

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN OFFICERS COMMITTEE

of the

United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2018

Executive Committee Members

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Chair-Elect: CDR Tina Nhu
Executive Secretary: CDR Ruby Lerner
Corresponding Secretary: CDR Yoon Kong
Treasurer: CDR Khang Ngo
MOLC Representatives:
 LCDR Oliver Ou & LCDR Nancy Tian
Leadership & Strategic Planning:
 CDR Jerry Zee

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APAOC Chair's Corner

Dear APAOC Members,

At the beginning of 2018, I set my goal to drastically improve APAOC's value, visibility, and service to its members, communities, and the Commissioned Corps. Through your extraordinary leadership, dedication, and contributions, I can proudly say that you exceeded my expectations. The following are some of the highlights from 2018:

ADM Brett P. Giroir, the Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH), envisions a modernized Commissioned Corps to implement his priorities of transforming the current "sick care system" into a "health promoting system" and addressing "behavioral health epidemics" through the Community Health and Services Missions (CHASM) program. In alignment with ADM Giroir's vision, APAOC launched the Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) which leverages APAOC's capabilities to reach its members' ethnic communities, establishing a novel and effective partnership model to promote mental health with a measurable outcome. As requested by ADM Giroir in June 2018, APAOC submitted a briefing document on the mission and goals of HMI (**Appendix 1 - Page 24**). APAOC also briefed RADM Trent-Adams, the Deputy Principal Assistant Secretary for Health,



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Interested in submitting an article or volunteering?

Please forward your submissions to LCDR Eric Wong Eric.Wong@ice.dhs.gov or CDR Su-Lin Sun, Su-Lin.Sun@fda.hhs.gov



APAOC Chair's Corner

Continued

and CAPT Joel Dulaigh, Chief of Staff, Office of Surgeon General, on the achievements of HMI and proposed the expansion of HMI across the country (**Appendix 2 - Page 26**). With support from the Office of the ASH and Office of the Surgeon General, it is my hope that the whole PHS can be mobilized to address mental health, which is one of the top HHS priorities. It is the first time in APAOC's 28-year history that an APAOC-initiated program has garnered such strong support from senior HHS and PHS leadership, PHS officers, our partners and collaborators, and, most importantly, our communities.

APAOC initiated and completed the first Demographics Report of its 538 members. The report included the language capacity, ethnic composition, rank, deployment experience, and geographic distribution of APAOC officers. These valuable data can assist APAOC and PHS leadership to identify APAOC's resources and human capital that can be drawn on for public health responses across the nation. Special thanks to LCDR Daniel Lee and CDR

Dipti Kalra, Chair and Co-Chair of the Career Development and Advancement Subcommittee, for their extraordinary leadership and dedication.

APAOC successfully revamped its newsletter, significantly increasing its quality and value, as well as raising the visibility of APAOC. CDR Su-Lin Sun and LCDR Eric Wong, Chair and Co-Chair of the Newsletter Subcommittee, and their alternates, CDR Quynh-Van Tran and LT Kinbo Lee, did a fabulous job implementing the changes. Special thanks also to LCDR Kelly Leong, Chief Information Officer of HMI. She volunteered to be the Editor-in-Chief for APAOC's Special Edition Newsletter on HMI which provided comprehensive information about the initiative to our stakeholders.

The second APAOC Leadership Summit was a great success, especially with the support and guidance of Dr. Matthew Lin, former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health, and Mr. Arne Owens, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health

and Substance Use. CAPT Paul Jung, APAOC's Senior Advisor, CDR Simleen Kaur and LCDR Catherine Arnatt, Chair and Co-Chair of the Education and Training Subcommittee, and the APAOC Executive Committee are credited for their extraordinary leadership skills and dedication.

Under the leadership of CDR Yeo Yvon and LCDR Mandy Kwong, Chair and Co-Chair of the Charter and Bylaws Subcommittee, APAOC revised its bylaws by officially defining the mission and leadership structure of the Community Engagement Workgroup to ensure the sustainability of HMI. The bylaws also stipulated the selection process of the APAOC Executive Committee to ensure transparency and fairness.

With the end of the 2018 operational year, I concluded my full six-year term as an APAOC Voting Member. I cannot thank you enough for the opportunity for me to learn from, to serve, and to grow with each of you. I also want to thank our senior HHS and PHS leadership, partners and collaborators, and community leaders for their guidance, strong support, and dedication. Together, we can make APAOC, the Commissioned Corps, and our communities even stronger!



RADM Trent-Adams, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health and former Deputy Surgeon General, was briefed twice on APAOC's HMI by CAPT Josef Rivero (Senior Advisor of HMI), CDR Eric Zhou (APAOC Chair), and LCDR Xinzhi Zhang (Chair, Community Engagement Workgroup, APAOC) on November 29 and December 19, 2018.



Remarks from RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health



**RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams,
Principal Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Health**

Mental health awareness and promotion is a top priority for the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, the Office of the Surgeon General and the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service. In 2018, the Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) launched a new initiative titled the Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI). The goal of HMI was to address the stigma of mental health amongst the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

In 2016, suicide was the leading cause of death among AAPI youth between the ages of twelve (12) and nineteen (19). Disparities exist in mental healthcare utilization amongst the community due to stigma and other factors. APOAC's HMI provides culturally sensitive education to the community while raising awareness of

this issue. APAOC is comprised of 535 officers – who represent fourteen (14) Asian-related and three (3) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander ethnicities, speaking thirty (30) languages, and serving in sixteen (16) federal agencies across the U.S. and the District of Columbia (2). Together these officers are tackling language barriers and providing culturally sensitive education to achieve a collective mission creating a prime example of leveraging the Commissioned Corps' unique resources and capacities to address an urgent public health need.

APAOC partnered with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) – led by Dr. Elinore F. McCance-Katz, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use and the Asian American Health Initiative of the Department of Human Health and Service of Montgomery County, Maryland. Everyone played a critical role in developing the culturally-tailored mental health awareness training materials for the communities in addition to providing Train-the-Trainer sessions to thirty-six (36) PHS Commissioned Corps Officers and the Mental Health First Aid training to fifty-six (56) Commissioned Corps officers, I commend APAOC; CAPT Jeanean Willis Marsh, Chief Health Services Officer; RADM Susan Orsega, Chair of the Chief Professional Officer Board and Chief Nurse Officer; CAPT Brian Lewis, Chief Medical Officer; and CAPT John Eckert, Chief Scientist Officer, for providing strong support to HMI over the past

year. I also commend the Commissioned Corps' professional mental health teams including the Psychologist Professional Advisory Group (PAG), the Social Work PAG, and the Psychiatrist PAG for lending strong technical support to HMI. The dedication of the HMI's 102 officers has been essential for the program's success.

HMI has proven a successful model in community engagement, forging fruitful partnerships among federal and local government, local communities, and the Commissioned Corps. As HMI moves into its next phase [Phase 1B and Phase 2] and expands its outreach to the general public, we will continue to mobilize Commissioned Corps resources to promote the mental health of the Nation. After attending 2 HMI briefings with the 2018 APAOC leadership, I would like our senior PHS leadership to discuss the potential of applying the HMI model in PHS' community engagement programs across the country, and to form strategy and implementation plans. While HMI has gained remarkable progress within one year, there is more work to be done. Our dedicated officers are well positioned to address the mental health challenges and needs of our Nation. I thank you in advance for your continued leadership, dedication, and support.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Reports, 1981-2016. Retrieved from <https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcause.html>

2018 APAOC Demographics Report by CDR Dipti Kalra, CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR Daniel Lee, LCDR Nancy Tian, and LT George Yeh. Winter Issue of the APAOC Newsletter. 2018

Chair's Corner by CDR Eric Zhou, 2018 APAOC Chair. APAOC Newsletter, Special Edition on the Healthy Mind Initiative. 2018.

Phase	Target Audience	Communities	Location
1A	Parents	AAPI	Nationwide
1B	Parents	General Public	
2	15-18 year old	General Public	



Chief Scientist Officer, CAPT John Eckert's Remarks to APAOC



CAPT John Eckert, Chief Scientist Officer

It was a sincere pleasure and honor to address the Asian Pacific American Officer Committee during your recent meeting. I am excited about the advocacy and outreach work in which your Committee's members are engaged. In fact, you are not only engaged, you are leading these efforts in many cases. Preeminent among your programs is the Healthy Mind Initiative. Your efforts, prompted by the alarming statistics related to suicides in youth, will save lives. You should be very proud of this program, and I assure you that the Corps' leadership is. There are many public health conditions that disproportionately affect Asian Pacific Americans. You are helping to not only shed light on those disparities, but implement programs to address them as well. That is the truest sign of leadership.

Yours is a particularly important group to me for a number of reasons. As I mentioned, my mother-in-law was

from Thailand, and she was one of those who died from a condition that disproportionately affects Asian populations. The suffering she endured, and the pain that struggle caused the members of my family, helps fuel my passion to confront health disparities head-on. Second, I have dedicated my life to combatting needless deaths caused by a lack of organ and tissue donation. While my focus has been on raising awareness about the urgent need to increase the availability of bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cells in the African-American community, it has not escaped my attention that the Asian Pacific American communities are losing thousands of their members annually due to the lack of donated organs and tissues.

The latest data available show that transplanted organs among Asian Americans was less than 20% of the number of Asian Americans awaiting transplants. In contrast, the rate for Caucasian Americans exceeded 30%. Additionally, "[w]hile 7.5% of the total candidates currently waiting for transplants are Asian American, they comprised 3.4% of organ donors in 2015" (HHS/OS/OASH/Office of Minority Health). The numbers for Pacific Islander Americans are not much better. In 2015, about 20% of Pacific Islander Americans awaiting an organ transplant received one. Only 0.2% of all of the transplants performed in 2015 went to Pacific Islander Americans, while Pacific Islander Americans awaiting transplants accounted for 0.5% of the total. These numbers may seem small; however, the morbidity and mortality associated with the failure to receive a transplanted organ directly impacts

tens of thousands of lives annually, and far more are indirectly impacted.

There are many factors that contribute to the shortage of organs and tissues available for donation, but the top four are cultural, religious, lack of trust among minority populations, and a lack of awareness about the problem. The first three factors are more difficult to overcome; doing so requires reconciling traditional beliefs with the innate desire to help others. Working to overcome the fourth barrier, "lack of awareness," frequently offers in-roads to tackling the first three. The education and outreach has to come from trusted and respected members of the community itself. This is not unlike the efforts in which you are engaged to reduce adolescent suicide and other mental health conditions. I have witnessed extraordinary results from these types of community-based efforts in the public health community, so I applaud and support your efforts with the *Healthy Mind Initiative*.





CAPT Marivic Fields, CDR Leo Angelo Gumapas, and LCDR Nicole Pascua posed for a picture with the Deputy Counsel and Ambassador of the Philippines after the HMI event at the Philippine Embassy on December 18, 2018.

Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC) Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) at the Philippine Embassy

By CAPT Marivic Fields, CDR Leo Angelo Gumapas, and LCDR Nicole Pascua

CAPT Marivic Fields, CDR Leo Angelo Gumapas, and LCDR Nicole Pascua conducted a Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) presentation to 43 Philippine Embassy employees at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, DC on December 18, 2018. Philippine Embassy leadership requested an HMI presentation for their employees soon after the National Forum on Filipino Mental Health, which was held on October 20, 2018, in Washington, D.C. The Philippine American Foundation for Charities, Inc. (PAFC) with support from the Philippine Embassy held a one-day forum to discuss ways de-stigmatize mental health and raise awareness on Filipino mental health.

During the HMI presentation, two interactive sessions were incorporated into the agenda. One of the two interactive activities were adapted from the Mental Health First Aid training conducted by the Montgomery County, MD, Department of Health and Human Services Asian

American Health Initiative. The purpose of these activities was to foster participation among the audience, provide experiential learning, and develop empathy for people with mental health disorders.

During the presentation of stress, the audience was divided into four groups and each group were asked to identify how stress affects mental, physical, behavioral, and emotional aspects of an individual.

To illustrate schizophrenia, the audience was divided into 13 groups for a role play:

- Two participants were assigned the role of Dave and Ann having a conversation;
- A third participant was assigned the voice of Jane, that was heard in Ann's head and stated the following two quotes: "I am Batman" and "The Joker is after me;"

- Two groups then summarized the main learning points.

The interactive sessions interjected energy among attendees which increased audience participation. The Schizophrenia exercise was unique because it provided empathy among the audience to fully understand how schizophrenia affects how a person thinks, feels and behaves through the role play exercise. At the end of the exercise, one of the audience members stood up and bravely communicated "he has been hearing voices in his head after he served in a post in Iraq, and that he has been ignoring the voices in his head to cope for decades..."

HMI Resource List Handouts were distributed to all audience members. The hand outs reinforced the knowledge that was presented and provided a list of places where individuals can find mental health assistance and support.



Philippine Embassy

Continued

At the end of the training session, 43 Filipino Embassy staff members learned how to identify the signs and symptoms of stress and common mental health disorders. The audience found the lesson and resources very informative and useful.

As a token of appreciation, the Deputy Counsel and Ambassador of the Philippines to the US presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Healthy Mind Initiative and invited CAPT Fields, CDR Gumapas, and LCDR Pascua to attend their holiday party. The holiday party consisted an array of catered Filipino foods ranging from main dishes such as pancit, lechon, and lumpia to deserts such as ube cupcakes and puto.

The APAOC Healthy Mind Initiative is a collaborative effort among the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), federal, and county government partners, Asian

American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community organizations and leadership. It highlights the importance of mental health literacy by educating about mental illness, substance misuse, and suicide among AAPI youth, with a focus on prevention and early detection. HMI aims to increase awareness of mental health, reduce stigma and encourage AAPI parents and youth to seek help when needed. HMI provides education about AAPI adolescent mental health risks and early warning signs of disorders and ways to seek help; builds a multi-tiered collaboration among federal, county and community entities in which the USPHS officers serve as mental health educators to the local AAPI communities in the DC metro area; and scales this approach nationally with other ethnic groups drawing upon the reach and breadth of the USPHS officers.



LCDR Nicole Pascua and CAPT Marivic Fields are presenting HMI to 43 Filipino Embassy Employees at the Philippine Embassy on December 18, 2018.

Cross-Culture Team of the Healthy Mind Initiative Successfully Holds First Webinar

By CAPT Joy Lee, LT Tiffany Pham, and LT Adi Rosario

On December 6, 2018, CAPT Joy Lee, LT Tiffany Pham, and LT Adi Rosario of HMI's Cross-Culture Team hosted an educational webinar on HMI at the National Institutes of Health to an audience of scientists from the Asian and Pacific Islander American Organization, Federal Asian Pacific American Council, and the United States Public Health Service. The presentation was well received. Audience members engaged via the chat function on the webinar platform. LT Rosario shared a personal account of awareness of changes in mental health in her own child. LCDR Micah Sichel fielded questions from the audience.

Six key messages were conveyed to the audience, using the acronym CHERiSH:

- Mental health is **CRITICAL** to overall physical, social, and emotional well-being
- Mental health problems occur at a **HIGHER RATE** in you than expected
- Know the **EARLY WARNING SIGNS** associated with mental health problems
- Know what could put you at **RISK** for mental health problems or protect them
- Know how to **SUPPORT, ACT, and LINK WITH PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT** when necessary
- Know that youth, with support, can **HEALTH and BOUNCE BACK** from mental health problems

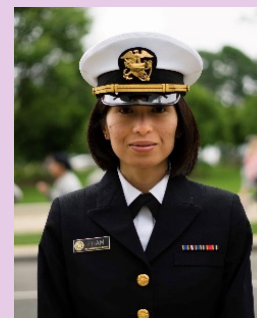
The authors need to end with a closing comment---what is the impact or the "so what" message. This was the HMI's first web-based outreach event and was promoted through all Commissioned Corps categories and many agencies where Corps officers serve.



CAPT Joy Lee



LT Adi Rosario



LT Tiffany Pham



Healthy Mind Outreach From Coast to Coast

Advancing the Healthy Mind Initiative out West

By CDR Khang D. Ngo

As it stands, the APAOC-led Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) has made significant strides in improving mental health literacy and addressing cultural barriers to seek mental health treatment in Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) communities. With as many as 14 (and counting) outreach events in Montgomery County, MD, it is important to carry forth the message to the rest of the country. Not settling on such success, it is also vital to engage other racial and ethnic groups beyond AAPI communities.



Representing the Western Region, I have been asked to direct HMI activities as part of a nationwide effort. The most important first step in this endeavor has been to build capacity. With this focus in mind, I have been fortunate to form a small cadre of PHS officers willing to carry on the torch. This small team of officers has representation as far west as CDR Stella Wisner (dentist, IHS) in Fairbanks, Alaska, and two officers in Arizona, LT Melody Sun and LT Sally Doan (pharmacists, IHS). Here in the Seattle area, along with myself (pharmacist, HRSA), we have CDR Eric Bradford (therapist, HRSA), CDR Jessica Murrer (pharmacist, BOP), LCDR Amos Chen (NP, IHS), LCDR Roger Liu (pharmacist, CMS), LCDR Stephanie Magill (dietitian, CMS), and LCDR Jesus Reyna (nurse, OASH). Several of us have participated in the HMI Train-the-Trainer session, and are now geared to take the Mental Health First Aid training.

We need your help. If you are interested, or if you know of officers in the Western states willing to join our HMI efforts, please reach out to me directly at kngo@hrsa.gov. One step at a time, we can work collectively to increase mental health awareness and promote suicide prevention among American youth.



Healthy Mind Initiative - Northeast Region 2019 1st Quarterly Update

By CDR Jerry Zee

On December 17, 2018, members of the Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC) in the Northeast Region met to discuss the vision and plan for the 2019 Healthy Mind Initiative. It was a pleasure to have CDR Eric Zhou, our APAOC Chair in attendance to share his insight on this initiative. Our members were excited and look forward to getting their training completed in the first quarter of 2019 so that community outreach can begin in the second quarter of the year. If you reside in New York or New Jersey and wish to join the 2019 Healthy Mind Initiative, please contact CDR Jerry Zee at jerry.zee@cms.hhs.gov. We would love to have you as a member and together, we can make an impact on the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community.





Opening Ceremony of the 2nd APAOC Leadership Summit. From Left to Right: CDR Simleen Kaur, Chair of the Education and Training, and the Surgeon General's Honor Guard (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian)

The 2nd APAOC Annual Leadership Summit

By CDR Trang Tran, LCDR Shiny Mathew, and CDR Ranjodh Gill

At the very first and initial APAOC Leadership Summit, which took place in October 2017, CAPT Paul Jung, Senior Advisor to APOAC, challenged us to have an encore performance every year on leadership. The APAOC leadership took on this challenge by hosting the second APAOC Leadership Summit in Rockville, Maryland on October 12, 2018. This event was a great success with attendance of the Key Note Speaker, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Minority Health, Dr. Matthew Lin, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Mr. Arne

Owens, and approximately 50 APAOC officers.

The day's program was opened with the call to order by the Lead Moderator, CDR Simleen Kaur, Chair of the Education and Training Subcommittee. This was followed by the presentation of colors by the U.S. Surgeon General's Honor Guard and the singing of the National Anthem and the PHS March by members of the USPHS Music Ensemble. As the Chair of APAOC, CDR Eric Zhou then welcomed the distinguished guests and all APAOC officers who attended the summit, followed by APAOC Senior Advisor, CAPT Paul Jung's opening remarks. As the Mental

Health

Initiative (HMI) was one of the most recognized APAOC initiatives in 2018, it was a great honor to have Mr. Arne Owens, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, present on the mental health issues in the Asian American and Pacific Island Community, Substance and Mental Health Service Administration's mental health initiatives, and its partnership with APAOC during this event. Mr. Owens commended the APAOC leadership for prioritizing mental health as an urgent issue in the AAPI community.

As the Key Note Speaker of the event, Dr. Matthew Lin presented



APAOC officers in attendance (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian)



Leadership Summit

Continued

stunning statistics on health disparities faced by the minorities in United States among the Asian American population and shared his experiences as an Asian American youth growing up in California. He reminded USPHS officers of their role in addressing such health disparities and commitment to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our Nation. Dr. Lin recommend the HMI model as a novel one in community engagement.

The leadership panel session with the theme of "Overcoming Leadership Challenges for APAOC Officers" participated by CAPT Meena Vythilingam, CAPT Dat Doan, CAPT Paul Jung, CAPT John Hariadi, CAPT Joy Lee, and CAPT Angela Shen (Retired) was very inspiring and interactive. With an intimate environment, each of these senior officers genuinely shared their personal experiences in overcoming leadership challenges and provided sincere advices on how to address racial bias and values of leadership that are curial to the development of every APAOC officer. The session then ended with the Questions and Answers for these senior officers to answer any questions or address any concerns from the audience.

Following the networking lunch, CAPT Paul Jung presented on "Structure of Corps Leadership, Status of APAOC, Corps Leadership Opportunities." He underscored the importance of developing the future APAOC leaders. In order to be great public health leaders, we must break through the cultural and societal barriers that prevent us from delivering the highest level of care to the United States public. We must be visible and take an active role in advancing the UPHS mission during every stage of our officer ship. With this intent, the afternoon breakout session had representatives from Deployment Teams, Professional Advisory Committees, MOLC, COA, USPHS Music Ensemble, Surgeon General's Honor Guard, and Healthy Mind Initiative who presented on their respective fields of expertise.

CAPT Jung provided closing remarks of the day by inspiring us through a second challenge for the APAOC leadership to double the attendance during the 2019 APAOC Annual Leadership Summit. In planning for next year's event, APAOC leadership is looking into broadening the scope of the program to include

technical trainings in addition to the core mission of providing leadership training and developing APAOC officers; providing continuing education credits; and opening up for virtual attendance.



The Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) table during the Round Table Session. Front Row from Left to Right: CDR Janice Maniwang, LCDR Oliver Ou, LCDR Nancy Tian, CDR Su-Lin Sun, LT Ruby Leong, and LT Jason Tu (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian)



HHS leadership with APAOC members. From Left to Right: CDR Eric Zhou, APAOC Chair, Dr. Matthew Lin, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health, Mr. Arne Owens, Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, CDR Michelle Tsai, Team Lead of Clinical Phycologist Professional Group for HMI, LCDR Xinzhi Zhang, Chair of the Community Engagement Workgroup. (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian)





CDR Tina Nhu (2019 APAOC Chair) and CDR Eric Zhou (2018 APAOC Chair) at the Change of Command Ceremony [Photograph provided by CDR Fei Xu]

2019 APAOC Change of Command Ceremony

By LT Stephanie Chiang and CDR Ruby Lerner

The Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) Change of Command Ceremony was successfully held on January 12, 2019 at the USO Warrior and Family Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Approximately 50 APAOC officers and their families attended the ceremony and all-hands meeting with plenty of delicious treats and inspiring speeches. The 2018 APAOC Chair, CDR Eric Zhou, made his opening remarks at the ceremony by highlighting major accomplishments in 2018. CDR Zhou commended his Executive Committee team and Subcommittee Chairs/Co-chairs, and officers for their extraordinary leadership, dedication and contributions to APAOC, the Commissioned Corps, and the Asian American and Pacific Islanders' communities. CDR Zhou pledged all officers to fully support the 2019 APAOC leadership.

The 2019 APAOC Chair, CDR Tina Nhu,

is currently assigned to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as Regulatory Project Manager Team Lead for the Division of Project Management at the Office of Generic Drugs located at the White Oak Campus in Silver Spring, MD. CDR Nhu

has been an active APAOC member since 2009. She served as Chair of the APAOC Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee in 2014, Chair of the APAOC Training and Education Subcommittee from 2015-2016, and



From left to right: LT Stephanie Chiang, CDR Ruby Lerner (Public Relations and Merchandise Subcommittee Co-Chair), CDR Tina Nhu (2019 APAOC Chair), CAPT Mei-Ying Li (Education and Training Subcommittee Co-Chair), CDR Michelle Tsai (2019 APAOC Chair Alternate), and CDR Hawyee Yan (past APAOC Voting Member) [Photograph provided by CDR Fei Xu]



Change of Command

Continued

APAOOC Chair-Elect for the 2018-2019 term. CDR Nhu provided her vision for the 2019 Operational Year and stressed the importance of teamwork. She believes teamwork makes the dream work and that TEAM means "Together Everyone Achieves More".

CDR Tina Nhu welcomed the 2019 Executive Committee members and Subcommittee Chairs and Co-Chairs. Among those who attended the event, CDR Trang Tran (Executive Secretary), LCDR Ruiqing Pamboukian (Corresponding Secretary), and LCDR Daniel Lee (Minority Officers Liaison Council Representative) gave brief

introductions followed by recognition of CAPT Mei-Ying Li (Education and Training Subcommittee Co-Chair), LCDR Rebecca Wong (Nomination and Membership Subcommittee Co-Chair), CDR Ruby Lerner (Public Relations and Merchandise Subcommittee Co-Chair), LCDR David Eng (Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Co-Chair), LCDR Oliver Ou (Community Engagement Workgroup Co-Chair), CDR Karen Chaves, (Community Engagement Workgroup Training Co-Chair), and LCDR Nancy Tian (Community Engagement Workgroup Phase 2 Healthy Mind Initiative Co-

Chair).

The APAOC Senior Advisor, CAPT Paul Jung; 2017 APAOC Chair, CDR Kun Shen; 2015 APAOC Chair, CDR Karen Chaves; and 2003 APAOC Chair, CAPT Samuel Woo, also attended the ceremony. Although everyone was aware of the snowstorm brewing outside the Center; all of the speeches warmed everyone's hearts. And of course, without CDR Kun Shen's delectable cooking and the contributions from everyone, the event would not have been such a great success.



Some of the attendees of the 2019 APAOC Change of Command Ceremony successfully held in Bethesda, MD [photograph provided by CDR Kun Shen]

Front row (from left to right) - CDR Kun Shen, CDR Qiao Bobo, LCDR Nancy Tian, LCDR Ick Ho Kim, CDR Fei Xu, CDR Prabath Malluwa-Wadu, CAPT Samuel Wu, CDR Tina Nhu (2019 APAOC Chair), LCDR Rebecca Wong, CDR Michelle Tsai, CDR Hawyee Yan, CAPT Mei-Ying Li, and CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian

Back row (from left to right) - CAPT David Wong, LT Kinbo Lee, CAPT Soju Chang, LCDR Oliver Ou, LT Suresh Jayasekara, LCDR Xinzhi Zhang, LCDR Daniel Lee, LT Tuan Nguyen, LT Rachel Forche, LCDR David Eng, CDR Karen Chaves, Hien Nguyen (CDR Tina Nhu's husband), CAPT Jason Woo, CAPT Joy Lee, LCDR Mandy Kwong, CDR Trang Tran, CDR Ruby Lerner, LT Stephanie Chiang, and CDR Eric Zhou





Vision 2020 and Accomplishments Undeterred

By CDR Jerry Zee

What a year! As the Chair for the Leadership & Strategic Planning in 2018, it is a privilege that I witnessed up close and personal in working with the APAOC Chair: CDR Eric Zhou, Chair-Elect: CDR Tina Nhu, and the rest of the Executive Committee members in “Reimagining APAOC” in how APAOC can make a deep and lasting impact in the Asian-American communities in 2018 and beyond. The new initiative that APAOC launched is called Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI) and it’s incredible that the Assistant Secretary of Health, the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), the Office of Minority Health, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and many other Federal Partners have already taken notice. Just recently on November 29, 2018, the Deputy Surgeon General, Rear Admiral Trent-Adams was briefed by CDR Eric Zhou, CAPT Joseph Rivero, and LCDR Xinzhi Zhang on the progress that HMI is making thus far, and Deputy Surgeon General Trent-Adams even proposed to put HMI under the OSG’s program with potential funding in the future so that it can be expanded nationwide to the general public. This is completely in line with APAOC Vision 2020, which is to have every single APAOC member making an impact in the Asian-American community at his or her duty station. As of today, we have 536 APAOC members. Just imagine what kind of impact if all 536 members do something in one year, two years, and so on!

In the meanwhile, our standing subcommittees and workgroups are already making great strides in what they set out to accomplish for 2018. For the Social Media Workgroup, one of the goals is to engage the public through the Facebook platform by increasing 500 followers for the APAOC Facebook page. As of October, there were 460 new followers, and I think it is on track to meet and exceed 500 followers. For the Publications Workgroup, one of the goals is to redesign the APAOC newsletter to provide a fresh and modern look in an effort to enhance readership. I think it is definitely an accomplishment when other OSG advisory groups wish to imitate the APAOC newsletter layout and template. This has not happened prior to 2018. As for achieving another milestone, the APAOC Career Development and Advancement Subcommittee collected self-reported data from APAOC members in the fall, and 255 out of 536 members responded, which means the response rate is at 48%. For those of you who are familiar with data-collection, this is an outstanding response rate. From this demographics report, we will now be able to plan outreach activities and supporting initiatives and future disaster responses to a diverse API population. The list of accomplishments goes on and on for our standing subcommittees in 2018.

As we conclude the year, let’s make a decision to go out and make an impact at our duty stations in 2019! For those of you who are living in New York, and New Jersey, please contact me at jerry.zee@cms.hhs.gov as I am gearing up in putting together a HMI program for this region in 2019.



Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service 2018 APAOC Demographic Report

By CDR Dipti Kalra, CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR Daniel Lee, LCDR Nancy Tian, LT George Yeh

Introduction

The purpose of the 2018 Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC) demographic report is to show the specific ethnic and language diversity among APAOC officers of the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS). This report contains data which was self-reported by APAOC officers in 2018. This report is a follow-up to the 2014 USPHS Demographic Report, in which all Asian or Pacific Islander (API) officers were reported as one group. In this current survey, APAOC's goal is to recognize the diversity among the API officers to better understand the composition of the group. In the 2010 United States (US) Census, Asian Americans made up 5.6% of the total US population and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHPI) Americans made up 0.2 % of the total US population.^{1,2} Over 20 different Asian detailed groups were listed in the 2010 US Census, with Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, and Korean as the top five largest ethnic groups.¹ Over 20 different NHPI groups were listed in the 2010 US Census, with Native Hawaiian, Samoan, and Guamanian/Chamorro as the top three largest groups.² The 2018 APAOC demographics report is prepared by the APAOC Career Development and Advancement Subcommittee. It will be utilized in planning outreach activities and supporting initiatives and future disaster responses to a diverse API population.

Method Utilized

The APAOC Career Development and Advancement Subcommittee collected self-reported data from APAOC officers via a SurveyMonkey portal from September 19, 2018 to October 5, 2018. APAOC officers were emailed a link to the SurveyMonkey survey and data was collected anonymously. Eleven questions were asked in the survey: Asian-related ethnicities were broken down into specific categories for officers to select (officers were able to select and write-in multiple ethnicities that they identified with); additional languages spoken by the officers and corresponding language proficiency levels were requested (officers were able to select and write-in multiple languages and proficiency levels); rank, years of service in USPHS, number of deployments, prior service and corresponding number of years of prior service, current Operating Division (OPDIV), professional category, and the states or territory/territories of the current duty station and residence were also requested.

Findings

We received responses from 255 of the 535 active duty APAOC officers (response rate of 48%). Based on the responses from 220 APAOC officers, 14 Asian-related ethnicities were reported (Figure 1): Asian Indian, Bangladeshi, Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Thai, and Vietnamese, and 3 NHPI groups were reported (Figure 2): Native Hawaiian, Samoan, and Chamorro. Of the 14 Asian-related ethnicities reported, the top five were Chinese (~38%), Vietnamese (~16%), Filipino (~16%), Korean (~13%), and Asian Indian (~8%), which correlates to the top five Asian-related ethnicities listed in the 2010 US Census. The top NHPI groups reported were Samoan (50%), Native Hawaiian (25%), and Chamorro (25%), which also correlates to the 2010 US Census.

Please note that ten officers may have selected more than one ethnicity.

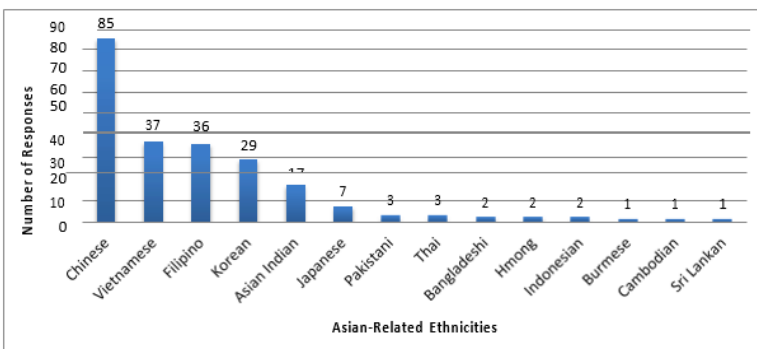


Figure 1 – Number of Asian-Related Ethnicities Reported.

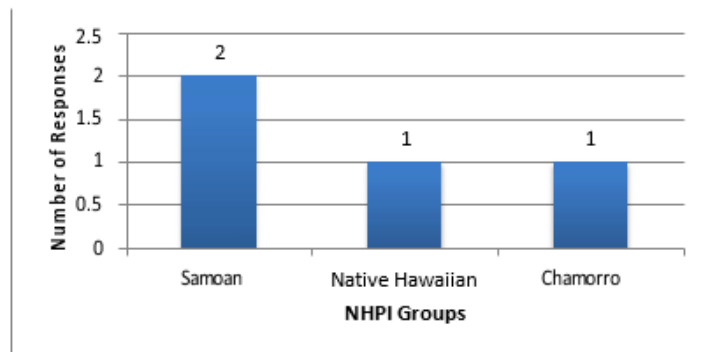


Figure 2 – Number of NHPI Groups Reported.



APAOC Demographic Report

Continued

In total, APAOC officers reported being able to speak an additional 30 languages (Figure 3), with Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese), Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, Spanish, and Hindi as the top six languages. Proficiency levels for the top six languages are reported in Table 1.

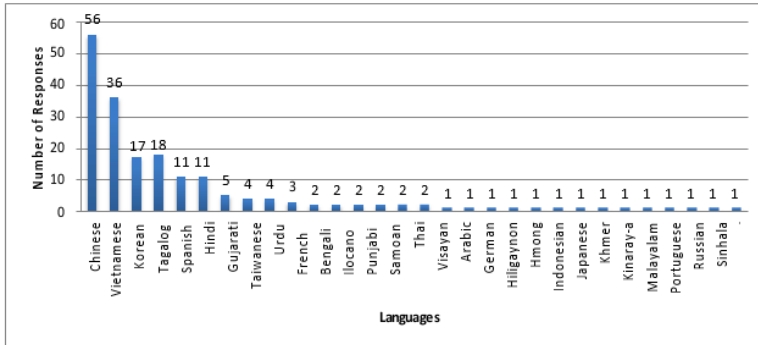


Figure 3 – Reported Number of Additional Languages (Besides English) Spoken.

Language	Native Proficiency Level	Professional Proficiency Level	Conversational Proficiency Level
Chinese	48.0%	9.0%	43.0%
Vietnamese	60.0%	9.0%	31.0%
Korean	47.0%	6.0%	47.0%
Tagalog	72.0%	0%	28.0%
Spanish	45.5%	9.0%	45.5%
Hindi	55.0%	9.0%	36.0%

Table 1 – Proficiency Level Percentages of the Top Six Languages Reported.

Reported ranks of the APAOC officers are provided in Figure 4.

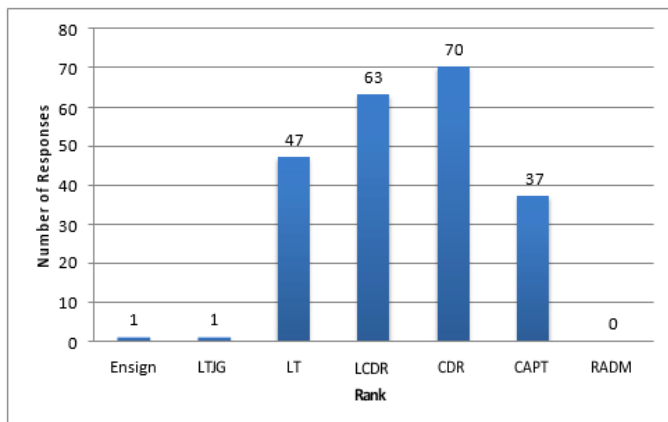


Figure 4 – Number of Reported Ranks.

Years of service in USPHS reported by APAOC officers is presented in Figure 5.

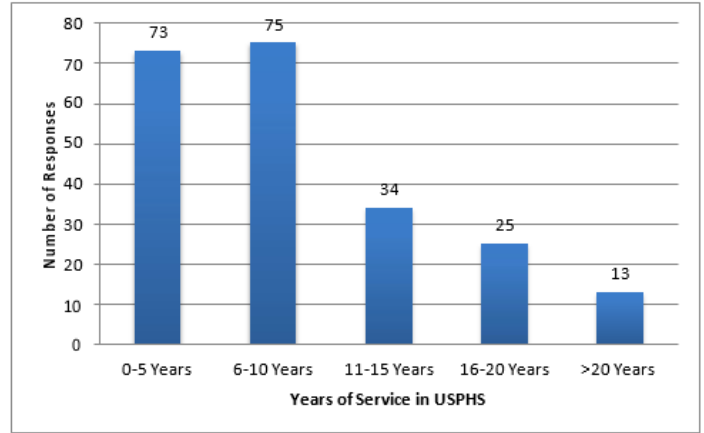


Figure 5 – Number of Reported Years of Service in USPHS.

Number of Deployments reported by APAOC officers is presented in Figure 6.

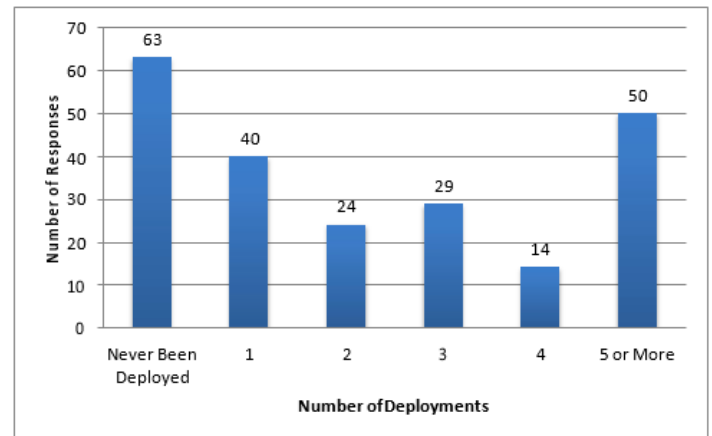


Figure 6 – Number of Reported Deployments.

Number of APAOC officers reporting prior military service is reported in Figure 7. Years of prior service ranged from 2 to 16 years, with an average of 7 years of prior service

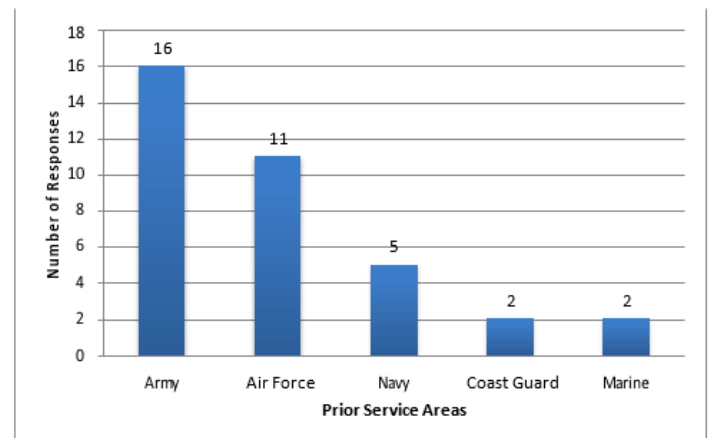


Figure 7 – Number of Reported Prior Service Areas.



APAOC Demographic Report

Continued

APAOC officers reported currently working in 16 different OPDIVs (Figure 8). These agencies are: Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Indian Health Service (IHS), Federal Bureau of Prison (BOP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Office of the Assistant Secretary of Health (ASH), Department of Defense (DOD), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).

APAOC officers work across the country in a reported 26 states and the District of Columbia.

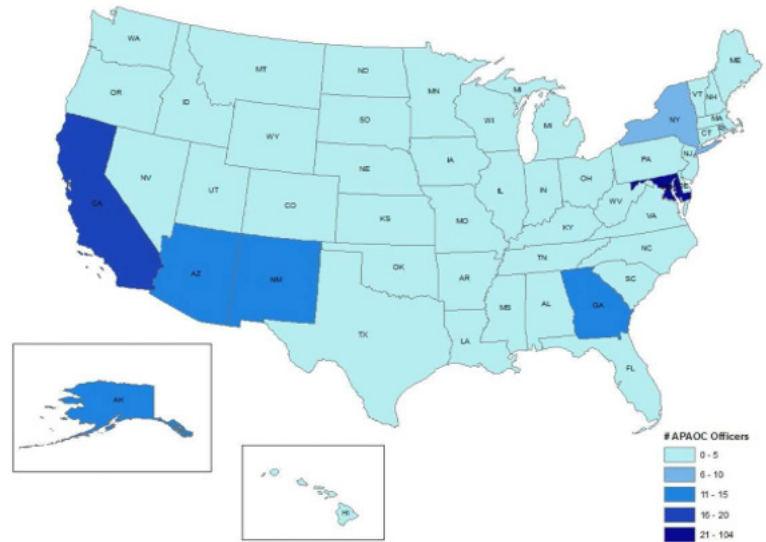


Figure 10 – Geographic Distribution of APAOC Officers.

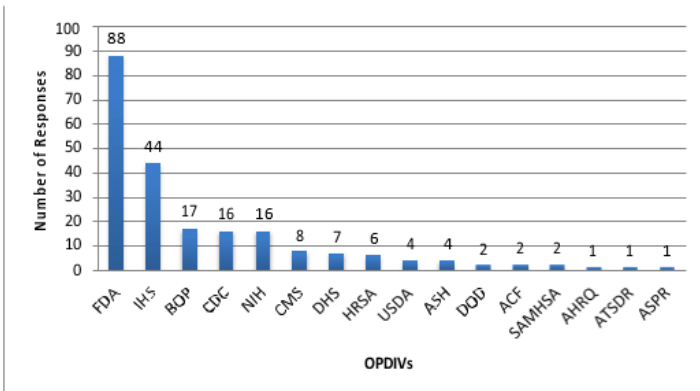


Figure 8 – Number of Reported OPDIVs.

APAOC officers are serving in various professional categories (Figure 9).

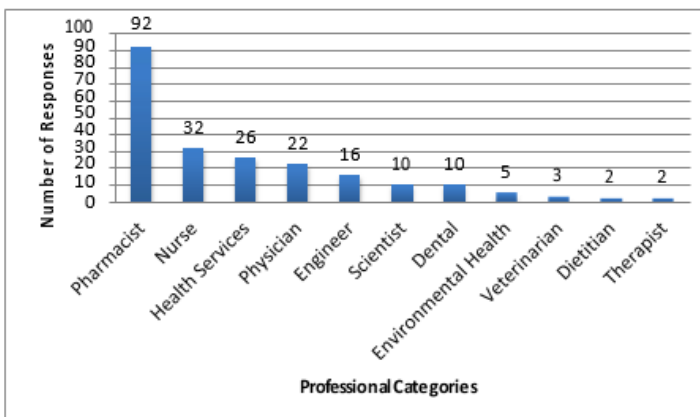


Figure 9 – Number of Reported Professional Categories.

Conclusions

The 2018 APAOC demographic survey report shows that APAOC officers are ready to serve the ethnically diverse API population in the US. APAOC officers have a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. This report will be critical for planning outreach activities and new initiatives where ethnic diversity and language proficiency levels can be utilized for assistance. In disaster responses, APAOC officers will be able to serve a diverse population, assisting in proper communication and continuity of care.

Limitations of this survey include: not distinguishing between different Chinese languages (i.e. – Cantonese and Mandarin) and not specifying if an individual is bi-racial or multi-racial. Future reports can further expand on classifying smaller subgroups and look more into racial diversity of APAOC officers.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared as a product of the APAOC Career Development and Advancement Subcommittee:

- CDR Dipti Kalra; CDR Vandna Kishore; LCDR Daniel Lee; LCDR Nancy Tian; and LT George Yeh

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1. The Asian Population: 2010, 2010 Census Briefs. (<https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-11.pdf>)
2. The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Population: 2010, 2010 Census Briefs. (<https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-12.pdf>)



2018 Peace Officer Memorial Mission: National Special Security Event

By CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR Shaun Chapman, LCDR Jun Lee,
LCDR Morgan Walker, LT Elizabeth Kim, and LT John Skender



USPHS Officers with NDMS & LRAT team

In 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial (POM) Day and the respective calendar week as National Police Week. National Police Week pays special recognition to the local, state, and federal peace officers who have died or have been disabled in the line of duty. In 2018, the 37th annual event was held at the West Front grounds of the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C.

The 2018 POM event drew 40,000 law enforcement officers, their families, and other visitors in attendance, including the President of the United States. In addition to an array of esteemed special guests and keynote speakers, President Trump addressed over 40,000 guests, including survivors of the fallen. This year, 199 fallen Officers were honored. The prestigious ceremony included a reading of the Roll Call of Heroes. The event was sponsored by the National Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and implemented by the FOP Memorial Committee.

Planning for this monumental National Event required weeks of preparation from a multi-disciplinary group of healthcare and logistics professionals.

POM 2018 was supported by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Assistant

Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Contributing to this National Special Security Event, USPHS officers worked alongside the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) teams to complete HHS's mission to provide health and medical response resources in support of the response strategy of the Office of Attending Physician to Congress (OAP). The 2018 POM event yielded the highest number of patients seen in our medical tents, resulting in 92 patients requiring medical intervention.

Our mission was to assist logistics personnel in the preparation, transportation, deployment, set up/tear down of equipment, and return/inventory of equipment supporting this HHS response. Ten officers were requested from the Readiness and Deployment Operations Group (RedDOG), Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR): 1 Pharmacist, 2 Information Technologists, 1 experienced with EMGLOG desk responsibilities, 1 experienced with communication, and 5 General Logistics responders (includes transportation, equipment movement, inventory control). Officers from several categories (EHO, HSO, Nurse, Pharmacy) and various agencies (EPA, CDC, FDA, HRSA, NIH) were

deployed during the operational period of May 6-18, 2018 between 3 locations: Mission Support Center (MSC) in Frederick, MD; Humphrey Building Washington DC, and the Capitol grounds for set up/retrieval of medical tents & equipment.

The POM event is a great opportunity to prepare for longer deployments. An officer can learn adequate deployment preparation, develop good deployment habits, learn to work with teams from various federal agencies, engage in varied roles, while testing their physical endurance. In the field, where heat and humidity play formidable roles, an officer supporting the POM event will begin to understand the appropriate amount of meals, snacks, and beverages to cover the duty period to keep the body energized while on duty. Furthermore, an officer has an



CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR William Brown, LCDR Shaun Chapman, LCDR Kenneth Chen, LCDR Jun Lee, LT Elizabeth Kim



DO YOU KNOW?

The purpose of this newly-created section is to share some valuable information among officers. The success of this section depends on officers' support to share. Please submit such information to the Newsletter Working Group to share with our members.

Peace Officer Memorial

Continued

opportunity to develop and practice good deployment habits and proper physical mechanics as the officer builds and breaks down the tents/equipment and transports heavy objects. The best part of the POM event is the chance to collaborate and work alongside the responders from many federal agencies where you learn from the experiences of others and share your expertise. Moreover, the POM event is an excellent opportunity to learn about yourself in a team environment. An officer can learn to practice flexibility and practice effective communication skills which will prepare an officer for future deployments.

In addition to advancing the mission of PHS, deployments of this type are opportunities and experiences for Officers. It allows officers to experience, understand, and appreciate the logistical roles. Deployments of this nature will require officers to be away from their duty station for up to 14 days or longer depending on the event. This is ideal for Officers who have deployed but do not understand the logistical side of a deployment, or those who have not deployed and want an opportunity to serve. POM also allows newly deployed officers to vet the adequacy of their planning and packing, practice flexibility, receive training in logistical roles, and learn what roles they may want to fill on deployment teams. PHS partners with Logistics Response Assistance Teams (LRAT) and Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT) to support and complete the mission. Request for volunteers are typically sent out several months before these types of events. Be on the lookout for your opportunity to serve!



CAPT Steven Mazzella, CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR William Brown, LCDR Shaun Chapman, LCDR Kenneth Chen, LCDR Jun Lee, LCDR Avi Stein, LCDR Morgan Walker, LT Elizabeth Kim, LT John Skender

Space-A Travel

Submitted by LCDR Oliver Ou

Space Available Travel, commonly known as "Space A" travel, is probably one of the best benefits available to PHS officers and their families.

- Sign up through Take-a-Hop (<http://www.takeahop.com>)
- Open-toed sandals and flip flops are not allowed on the cargo aircraft
- Take a sleeping bag so that you can lay on the floor after takeoff

[Editor's Note] See pictures of LCDR Ou's travels on page 23!

Personally Procured Move

Submitted by LCDR Daniel Lee

The Personally Procured Move, also known as the Do-It-Yourself (DITY) move, allows you to be reimbursed for 95% of what it would have cost the federal government to move you. You are eligible if you make a Permanent Change of Station (PCS), Temporary Duty (TDY), or separate/retire.

Once your agency liaison confirms your moving date, you may begin planning for your DITY move. Be sure the actual moving date takes place after the Personnel Order's "Effective Date."

- 1) Decide on the type of move. Will you be doing it all by yourself? Will you be hiring packers or movers? Will you be hiring a moving company to take care of it all (pack/load/drive/unpack)?
- 2) Arrange for any rental equipment or moving services that you will need.
- 3) When your rental vehicle (truck) is ready, calculate the total weight of the contents being moved. This is crucial – you must weigh your vehicle both fully loaded and unloaded. Remember, trailer does not count towards fully loaded weight. Your PPM payment will be based on these weight tickets.
- 4) Save receipts of all moving expenses (all of them). This includes, but is not limited to, rentals, packing supplies, moving equipment, gasoline, tolls and weight tickets, etc.
- 5) Make your move, then submit your settlement.

It is often helpful to do a cost and benefit analysis first to decide whether your plan is worth it. There are many articles and YouTube videos made on this topic for you to reference. Begin your research as soon as you have accepted a new job offer.





Group Picture with officers holding thank you cards made by the children:

LT Edward McDonald, LT Jessica Dunn, CDR Rebecca Cohen, CDR William Bolduc, CDR Paras Patel, LT Edward (Andrew) Taylor, LT Jennifer Weekes, LT Tramara Dam, LCDR Trami Nguyen, CDR Su-Lin Sun and LCDR Witzard Seide

PHS Officers Promoting the Surgeon General's Initiatives: Healthy Eating and Active Living and Serving as a Role Model for the Community

By LT Tramara Dam

On a cold and windy 2018 Veterans Day morning, Monday, November 12, my co-lead, LT Edward McDonald, and I led 11 PHS Commissioned Corps officers to participate in a Walk-a-Thon event at my children's school, Braddock Elementary. Braddock Elementary is a diverse school located in northern Virginia and consists of children from over 35 countries where 75 percent of the families enrolled have low income or live below the poverty level. I believe in advocating for these underserved families. I also believe PHS carries significant pride and dignity to serve our nation while demonstrating professionalism, selflessness, dedication, and compassion for the underserved. With all of this in mind, it was critical that I enlisted PHS officers to visit Braddock Elementary to both promote the Surgeon General's initiatives and to serve as a role model for my own children by volunteering in our community.

Throughout my life, service has always resonated the most with me. As a PHS officer and mother of three children under the age of nine, I strive to be an exemplary role model to my children and their friends. In addition to our daily call to duty, PHS officers also spend time volunteering and promoting healthy living as representatives of the Surgeon General's Initiatives and Calls to Action. I

immediately recognized that the Corps' presence at the Walk-a-Thon event would make a difference in these children's lives.

The Walk-a-Thon is a health-focused event held annually around Veterans Day. The goal of the event is to educate children, faculty, and parents on the importance of healthy eating and active living. For a second year in a row, I have had the honor to lead the PHS officers as the Surgeon General's representatives to deliver health and wellness messaging to over 975 participants, including 850 children, 75 faculty members, and 50 parents.

The numerous hours spent working closely with the school to coordinate and plan for the event paid off as the event ran smoothly. During the event, families from the community participated in a series of physical and educational activities. A total of 11 PHS officers helped with the stations. Six officers in ODU's operated five athletic stations to engage the children, faculty, and parents by leading various physical activities. These six officers explained the importance of staying active, among other distinct topics communicated at the five stations. The other five officers in SDBs oversaw a sixth station, educating over 975 participants on the duties and

responsibilities of PHS Commissioned Corps Officers, healthy eating, including reviewing the five food groups, and the importance of staying physically active. The participating officers utilized their diverse professional backgrounds (e.g., pharmacist, doctor, nurse, social worker and scientist) to promote the Surgeon General's initiatives and to serve as role models to the children.

I felt a great sense of pride and dignity every time a child or a parent thanked me for my service. I also felt that my goal as a role model was accomplished when many children said they wanted to grow up and be just like us in uniform, serving our country. This is a great feeling and compounds my fervent commitment to another successful event next year. The officers who were involved with the past two events were touched and had a great time! They all expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunity to serve the underserved populations and look forward to future events.

The officers involved with the event included event leads- LT Tramara Dam & LT Edward McDonald, CDR William Bolduc, CDR Rebecca Cohen, CDR Paras Patel, CDR Su-Lin Sun, LCDR Trami Nguyen, LCDR Witzard Seide, LT Jessica Dunn, LT Edward (Andrew) Taylor and LT Jennifer Weekes.





3rd Annual FDA Mingle & Jingle Concert at White Oak Campus

By LCDR Kelly Leong, CDR Janice Maniwang, and CDR Diane Nhu

The tradition continues! While you wait to unwrap the presents under the Christmas tree, the holiday season gets into full swing with the USPHS Music Ensemble bringing their 3rd annual holiday concert to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) White Oak Campus in Silver Spring, Maryland on December 6th, 2018. The concert was organized in collaboration with the FDA Commissioned Officers Network (FCON) as the Holiday Mingle and Jingle event. This included a networking opportunity for all officers and civilian colleagues and an array of delicious holiday sweet treats provided by the D.C. Commissioned Officers Association celebrating the holiday season.

This year, we had approximately 300 attendees, including Commissioned Corps officers and our FDA colleagues, joining the event while our Ensemble members spread some holiday cheer. We were very fortunate to receive a lot of support from our Commissioned Corps leadership to have numerous distinguished guests at our event. This year, we had the FDA Chief Scientist RADM Denise Hinton, Dietician Chief Professional Officer (CPO) CAPT Suzan Gordon, USPHS Agency Liaison for FDA CAPT Randy Anderson, CAPT Sean

Boyd representing the Engineer CPO RADM Edward Dieser. All were in attendance to share the holiday spirit with us.

The D.C. Ceremonial Band, along with three Field Band members from South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, performed familiar holiday tunes including Canticle of Christmastide (Hark! The Herald Angels Sing), Selections from the Nutcracker Suite, Our Winter Wonderland, A Hanukkah Festival, and closed our program with electric guitars to accompany the song "rock out" Christmas Eve Sarajevo. CAPT Brian Lewis was the lead conductor, while LCDR Kelly Leong was the "conductor-in-training" and had her first conducting debut. In addition, CAPT Lewis was our soloist to sing along with the band during Our Winter Wonderland performance, and our D.C. Choral Lead, CDR Michael Ahmadi, joined the band in Christmas Eve/Sarajevo with an electrifying guitar performance!

The D.C. Choral Ensemble, conducted by LCDRs James Trinidad and Jean Ennis, sang a selection of the world's all-time favorite festive tunes including Sleigh Ride, We Wish You a Merry Christmas, Carol of the Bells, This Christmas, and a beautiful

arrangement of Auld Lang Syne. Their performance was spectacular and, thus, added more joy to the holiday spirit. It had the audience singing and dancing to their tunes.

As always, we were thankful to have our special guest Santa Claus from the North Pole pay us a visit at the concert. Special thanks go to the Holiday Concert Planning Team, including CDR Diane Nhu, LCDR Kelly Leong, CAPT Megan Startzell, and CAPT Karen Munoz from the Ensemble along with LCDR Jessica Cleck-Derenick, LCDR Katie Watson, and LCDR Sophia Park from FCON, for their time and effort in organizing and coordinating the event. We would also like to thank our wonderful volunteers for their support, and CAPT Steven Link for his accurate representation of old St. Nick!

The USPHS Music Ensemble's annual holiday concert has become a holiday tradition over the years and is the perfect way to ring in the holiday season. It wouldn't be Christmas without it! We look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come and hope we will see you at our next holiday concert!



Junior APAOC Officers Dine with a Captain at 2018 NDMS Summit

By LCDR Amos Chen

This past summer, the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response organized a National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Training Summit in Atlanta to re-ignite the public health and medical response within the country. Over 400 PHS officers were invited to participate alongside nearly three thousand NDMS civilian attendees in this rare opportunity. From July 24th to July 26th, PHS officers and NDMS civilians learned many valuable skills related to disaster response, with mandatory trainings in classroom settings and hands-on skills training.

The NDMS Summit had 11 areas of focus, which included Emergency Management, Response and Recovery, Healthcare Systems Preparation and Response, Readiness and Resiliency, Emerged & Anticipated Threats, Logistics, and Communications and Electronics. Attendees were required to attend mandatory sessions in N95 respirator fit testing, Level-C Personal Protective Equipment donning and doffing, and Joint Patient Assessment & Tracking System (JPATS) familiarization. In addition, clinicians attended an electronic medical record familiarization session, learned

how to use tourniquets to stop blood flow to wounds, and reviewed smallpox signs and symptoms in the classroom.

Many PHS officers including officers associated with APAOC were able to network between busy didactic and hands-on sessions. Three APAOC officers, CAPT Janet Valdez from NIH, LCDR Amos Chen from IHS, and LCDR Yvon Yeo from BOP, previously unknown to each other, met on the first day of the summit in Atlanta. All three officers met again after the conclusion of the summit at a local Taiwanese restaurant. In a style similar to the "Dinner with a Captain" program, CAPT Valdez graciously accepted the invitation from LCDR

Chen and LCDR Yeo.

Over the Southern-style "Three-Cup Chicken" dish and the Taiwanese beef noodle soup, CAPT Valdez shared her professional experience as a lead NIH Physician Assistant with the other two junior APAOC officers. LCDR Yeo, a clinical pharmacist, learned from the captain that there are many career pathways for pharmacists at various NIH institutions. LCDR Chen, a Nurse Practitioner, found it intriguing that CAPT Valdez has a similar career background as an ex-Medical Technologist and now as a clinician. Many career and professional questions were further answered.

In addition to outlining career opportunities, CAPT Valdez discussed with these two junior APAOC officers key components to be a successful PHS officer, which include resilience, persistence, and flexibility. CAPT Valdez also shared her deployment experiences in relation to lessons learned at the NDMS Summit. At the end of this APAOC-style "Dining with a Captain", both LCDR Chen and LCDR Yeo were very appreciative of the opportunity to sit down with CAPT Valdez over dinner during the NDMS Training Summit.



LCDR Amos Chen, CAPT Janet Valdez, and LCDR Yvon Yeo



APAOC Photo Gallery



Led by the Surgeon General Honor Guard, USPHS participated in the 2018 Independence Day Parade along with other uniformed services for the first time in U. S. history in Washington D. C. on July 4, 2018. (Front row from right, LT Tramara Dam, LCDR Mandy Kwong, and CDR Eric Zhou (Right 4))



Former HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health, Dr. Matthew Lin, made the keynote remarks at the 2nd APAOC Leadership Summit in Rockville, MD on October 12, 2018. (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian)

PHS Flag Raising Ceremony at NIH



From left to right, ADM Brett P. Giroir (Assistant Secretary of Health), CAPT Josef Rivero, Dr. Lawrence Tabak (Principal Deputy Director of NIH), RADM Susan Orsega (Chair of the Chief Professional Officer Board, Chief Nurse Officer), and RADM Richard W. Childs attended the USPHS Flag Raising Ceremony to celebrate the USPHS 220th Commemoration Day at NIH in Bethesda, MD on July 16, 2018



The USPHS flag was raised by the Surgeon General's Honor Guard in front of Building One on the main campus of NIH, the birthplace of USPHS. The USPHS flag has been permanently hoisted on NIH campus for the first time in history.



Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Mr. Arne Owens, commended for APAOC's Healthy Mind Initiative at the 2nd APAOC Leadership Summit in Rockville, MD on October 12, 2018 (photographed by CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian).



APAOC Photo Gallery

Change of Command Ceremony



From Left to Right. CDR Karen Charves, CDR Michelle Tsai, LCDR Rebecca Wong, CDR Bobo Qian, LCDR Nancy Tian, CDR Trang Tranm, CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian, CDR Hawyee Yan, CDR Ruby Lerner, CAPT Mei-Ying Li, and LT Stephanie Chiang.

Photographs by CDR Fei Xu



LCDR Mandy Kwong (Left), CDR Eric Zhou (Right), and CDR Kun Shen's (Middle) family.



From Left to Right. Rudy Lawidjaja, CAPT Samuel Wu, LCDR Xinzhi Zhang, and CAPT David Wong.



CDR Prabath Malluwa-Wadu, LT Suresh Jayasekara, LCDR Daniel Lee, Melissa Foo, LCDR Rebecca Wong, and CAPT Joy Lee.



APAOC Photo Gallery

Space-A Travels

Photographs by LCDR Oliver Ou



A Handmade Cheese shop in Seattle's historic Pike Place Market (Beecher's)



A seafood store in Seattle's historic Pike Place Market.



A handcrafted soup dumpling restaurant in Seattle (Din Tai Fung)



Misawa railway station is right outside the Misawa Air Base.



Ueno Zoo is Japan's oldest zoo (March 20, 1882). Home to more than 3,000 animals with over 400 species.



A small shop in Tokyo's Tsukiji Fish Market, which is sometimes called the "Wall Street of Fish."



The Giant Ghibli Clock spins, dances, whirs and clanks five times a day.



The ASIMO by Honda is the most advanced humanoid robot in the world. It can run, dance, hop and sing.



Yokota Air Base is located in western Tokyo. It has "Space A" flights to South Korea, Singapore, and the U.S.



Singapore Flyer: Eye of Singapore. It is the tallest flyer in the world.



Marina Bay Sands in Singapore is a luxurious destination, with three 55-story hotel towers connected by a 1 hectare roof and an observation deck with panoramic views.



Condominiums in Singapore usually come with large sized outdoor swimming pools.





Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI)

Jumpstarting an overdue conversation about the mental health of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) youth



Key Mental Health Issues

Adolescent Suicide¹

- 2ND leading cause of death (LCD) for youth, ages 12–19; 19.5% of all deaths in this age group (2016)
- LCD for AAPI females (24.5% of deaths) and males (31.7% of deaths), ages 12–19 (2016)
- AAPIs, ages 12–19, were the only race/ethnicity to have suicide as the 1st LCD

Adolescent Mental Health

- 50% of mental illness have onset by age 14, and 75% have onset by age 24²⁻⁴
- 1 in 5 youth, ages 13–18, have a severe mental health condition⁵
- 1 in 9 Asian Americans, ages 12–17, had at least one major depressive episode in the past year (2016)⁶
- 1st generation Asian American adolescents are less likely to have mood/anxiety disorders compared to 2nd generation Asian Americans adolescents⁷

Barriers to Care

- AAPIs consistently have the lowest rates of treatment for mental illness, and often enter treatment when their mental illness has become serious or debilitating^{8,9}
- Stigma, shame, discrimination, stereotypes, academic pressures, intercultural and intergenerational issues confronting AAPI youth further compound usual factors that contribute to mental illness⁹⁻¹¹
- AAPIs represent a heterogeneous group of people; tailored mental health and substance use prevention and treatment for AAPIs is limited but needed¹⁰

Healthy Mind Initiative

Healthy Mind Initiative is a collaborative effort among the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), federal, and county government partners, AAPI community organizations and leadership. It highlights the importance of mental health literacy by educating about mental illness, substance misuse, and suicide among AAPI youth, with a focus on prevention and early detection.

Mission

To increase awareness of mental health, reduce stigma and encourage AAPI parents and youth to seek help when needed.

Approach

Provides education about AAPI adolescent mental health risks and early warning signs of disorders and ways to seek help; builds a multi-tiered collaboration among federal, county and community entities in which the USPHS officers serve as mental health educators to the local AAPI communities in the DC metro area; and scales this approach nationally with other ethnic groups drawing upon the reach and breadth of the USPHS officers.

Short-term Process Objectives by December 31, 2018

- Provide at least six (5 ethnic specific, e.g., Chinese, Indian, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese; 1 cross-cultural) 90-minute educational presentations to AAPI parents in the DC metro area
- Have at least 150 AAPI parents attend the 90-minute educational presentations
- Publish six HMI educational and awareness materials (e.g., blog posts, newsletter articles, etc.)
- Establish 20 federal, county, and community partnerships



Timeline

Begin collaboration fall 2017; launch HMI spring 2018; community piloting, refinement of materials, and outreach summer 2018; launch educational presentations in communities fall 2018.

Primary Partners

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Office of Behavioral Health Equity, in the U.S. DHHS; and the Asian American Health Initiative of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Maryland.

Other Government and Community Partners

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD); USPHS Social Work Professional Advisory Group (SWPAG) from the HSO PAC, Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG); The Federal Asian Pacific American Council; Chinese American Parents Association; Asian Pacific American Student Achievement Action Group; OCA-DC - Asian Pacific American Advocates; Calvin J Li Memorial Foundation.

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Healthy Mind Initiative (HMI)

Executive Summary - Addressing Mental Health & Well Being Among Underserved Populations in the U.S.

Overall Program Goals

- Align USPHS activities with the strategic initiatives of Community Health and Services Missions (CHASM) of the Office of the Surgeon General and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.
- Train USPHS officers to optimize the ability to meet current and future public health missions of the country.
- Provide research-based, culture-tailored awareness education to underserved high-risk communities to promote mental wellness.

Program Strategy for Promotion of Mental Wellness to Prevent Suicide

- Building national, state, and local partnership to address national mental health issues in underserved communities, starting with the AAPI population.
- Leveraging the resources and capacity of USPHS Officers in different backgrounds (culture, language, and geographic distribution) to provide outreach to parents and youth in health disparities communities leading to measurable changes over time.
- Developing culturally competent and standardized mental health education material for underserved high-risk communities through partnership with SAMHSA and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).
- Implementing an effective and evidence-based Train-the-Trainer course for USPHS officers including both Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training and community-specific HMI training.
- Empowering youth to address mental wellness such as stress, trauma, bullying, suicide thoughts, etc. through essay competition and outreach activities.

Program Accomplishments for HMI

Since the Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC) launched the HMI in January 2018, APAOC has:

- Established the HMI team consists of **96** officers from different racial/ethnic groups, **8** PHS categories, and **13** states.
- Established **26** partners and collaborators with national, state, and local governments and community organizations.
- Developed the AAPI-specific mental wellness education material with translation in 3 different languages (e.g., Chinese, Korea, and Vietnamese) partnered with SAMHSA and Asian American Health Initiative in Montgomery County, MD.
- **56** PHS officers completed the MHFA training, and **36** completed the Train-the-Trainer sessions.
- Conducted **14** outreach events in the of Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) communities. Over **80** PHS officers presented or supported for the HMI activities.
- Reaching out to approximately **600** individuals in underserved AAPI communities.
- Published **18** articles including, HHS Diversity and Inclusion newsletter, NIH/National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) blogs, Frontline, APAOC, HSO PAC Newsletters, and a special edition of APAOC Newsletter on HMI.
- Launched National Ambassador Program to reach out to high school students and promote adolescent mental wellbeing.

Projected HMI Activities in 2019:

- Identify high-risk populations in mental health to prevent suicide and develop tailored education materials for underserved communities.
- Continue reaching out to Asian American and Pacific Islanders communities through awareness education in worship places, language schools, and community gatherings.
- Continue collaborating with NIMH, NIMHD, COA, and local organizations/foundations to launch National Essay Contest for high school students nationwide through <https://challenge.gov/a/buzz/challenge>.
- Expand National Ambassador Program to 9 divisions of the country and train PHS officers to reach out to high schools to promote National Essay Contest.
- Pilot a partnership with the local COAs and other organizations to reach out to underserved low Socioeconomic status (SES) communities (e.g., rural underserved population in West Virginia or urban underserved population in Baltimore, MD).



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).

Please note that APAOC merchandise will be available for purchase at the both PHS Awareness Day Event @ FDA and also MOLC booth during the COA Exhibit Hall.

For MOLC booth @ COA Symposium Event, we highly encourage you to pre-order with CDR Phung to ascertain that we have your items and sizes available for pickup at the event.

**Window Cling
(5" x 5") with PHS
logo: \$5**



Coin (1.75"): \$10

