention coordinates the Out of the Darkness Community Walk and Resource Fair events across the United States, bringing communities together to raise awareness and openly discuss mental health and suicide. These events allow participants to honor and remember the loss of their loved ones and connect with others affected by suicide.

The Out of the Darkness Community Walk and Resource Fair event was held on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, in Washington, D.C. In a collaborative effort, 30 United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps officers from the Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) and the Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE) hosted a booth and provided educational materials on public health, USPHS recruitment, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, and COVID-19 fact sheets. The APAOC team, led by LCDR Tramara Dam, also presented the Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) Lesson Plan to 325 community members who visited the USPHS booth, covering the current data on youth mental health as well as the new 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline hotline dedicated to suicide prevention by providing support to anyone in emotional distress.

The pandemic significantly changed American lives with social distancing which prevented officers from supporting community events. LCDR Dam commented, “the pandemic has changed me significantly over the past few years. I have learned to appreciate life even more and really value the opportunity to support the community.” The officers who participated and supported this event, were honored to serve and reunite with the community after many years of social distancing. The Out of the Darkness Community Walk and Resource Fair enabled officers to provide public health education and mental health awareness to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the nation.



From left to right: CDR Armando Santiago, LT David Chon, CDR Su-Lin Sun, LCDR Tramara Dam, LT Kerui Xu, LCDR Sophia Yang, LCDR Sylvia Park, LCDR Trami Nguyen, LT Karen Lumbu Kinard, LT Lesianella King

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# USPHS Officers and D.C. Community Members United to Support the Out of the Darkness Community Walk and Resource Fair to Bring Mental Health and Suicide Awareness

*Continued*



Officers educating the community members on mental health topics





# Did You Know?

The purpose of this section is to share useful and valuable information among officers. Please submit any suggestions to the Publications Subcommittee on information you would like to see in this section.

## You can receive BLS training for free at the Walter Reed Medical Hospital in Bethesda

1. Log in to Relias
2. If you have any issues with Relias, please email the local Help Desk at [dha.bethesda.j-11.mbx.relias@mail.mil](mailto:dha.bethesda.j-11.mbx.relias@mail.mil) or visit the Relias FAQ page at <https://wrnmmc-intranet.health.mil/sites/DETR/HEAT/SitePages/Relias%20LMS.aspx>.
3. On your dashboard under Upcoming assignments is a plus sign. Click on the plus sign
4. Search WRNMMC. This will populate all of Walter Reeds Courses, beginning with ALS. Scroll until you see Basic Life Support (BLS): Provider Course, Phases I & II (WRNMMC)
5. Select a date and time that works best for your schedule and click enroll. The course will now be added to your assignments
6. To access, go back to your Dashboard. Select see full list in Assignments. BLS will appear at the end of your upcoming assignments
7. Click start course and click link to the Red Cross. If you have never taken a Red Cross course, you will need to register an account. Please complete Phase I of the course and print a copy of your completion certificate. You must have a copy or a picture of this certificate to attend the hands on portion.

## New Login Options for Your Military OneSource Account

Use one of the two new options to log in to your Military OneSource account: [DS Logon](#) or [ID.me](#)

**Access all these resources and more.** When logged in to your account, you can take advantage of Military OneSource resources, including:

- Free tax services and e-filing with MilTax
- Online training with MilLife Learning
- Scheduling non-medical counseling appointments
- Saving checklists in Plan My Move
- Saving progress in EFMP & Me

### **ID.me now includes USPHS in its military service verification**

Both Military OneSource and ID.me provide some military benefit to service members only

Learn more at [www.id.me](http://www.id.me)





# Call for Article Submissions and Volunteers

The Publications Subcommittee is seeking article submissions for the 2023 APAOC Newsletters. 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

LCDR Jun Lee, [Jun.Lee@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Jun.Lee@fda.hhs.gov)  
LT Adena Yau, [Adena.Yau@ihs.gov](mailto:Adena.Yau@ihs.gov)

## General Guidelines

- Please submit articles in Microsoft Word (.DOC or .DOCX format), using Garamond 12-point font.
- An editor 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 Summer 2023 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 the Publications Subcommittee 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.

