

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN OFFICERS COMMITTEE

of the

United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019

Executive Committee Members

Chair: CDR Tina Nhu
Chair-Elect: LCDR Kelly Leong
Executive Secretary: CDR Trang Tran
Corresponding Secretary:
CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian
Treasurer: CDR Su-Lin Sun
MOLC Representatives:
LCDR Daniel Lee & LCDR Yvon Yeo
Leadership & Strategic Planning:
CDR Jerry Zee

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APAOC Chair's Corner

Dear APAOC members,

One of the goals and visions I set for 2019 as APOAC Chair is to expand Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) and increase partnership with other communities, PHS workgroups, including Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) and other PACs. To date, we are at our 19th HMI community outreach events. APAOC

continues to meet goals and accomplish its mission through everyone's hard work, dedication, and most of all is due to our TEAM spirit (**Together Everyone Achieves More**). I am so proud to serve as the leader of the chartered group under the supervision of the Surgeon General (SG).

In 2019, APAOC's HMI continues its effort to raise the importance of mental health in Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities, especially to parents and caregivers regarding adolescent mental health. APAOC's HMI workgroup also provides guidance on how to seek professional support and resources, in addition to promoting this effort to the Commissioned Corps community. This year, APAOC's HMI team gave

(continued on page 2)



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Interested in submitting an article or volunteering?

Please forward your submissions to
CAPT Janice Maniwang, Janice.Maniwang@fda.hhs.gov
CDR Reasol Chino, Reasol.Chino@tchealth.org
or CDR Minglei Cui, Minglei.Cui@fda.hhs.gov



APAOOC Chair's Corner

Continued

presentations both in our community and to our Commissioned Corps colleagues. Within our community, the APAOC HMI team in the National Capital Region presented at a Sri Lankan community center, at a Chinese community center, and at a county level health fair. We also presented the structure of HMI at the Commissioned Officer Foundation Symposium during the Category day to the PharmPAC and HSO, in addition to a booth at the exhibit hall. We continue to collaborate with Montgomery County in Maryland to have our officers trained in Mental Health First Aid to prepare our non-mental health professionals for this initiative.

During the Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) Heritage Month, I was honored to be one of the panelists for the FDA AAPI Heritage Observance event with the theme as "Unite Our Mission by Engaging Each Other", proudly presenting APAOC amongst high-profile civilians. It was wonderful to see high numbers of APAOC officers involved in promoting and supporting our own AAPI communities.

To support the SG's top priorities including the opioids and addiction, APAOC continues to increase partnership

with other communities, PHS workgroups, including Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) and other PACs. This year, APAOC assisted the PACE opioid awareness team with the translation of the pre- and post-evaluation survey into Chinese so that the PACE team can expand their target audience and still able to obtain the participants' feedback. A group of APAOC officers in Chinese descent were able to get this complete within a week! Big kudos to **CDRs Kun Shen, Sulin Sun, Jerry Zee, and LCDRs Kelly Leong, Oliver Ou** for their professionalism and language expertise to get the material translated.

In addition to having the Montgomery County staff providing naloxone training at our 3rd annual summit, APAOC is also planning a "train-the-trainer" naloxone training session by mid-December 2019 to expand the number of officers who can provide naloxone training to our communities.

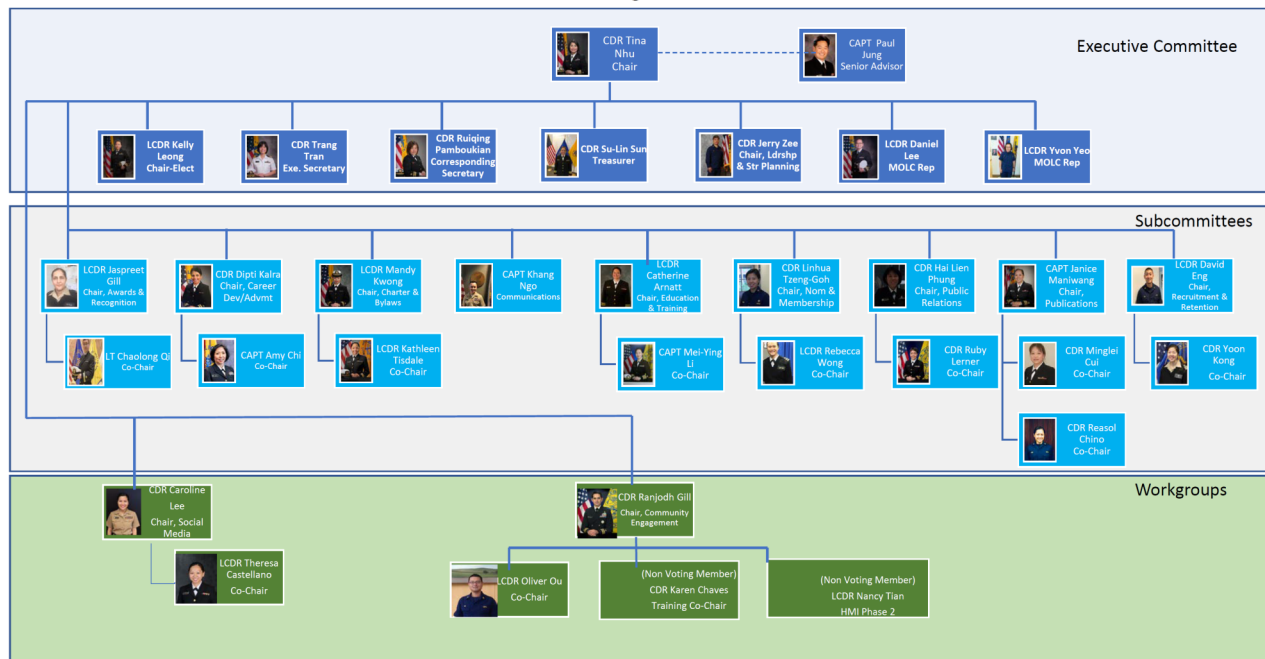
Aside from community engagements, APAOC also had quite some events in the last few months to support APAOC as a group. We definitely cannot build up our team without the support of our officers. For example, the Charter and By Laws Subcommittee Chair LCDR Mandy Kwong

took on the challenge and successfully developed an accurate APOAC organizational chart in addition to working on revising the SOP for the APAOC's Senior Advisor. While we work hard, we did not neglect to have fun and celebrating the success. APAOC's Recruitment and Retention (R&R) subcommittee hosted an outing event to hike to the Sugar Loaf Mountain in early June, and it was another great turn out, filled with TEAM spirit and PHS comrades. The R&R subcommittee planned a summer picnic and invited other MOLC groups to participate.

I am grateful and proud of the accomplishments and the work that set forth by APAOC officers. I am especially proud of the 30 voting members and their alternates who diligently support our 2019 operations. "It takes the village to raise a child", and I'm glad to have my **T.E.A.M.** with me to make everything possible.

Yours in Service,
CDR Tina Nhu

APAOOC 2019 Organizational Chart



Click to view full image



Onward and Upward!

To Captain (O-6)

Medical

Curi Kim
Neil Gupta
Jimee Hwang
Harry Seung-Shik Ko
John Renn Su

Dental

Jonathan Yang Chiang
Joseph Samuel Park

Nurse

Ruby Lerner
Isatu Negeh Bah
Tzu-Ching Liu

Scientist

Sukhminder Kaur Sandhu
Andrea J. Sharma

Pharmacist

Janice Lee Maniwang
Khang Duy Ngo
Jade Ariel Pham
Tina Rajendrakumar Bhavsar
Irene Zuhue Chan
Peter Chen
Mark Mitsuo Iseri
Lisa H. Kwok
Thang Xuan La
Paras Mahendra Patel

Health Services Officer

Douangchit Mounghane Kirivong
Mylene I. Santulan
Van Tran

APAOC congratulates the following officers on their recent promotion! Their successful promotion exemplifies their professional achievements, readiness and deployment skills and the embodiment of the Commissioned Corps' core values of leadership, service, integrity, and excellence. Bravo Zulu!

To Commander (O-5)

Medical Officer

Jolene Hiromi Nakao
Lei Xu

Dental Officer

Antonio Sashi Parameswaran

Scientist

Jean Yeh Ko
Terrence Quock-Kit Lo

Pharmacist

Andrew Kim
Rebecca Nahleen Lopez
Chitra Mahadevan

Dietician

Ellen Thanh Lan Thi Yip

Health Services Officer

Neil Anthony Mafnas

To Lieutenant Commander (O-4)

Nurse

Melanie Ann Gumapas Webb

Engineer

Garrett Gin Ping Chun

Scientist

Debra Chen
Sharoda Dasgupta
Teresa Wei Wang

Pharmacist

Roseline N. Boateng
Kinbo James Lee
Jonathan Art Lee
Stephanie C. Lim
Brian Joseph Ong
Charles Chihun Park
Pritesh Hitendra Patel
Khanh Hung Vu
Jim Xu Wei
Peng Zhou

Health Services Officer

Tuan Anh Nguyen



APAOC Awards

Congratulations to the 2019 award recipients!

The APAOC awards were developed to promote future leadership of Asian Pacific Americans in Public Health Service by honoring members of the Commissioned Corps or equivalent Civil Service professionals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of the Nation's Health.

CDR Karen Ho Chavez

RADM Samuel Lin Senior Officer Award

LCDR Xingzhi Zhang

RADM Kenneth Moritsugu Junior Officer Award

LCDR Oliver Ou

CAPT Allen Lock Service Award

APAOC Lunch Social

By LT Stephanie Chiang

More than 20 APAOC officers gathered at the Ping's Szechuan Bar & Grill to enjoy lunch buffet on Monday, May 6, 2019 (first day of the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium) in Minneapolis, MN. Officers were not only delighted to have a break from the training symposium but also cherished the opportunities getting to know each other better. Many thanks to CAPT Ruby Lerner and LT Stephanie Chiang for coordinating a successful luncheon.



(L-R): LCDR Hanah Pham, LT Tramara Dam, CAPT Mimi Phan, CDR Tina Nhu, LCDR Trami Nguyen, CDR Nguyet Ton, CDR Trang Tran



1st Row (L-R): CAPT Ruby Lerner, CAPT Mei Ying Li, CAPT David Lau, CDR Nguyet Ton and LCDR Trami Nguyen
2nd Row (L-R): LCDR Kelly Leong, LCDR Dien Nguyen, LCDR Christine Williams, CDR Minglei Cui, and CAPT Mimi Phan
3rd Row (L-R): CDR Tina Nhu, CDR Michelle Tsai, LT Stephanie Chiang, CDR Su-Lin Sun, CDR Diane Nhu, LT Renee Zellner, LT Melanie Webb, LT Keyonica Lassiter, CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Stephanie Lim, LT Tramara Dam, and LCDR Hanah Pham
4th Row (L-R): LCDR Daniel Lee, LCDR Rebecca Wong, Mike Lee, and LCDR David Shih



APAOC Officers Engaging with the Sri Lankan Community in DC Metro Area By LT Suresh Jayasekara



(L-R): CDR Ranjodh Gill, LT Tiffany Pham, LT Vicky Hsu, LT Suresh Jayasekara, CDR Prabath Malluwa-Wadu, CDR Tina Nhu, LCDR Kelly Leong, LCDR Melissa Reyes

The Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) Sri Lankan team organized a presentation at the Sri Lankan temple, Washington Buddhist Vihara, in Washington DC to their community of about 60 parents and 80 children. The training provided an interactive presentation and discussion on adolescent mental health, along with information and local mental health resources including hotlines and referral services. This is part of the effort to support APAOC's goal to enhance value to the Asian community.

At the end of the presentation, parents learned about the factors that are associated with mental health issues and how each of these factors may be risk factors for or protective factors against mental health

problems. The parents asked many questions regarding their child's behaviors. After the presentation, parents stated that they will pay more attention to their child's behavior. Some parents asked advice from the clinical officers.

This particular Sri Lankan temple have service every other Sunday for the community to learn about religion and the language. The children range from ages 6 to 17 years old. Most parents are first generation US citizens and new to US culture and education system. The presentation was very helpful for the parents to learn the factors that can be associated with their child's mental health.

The presentation can be accessed through <https://youtu.be/YxrJA51fr0c>

Proclamation Presented to US Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps Officers and Key Partner Organizations, in Recognition of the Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) By LCDR Rebecca Wong, LCDR Oliver Ou, and LCDR Nancy Tian

On May 14, 2019, the Maryland Montgomery County Councilman Gabe Alborno presented the Healthy Mind Initiative with their official proclamation in recognizing the importance of promoting mental health awareness in Montgomery County's Asian-Pacific community and the collaborative efforts of three partner organizations, Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) in breaking down key barriers, coordinating trainings, and hosting community engagement events. APAOC is represented by five of our active participants including our Community Engagement Co-chair LCDR Oliver Ou.

We appreciate the councilman for recognizing our effort. To date, Montgomery County's Asian American Health Initiative has provided multiple mental health first aid training to our officers, and also provided their multi-language mental health promotion materials.



Pictured Above (L-R): CDR Karen Chavez, LCDR Nancy Tian, LCDR Daniel Lee, LCDR Shercoda Smaw, LCDR Oliver Ou, and LCDR Rebecca Wong

Sri Lankan Community Blood Drive Event By LT Suresh Jayasekara

Under the theme of "Save a Life, Donate Blood," organizers invited the Sri Lankan community and other communities to participate in a blood drive on the 22nd of June from 10:00 am - 2:30 pm at the Lion of Wisdom Medication Center in Gaithersburg, MD. This was our first APAOC supported community engagement event. Approximately 65 people attended this event, including 45 adults who participated in the blood donation program. Lunch and snacks were provided by the Sri Lankan community for all the attendees.

Three USPHS officers (Pictured L to R: LT Vicky Hsu, LT Suresh Jayasekara and LT Candice Karber) participated in the event from 10:00 am - 2:30 pm, and also helped set up before the event and clean up the premises after the event.

Organizers found that all the people who came to the event were very excited about this event and they were very happy to donate blood. Several high school students joined us as volunteers. Organizers were able to educate the attendees about USPHS and our mission in public health.



High School Essay Contest “Speaking Up About Mental Health”

By LT Heather Light, LCDR Rebecca Wong, LCDR Nancy Tian, LCDR Oliver Ou, LCDR Daniel Lee

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youths aged 15 to 24, yet only about half of young adults with a mental disorder receive treatment. To address the disparity and inspire conversations about mental health among high school students, a few core PHS officers formed the planning committee in September 2018, and in conjunction with the NIMH’s 70th Celebration, launched the National Essay Contest “Speaking Up About Mental Health” in collaboration with federal, county, and community partners including the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), and the Calvin J. Li Memorial Foundation. High school students ages 16-18 across the United States were invited to participate in this unique essay contest. It provided an opportunity for youth, from a variety of cultural backgrounds, to explore ways to improve mental health by sharing innovative solutions that tackle stigma and social barriers that adolescents commonly face when seeking mental health treatment. Essay winners would receive cash and non-cash prizes.

On September 30, 2019, a press release from National Institutes of Health highlighted the purpose of the essay contest and announced the results. More than 235 essay submissions from 38 states and Puerto Rico were received. Additionally, over 128 PHS officers were recruited for the essay pre-screening and evaluation period using validated criteria and scoring before submission to the official judging panel. Subsequently essay judges, from NIMH and NIMHD, in close collaboration with the Calvin J. Li Memorial Foundation, selected winning essays based on understanding of the topic, innovative solutions and overall writing qualities. In total, there were ten cash prize winners and two honorable mentions receiving non-cash prizes. The winners were from various parts of the country, including California, Colorado, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia. The selected essays are available at <https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/programs/edu-training/hmi/winners.html>.



This crucial project would not have been possible without the contributions and tireless dedication of PHS officers. Approximately 150 officers volunteered their time and expertise. They helped with a wide range of efforts including: assisting with contest development, providing subject matter expertise, promoting the essay contest through community outreach events, providing leadership guidance from professional advisory groups, communicating through social media channels, and serving as essay contest evaluators during pre-screening and evaluation stages. Finally, our volunteer officers spanned a total of nine out of eleven officer categories. Additionally, volunteers were represented across an impressive 14 agencies: Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Center of Disease Control, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Occupational Health, Food and Drug Administration, Health Resources & Services Administration, Indian Health Service, National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Headquarters, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Veteran Affairs.



HHS Celebrates Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI)

By CAPT Joy Lee

May is the month for celebrating AAPI Heritage. It celebrates the culture, traditions, and history of AAPIs. To help celebrate, APAOC members, Commissioned Corps officers, and civil service employees across the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) organized an observance at Twinbrook Building in Rockville, MD on May 14, 2019.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Howard Koh, former Assistant Secretary for Health, Dr. Michael Lu, former Administrator of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and Ms. Holly Ham, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on AAPI. The event included the Presentation of Colors by the U.S. Surgeon General's Honor Guard.

The theme of the event was "Unite Our Mission by Engaging Each Other." The event promoted workforce diversity and inclusion, raised the visibility of the contributions made by AAPI individuals, and highlighted the dedication, advancement, and contributions of the AAPI workforce in HHS.

The Planning Committee collaborated with more than 15 organizations across the HHS Operating Divisions and Staff Divisions including: Assistant Secretary for

Administration Office of Human Resources (ASA/OHR), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Indian Health Service (IHS), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). The Planning Committee collaborated with the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), the Asian American Network and Blacks in Government.

More than 200 HHS employees attended this event in person or online, celebrating diversity and inclusion in the HHS workforce, and sharing their vision for the role of AAPI in science and public service. This event also provided an opportunity for attendees to learn about the many contributions made by AAPI employees at HHS in medicine, public health, and social services and to celebrate the rich heritage of AAPIs. The event inspired both organizers and participants to consider how AAPIs could further contribute to HHS.

To learn more about AAPI Heritage Month, please visit <https://asianpacificheritage.gov>.



Diana Espinosa, Deputy HRSA Administrator & HRSA AAPI ERG Executive Sponsor and the event moderator CAPT Joy Lee at the AAPI Heritage Month event at the Parklawn Building in Rockville, MD.



Former HHS Assistant Secretary Dr. Howard Koh provided the keynote speech



A panel discussion on AAPI roles and contributions in public service (L to R): CAPT Samuel Wu, Mr. Bertrand Tzeng, CAPT Paul Jung, and Ms. Ting Chau

Distinguished guests, speakers, and participants from the HHS AAPI Heritage Month Celebration



Honoring CAPT Jason Woo's 31 Years of USPHS Career

By CDR Trang Tran

On July 26, 2019, CAPT Jason Woo was joined by his family, friends, and 80 fellow officers in celebrating his retirement after 31 years of service with the USPHS Commissioned Corps. The ceremony was held at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) White Oak Campus in Silver Spring, Maryland, under the leadership of CDR Andrew Fine and the Planning Committee. CAPT Calvin Edwards served as the Master of Ceremony. The USPHS Music Ensemble and the Surgeon General's Honor Guard also participated in the event. There were several distinguished guests in attendance including RADM Rick Childs, RADM David Goldman, RADM Denise Hinton, RADM Brandon Taylor, RADM (Ret.) Marlene Haffner, RADM (Ret.) Sarah Linde, and COL (Ret.) Jim Currie, CAPT (Ret.) William Haffner, RADM (Ret.) Marlene Haffner, RADM (Ret.) Sarah Linde, CAPT Brian Lewis, and ENS Noah Nevo served as the special guest speakers of the event. Together, they shared many emotional and inspiring stories about CAPT Woo that really moved the audience.

CAPT Woo began his career as a medical student at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in 1988. Following graduation and promotion to Lieutenant, CAPT Woo completed his OB/GYN residency at Georgetown University. In 1996 CAPT Woo joined the Indian Health Service in Phoenix where he served for 6 years. In 2002, CAPT Woo joined FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and in 2006 CAPT Woo moved to FDA/ Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER)'s Office of Compliance. From 2010 to 2013, CAPT Woo served at NIH's National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. Then, in 2013 CAPT Woo joined CDER's Office of Generic Drugs where he served in several leadership roles until his retirement, including the most recent role as the Assistant Director of Clinical Affairs.

To complement his work, CAPT Woo has served on several deployments, including

part of the original RDF-1 team. Notably, he deployed in response to Hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Ike (2008) and Operation Lonestar. Throughout his career, CAPT Woo has consistently served in a variety of leadership roles and mentored his fellow officers while serving the American public.

During this ceremony, CAPT Woo's illustrious USPHS career was recognized by the Physician Professional Advisory Committee CPO, CAPT Brian Lewis, and APAOC Chair, CDR Tina Nhu, who had the honor to present the plaques to

CAPT Woo in appreciation of his 31 years of untiring public health service. CAPT Sarah Arnold and CDR Sandra Magera also presented a special citation and a shadow box to CAPT Woo at the ceremony. The Old Glory was presented by CDR Nikhil Thakur which was followed by RADM Denise Hinton's reading of the official retirement orders. Finally, CDR Andrew Fine recited "The Watch" to honor CAPT Woo as he goes ashore.

APAOC wishes CAPT Woo all the best in his retirement.



PHS Officers Addressing the Unmet Needs of the Community

By LCDRs Yvon Yeo, Oliver Ou, and Nancy Tian and LT Jen Eng

On Saturday, September 28, 2019, 14 U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) officers from 2 Chartered Minority Advisory Groups (CMAGs) volunteered for the Pan Asian Volunteer Health Clinic (PAVHC) Fall Health Fair held at the Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC) Headquarters in Gaithersburg, Maryland (MD). This was the first time the CMAGs had collaborated to serve at a community outreach event.

PAVHC is one of a few safety net clinics funded by Montgomery County in MD. The clinic provides basic health care and related services to uninsured low-income patients living in Montgomery County. Over 150,000 Asian Americans reside in Montgomery County, accounting for approximately 16% of the county's population. Unfortunately, many of these residents have limited access to health care services due to lack of insurance, language barriers, and cultural differences.

It was a busy afternoon for PHS officers from the Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC) and Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG) as they actively engaged with health fair participants to provide hands-on naloxone administration training and smoking cessation counseling, and disseminate Healthy Mind Initiative resources. Two PHS pharmacists volunteered at the vaccine clinic and administered Hepatitis B and influenza vaccines to walk-in patients.

The health fair event gave PHS officers an opportunity to promote and support the Surgeon General's motto: "Better health through better partnerships." Health and wellness are not obtained solely by an individual's efforts; rather, they are achieved in partnership with one's family, health care providers, and community, among others. The officers helped raise awareness within the community and ensured the underserved and uninsured patients had access to the health care services that were much needed.

We look forward to participating in the next annual health fair at CCACC and serving those in and around our community, striving to improve the health of the community around us.



(L-R): LCDR Nancy Tian, LCDR Chaltu Wakijra, CAPT Barbara Fuller, LT Jen Eng, CDR Maria Agresta Workman, LCDR Oliver Ou, Brendan Nguyen (CDR Nguyen's son), LCDR Yvon Yeo, CDR Maria Nguyen



(L-R): LT Jen Eng, CAPT Barbara Fuller, Brendan Nguyen, and CDR Maria Nguyen



CDR Kun Shen (L) and CDR Trang Tran administered vaccines to patients at the Health Fair.



(L-R): LCDR Alexander Amankwah, CDR Trang Tran, LT Charissa Cooper, CDR Kun Shen, CDR Tina Nhu, LCDR Yvon Yeo, CDR Deloris Caldwell, LCDR Oliver Ou



Elations from a First USPHS Deployment

By LT Jen Eng

I want to share the story of my first ever deployment as an USPHS officer! It all started with an email from the Remote Area Medical (RAM) team requesting for dental hygienist volunteers, I knew I have to respond. I was excited about this tremendous opportunity, and hoped that I could be a part of the meaningful deployment mission with RAM.

A week later, I received a confirmation email stating that I was selected to serve and I was ecstatic. I thought for sure I must have been selected because I am a BLS instructor, or perhaps my fluency in another language, that supported my selection. During the course of waiting, from the initial email I received in March to the deployment month of July, I would get occasional emails from RAM keeping me in the loop, during this waiting period-the Commissioned Corps became supportive of this event. This reinforced that I was going to be a part of a humanitarian project and felt like bread crumbs on a trail. When I flipped the calendar over to the deployment month, all I could think

about was making sure my uniform components were intact and that I had everything covered even down to the uniform socks.

The deployment day came before I knew it. I was ready to go with proper instructions from the RDF-4 deployment team. I knew what I needed to do, where I needed to be, and who I needed to see. The logistics could not have been orchestrated any better!

My deployment journey began with an Uber ride early in the morning to the airport, before the birds were even thinking about chirping. The Uber driver was the most talkative of any of my past drivers. Later, I thanked him, in my mind, for contributing to the first day of a wonderful adventure. I met up with one of the RDF-4 team member at the airport as the rest of the officers gathered together. Questions were flying left and right as we tried to get to know one another. We were a diverse group of officers from multiple health disciplines and categories. We rode a shuttle driven by volunteers from a local church to

the RAM location. Upon arrival..., I settled into my new home for the next few nights, and met my Battle Buddy, who I found to have many commonalties with. We made it to the first muster after a crash course on blood borne pathogens. We then divided up, met our team lead, and discussed the plans for the next few days of the deployment. Never had I met so many PHS Dental Hygienists all at one time! I recognized officers' names during our PAC meetings, but putting faces to the names helped us personally connect as officers on the same mission. The next morning, we were up at the crack of dawn for another muster, breakfast, and a day filled with providing care for patients that started from 0600 and ended at 1800.

I felt a great sense of joy and accomplishment after the first day ended! The smiles that radiated on the patients' faces in this community were priceless. They were so grateful and appreciative of our care and assistance.

Prior to this mission, I worked in a remote duty station location and did not get a chance to meet nor see so many PHS officers besides the few at my duty station. Seeing the sea of blue ODUs of my fellow officers was such an incredible sight. We all shared the same mission, and this gave me so much pride to be in uniform. If you have not served in a similar capacity, I highly recommend reaching out to senior officers to seek mentorship and get involved in your PAC. I did not know I had so many PHS brothers and sisters until this RAM experience, and I will cherish this experience for eternity.



(L-R) LT Jen Eng, LCDR Vee Yang, and LT Rachel Forche





Summer TDY at Peach Springs Health Center

By LCDR Kent Bui

After landing at Las Vegas McCarran International Airport, I drove across the scorching Nevada desert (average temperature in the low 100s in September), through the Hoover Dam and the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman bridge to reach Peach Springs, Arizona. I had been assigned on a two-week Temporary Duty (TDY) to assist with the urgent pharmacy staffing needs at the Peach Springs Health Center (PSHC).

PSHC is one of the subsidiaries of the Colorado River Service Unit which consists of the Parker Indian Health Center, a 17-bed hospital serving over 4,000 tribal members, and several federal clinics located in Peach Springs, Chemehuevi, Supai, and the tribally-run Fort Mohave clinic in Nevada. PSHC serves over 3,000 Hualapai tribal members including those who live in nearby towns like Kingman and Seligman. The Peach Springs pharmacy team is comprised of three pharmacists (including one supervisor) and one pharmacy technician. The pharmacy processes approximately 200 prescriptions per day and is open Monday-Friday. In addition to outpatient pharmacy service, PSHC serves as a backup pharmacy for the Veterans Affairs Consolidated Mail Order Pharmacy program. PSHC also provides pharmacy service to Supai, one of the most isolated ambulatory health stations in the United States. The Supai health station is located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon and serves approximately 1,100 Havasupai tribal members. This facility is accessible only by helicopter, mule or on foot. Therefore, prescriptions sent to Supai are transported either by helicopter (refrigerated meds) or mule (normal meds) through the U.S. Postal Service.

My role at PSHC was to augment the pharmacy staff and as an outpatient pharmacist. The essential daily duties included, but were not limited to: screen and verify

prescriptions using ScriptPro 200 Robotic Prescription Dispensing System, counsel patients, consult with physicians, utilize Electronic Health Record and Resource Patient Management System to review medication profile and drug interactions, generate pre-packed medications for Supai health station and other tasks as directed by the pharmacy acting supervisor. I also had an opportunity to deliver medications (via helicopter) and conducted a comprehensive pharmacy inventory audit, including an inspection of expired medications and narcotics, Physician Field Bag, Crash Cart and Rapid Sequence Intubation kit at the Supai health station with two pharmacy students from Parker Indian Health Center.

I am honored to serve and support the pharmacy staff at PSHC to deliver excellent and efficient health care services to the underserved populations at Peach Springs and Supai. I have learned so much from this assignment and look forward to continuing my service and dedication to promote and advance the mission of IHS and PHS.



LCDR Kent Bui operating ScriptPro Sp 200 Robotic Prescription Dispensing System at Peach Springs Health Center, AZ.



Hike and Wine Event at Sugarloaf Mountain

By CDR Teresa Ramson, LCDR David Eng, and CDR Tina Nhu



The Hiking group reached the summit and took a pitstop to enjoy the views of the overlook.

(L-R): CDR Kun Shen and kids; CDR Michelle Tsai and husband; LT Jason Tu and wife; CDR Tina Nhu and kids; LCDR David Eng and family; CDR Lisa Tung and kid; LCDR Kinbo Lee and friends; CAPT Ruby Lerner, CAPT Curi Kim and friend; CDR Teresa Ramson; LCDR Jung Lee.

On a sunny summer day of 1st June 2019, CDR Teresa Ramson and LCDR David Eng of the Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee hosted an outdoor "Hike and Wine" social event. Over thirty officers, civilian colleagues, and family members hiked through the trails of Sugarloaf Mountain, located about 10 miles south of Frederick, Maryland. After the hike, the group rested their feet at the vineyard located at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain.

Around mid-morning, the group gathered at the East View parking lot on an unexpectedly cool and pleasant June day to begin the hike. Unbeknownst to the subcommittee, a group of civilian colleagues from the Food and Drug Administration heard of the event through social media and arrived at the parking lot to join the APAOC officers for the event.

CDR Tina Nhu, APAOC Chair, who is an avid hiker, challenged the group with her cheerful and positive attitude to hike the most difficult trail with the rockiest terrain on the mountain, the Red trail (Monadnock Trail). It is a short but challenging climb that offers spectacular views at the top. The group accepted the challenge and followed each other's foot-steps. It took about an hour to

climb up the difficult trail with frequent breaks for water and rest as there were small children, infants, and dogs with the trekkers. The group successfully made it to the top of the mountain. Despite climbing the difficult trail, the group felt rewarded with the magnificent and astonishing view, overlooking the Potomac River but the exploring did not stop here. By the end of the day, the 30+ person group explored the Orange, Green, and Blue Trails, giving the hikers a perfect opportunity to network and build camaraderie. Throughout our 1.5 hour hike, there were babbling from babies as young as 8 months old, laughter from children, and chitter-chatter from everyone talking and checking in on one another.

The event was well received by the group with perfect hiking weather and a great turn out. The event increased PHS awareness and promoted APAOC's visibility, while getting our daily steps and maintaining our physically active lifestyle. The hikers were rewarded with panoramic views of the mountains surrounding the summit. Afterwards, a few officers spent the rest of the day at the winery located at the base of the mountain for a picnic and enjoyed local Maryland wine. If you haven't come to visit the Sugarloaf Mountain, what are you waiting for?



New Officer Spotlights

LT Amy Nham

1. Please tell us about your background.

I was born in Vietnam and immigrated to the US when I was 6. I first lived in Wisconsin but later moved to sunny Los Angeles, California. I stayed in Los Angeles for college where I graduated as a first-generation college student from University of Southern California (USC) in 3 years with a Biological Sciences degree. After undergrad, I obtained a PharmD as well as a Master's in Public Health with an emphasis in Biostatistics & Epidemiology from USC Pharmacy School/Keck School of Medicine. I am currently doing a pharmacy residency at the Indian Health Service in Whiteriver, AZ. I am interested in ambulatory care pharmacy, community outreach, and population health.

2. Tell us something interesting about yourself?

I have traveled to 20 countries so far! Almost every time I have an opportunity to travel, I will take advantage of it. Some of my most memorable trips were when I drove around the entire perimeter of Iceland in 3 days, did a weeklong surf camp in Nicaragua, and traveled by myself for a week in Europe. I also studied abroad in both London and Shanghai. The next countries on my to-go list are Peru, Japan, and New Zealand.

3. What are your hobbies?

I love to stay active and take care of my health, from taking workout classes (spin, boxing, HIIT, yoga, etc.) to going on hikes. I could easily spend all day at the beach. One of my favorite ways to spend an afternoon is to go to the park, play with my dog (he's a poodle mix), and read. I also love music and art, so on the weekends I enjoy going to concerts and checking out cool museums. When I lived in DC for my FDA rotation, I devoted each weekend day to a different museum, and now I've been to almost all the museums there!

4. Why did you join USPHS?

I want to utilize both my PharmD and MPH degrees to their fullest potential and be a leader in the pharmacy and public health fields. First, I want to focus on gaining more clinical experience so that I can be the most competent and knowledgeable pharmacist that I can be. However, my long-term aspiration is to use my expertise to improve health outcomes for large populations. The mission of the Commissioned Corps aligns



with my personal career values to help protect, promote, and advance the health of my community. Through my service and commitment to public health, I hope to inspire others around me to also serve in their local communities and maintain a high level of integrity while doing so.

5. How do you see yourself participating in APAOC?

Since I just joined APAOC not long ago, I am still familiarizing myself with how I can contribute as a member. As a brand new officer, I definitely want to become involved so I can network with and learn from other Commissioned Corps officers who may share similar backgrounds as me. The Healthy Mind Initiative really resonates with me, as I strongly believe in fostering mental and emotional health, as well as physical health, and it is great that APAOC created an initiative that helps to facilitate more discussion about mental health in the Asian community.

6. What would you do if you won the lottery?

If I won the lottery, I would first pay off my student loans, help my parents pay for their house, and have them retire early and comfortably. I would also pay both of my younger sisters' college education so they can pursue their dreams without having to worry about tuition costs. Then I would travel the world for a year (or longer), buy a house for myself, and with the rest of the money, I would probably start a social entrepreneurship endeavor, so I can make a difference in the world.

LT Xia Michelle Lin



A warm welcome to newly commissioned officer LT Xia Michelle Lin is in order. LT Lin was commissioned in June of this year and is currently stationed in Atlanta, GA with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the Immunization Information Systems Support Branch. She is in the Scientist category and holds the position of an Epidemiologist within her branch. Some of her hobbies include traveling and tennis. LT Lin is excited in being involved and contributing in any way to APAOC.

Spring Newsletter Correction

In the Spring Newsletter, LCDR Jaspreet Gill and LT Chaolong Qi were incorrectly listed as Co-Chairs of the Recruitment & Retention Subcommittee. Please note that their correct APAOC Voting Member role is Co-Chairs of the Awards & Recognition Subcommittee.



Support your APAOC!

Donations

Make a tax-deductible donation to the Commissioned Officers Foundation (memo: APAOC), and keep a copy of your donation check and notify CDR Su-Lin Sun (Su-Lin.Sun@fda.hhs.gov).

Please send your check to:

Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF)

Attn: Erica Robinson

8201 Corporate Drive, Suite 1170

Landover, MD 20785

Merchandise

To purchase APAOC Merchandise, please contact
CDR Hai Lien Phung (vvt3@cdc.gov),
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