Greetings from the Chief Professional Officer

By RADM Kelly Taylor, Chief Professional Officer

Happy Standard Time, EHOs!

Let’s talk about promotions. For Promotion Year 2019, 142 EHOs are eligible for either temporary or permanent promotion. That’s actually 41% of our entire category that are going to be reviewed this year! 107 EHOs are eligible for temporary promotion and 79 are eligible for permanent promotion. Forty-four EHOs are eligible for both temporary and permanent promotions. There are 39 EHOs eligible for promotion to temporary O-6, 49 EHOs eligible for promotion to temporary O-5, and 19 EHOs eligible for promotion to temporary O-4.

One of the single most important things you can do to be prepared for promotion review is to be familiar with the Promotion Year 2019 Checklist under the Promotions tab on the CCMIS website. Don’t wait till the last minute to update your CV, BLS, OS, etc. Count on problems occurring with the system at the last minute that keep you from uploading something extremely important, and do it early.

It has become very clear that many excellent officers are not going to be successful when they are up for promotion. Although it is easy to say, but harder to take to heart, “don’t take it personally!” Your focus should not be to get promoted. It should be to be the best officer you can.

Continue to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the nation as you support your agencies’ missions. You have amazing skills and abilities as EHOs in USPHS. Use those skills to make a difference and not necessarily to get promoted. With that being said, good luck to you all!

RADM Kelly M. Taylor
Assistant Surgeon General
Chief Environmental Health Officer

Awards Corner
(See Page 10 for Details)
EHOPAC Chair Report- Summary of Significant Activities for 2018

By CDR Chris van Twuyver, EHOPAC Chair

It’s been a busy year for the EHOPAC. I am providing a summary of our significant activities for 2018:

Executive Committee- Members: RADM Kelly Taylor, CAPT Jill Shugart, CDR Chris van Twuyver, CDR Michael Quinn, CDR Jessica Otto, and LCDR Malashock

- Reviewed and revised the EHOPAC Charter and EHOPAC Appointment standards
- Developed EHO Technical Skills and EHO Competencies documents and presented a summary of these documents to the CPO Board
- Prepared an overview of the EHO Category for presentation to the Surgeon General
- Prepared an EHOPAC Organizational Summary for the CPO Board
- Generated a Group award and EHOPAC Appointment Letter submissions
- Prepared presentations for the EHO Category day and NEHA AEC
- Participated in multiple conference calls with DCCPR IT staff
- Reviewed EHO applications received during the open application window
- Managed meetings, voting, coin purchases/sales
- Attended PAC Chair calls, and held weekly and monthly planning meetings
- Updated the CC Overview and Resources PPT for Supervisors and Reviewing Officials

Awards and Recognition- Chair: CDR Jamie Mutter

- Implemented a new SOP for processing and tracking awards as prescribed by the CPO Board
- Managed the Moran, Todd Eason, Crow, and Responder of the Year Awards
- Created an Awards Reference document which is posted on the EHOPAC website

Career Development- Chairs: CAPT Stephen Piontkowski and CDR Travis Bowser

- Provided training for Officers conducting Career Counseling and Mentoring
- Paired counselors with mentees at COF for end-of-year eOPF reviews and collaborated with the CPO to ensure official career counseling was conducted
- Updated all 9 promotion reference documents and posted these documents to the EHOPAC Website

Communications- Chairs: CDR Luis Rodriguez and LT Erin Kincaid

- Updated the EHO Survival Guide; this document will be posted on the EHOPAC website shortly
- Contributed to the Combined Category Newsletter, also developed and issued quarterly EHOPAC Newsletters
- Initiated the EHO “Share your Story” program

History- Chair: CDR Matthew Deptola

- Provided an updated EHO History for inclusion in the EHO Survival Guide
- Created a history for the EHOPAC Coin presented to the newly commissioned Officers at OBC
- Incorporated new CPO biography into the EHOPAC files and updated the EHO “Virtual Plaque,” which is a history of past EHOPAC elected members

Information Technology- Chair: CDR Jessica Hensley

- Implemented an IT sustainability plan which included creation of three new WGs, addition and training of 8 new members
- Resolved backlog of documents awaiting posting on the EHOPAC website
- Provided rapid response to IT related issues during the year

Marketing and Recruitment- Chairs: CDR Elena Vaouli and LCDR David Bales

- Routinely communicated with DCCPR and Policy and Standards Subcommittee regarding EHO applicants
- Quickly and clearly conveyed unexpected changes in recruiting policy and procedures
- Facilitated the JRCOSTEP and general active duty recruitment webinar
- Managed the Adopt-a-School and Recruit an EHO (RAE) programs
Mentoring and Orientation- Chairs: CDR Monica Leonard and CDR Carrie Oyster

- Developed a new SOP and process to manage EHOPAC representation at OBC courses to include OBC open house and graduation ceremonies
- Recruited new volunteers to represent the EHOPAC at monthly OBC open house and graduation ceremonies
- Managed the EHO Mentoring Program and provided mentoring at the USPHS Symposium
- Conducted two webinar trainings for mentees and protégés
- Participated in the creation of a novel cross-category orientation packet for new officers
- Updated the EHO Welcome Packet provided to newly commissioned EHO Officers

Policy and Standards- Chairs: CDR Katie Hubbard and LCDR Drew Kupper

- Participated in the review and update of the EHO Appointment Standards and EHOPAC Charter.
- Managed the screening of 60 new applicants during the EHO open application window

Readiness- Chairs: LT Krista Ferry and LT Steven Merritt

- Revised the Environmental Health Readiness Guide
- Provided monthly readiness reminders
- Posted revised readiness resources on the EHOPAC Webpage

Training and Events- Chairs: CDR Eva McLanahan and CDR Elizabeth Valenti

- Collected and coordinated key Leadership resources which are posted on the EHOPAC Website
- Planned and coordinated EHO Category Day and other EHO activities at the Symposium
- Planned and coordinated GI Bill training
- Planned and coordinated networking socials at NEHA and the DC and Atlanta areas

As you can see it was a busy year for the EHOPAC; I thank the Subcommittee Chairs and Volunteers for all of their hard work and support during the past year.

Starting this month, the Training and Events Subcommittee will be coordinating future training offered by the EHOPAC, including leadership training and training for deployment related skills. Initial deployment related training topics being developed by the Readiness Subcommittee will include water safety, food safety, safety in the field, and shelter sanitation. Our initial training offered by CAPT Calvin Edwards was “Leading Before You’re in Charge.” This training was presented at our December EHOPAC meeting.

EHO Category Coin is in stock!

The EHOPAC is selling the category coins for $10. There will be an additional shipping cost based on the number of coins ordered.

The coin features the EHO logo, which glows in the dark (shown on the right), on one side and the Seal of the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service on the other. Anyone interested in purchasing coins should use the fillable PDF form available via the link: https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/eho/ehocoin_pre2016.aspx

If you have questions you can contact CDR Jessica Otto at usphsehopac@gmail.com
2018 EHOPAC Members

RADM Kelly Taylor, IHS
Chief Professional Officer

CDR Chris van Twuyver, FDA
EHOPAC Chair

CDR Michael Quinn, DOI
EHOPAC, Chair Elect

CDR Jessica Otto, FDA
EHOPAC Secretary/Treasurer

LCDR Daniel Malashock,
EPA Executive Committee
Liaison

CAPT Jill Shugart, CDC
EHOPAC Ex-Officio

LT Erin Kincaid, CDC
Communications

CDR Luis Rodriguez, CDC
Communications

CDR Jamie Mutter, CDC
Awards

CDR Elena Vaouli, ATSDR
Marketing & Recruitment

LCDR David Bales, IHS
Marketing & Recruitment

LT Steven Merritt, EPA
Readiness

LT Krista Ferry, FDA
Readiness

LCDR Matthew Deptola,
NIH, History

CDR Jessica Hensley, FDA
Information Technology

CDR Carrie Oyster, USCG
Mentoring & Orientation

CDR Elizabeth Valent, FDA,
Training & Events

CDR Monica Leonard,
CDC, Mentoring & Orientation

CDR Eva McLanahan,
ATSDR, Training & Events

CDR Travis Bowser, IHS
Career Development

CDR Katie Hubbard, IHS
Policy & Standards

CAPT Stephen Piontkowski, IHS
Career Development

CDR Andrew Kupper,
FDA, Policy & Standards
EC Liaison Report
By LCDR Danny Malashock, EHOPAC EC Liaison

EHOs, three amazing years on the EHOPAC have flown by and it is sadly time for me to bid my farewell. It has been an absolute pleasure serving on the EHOPAC and getting to know many of you. I want to share my sincere appreciation to all of those whom I have had the pleasure of working with on the EHOPAC, and to the many EHOs who volunteered their time to support our activities. I want to share a special thank you to CDR Carolyn Oyster, CAPT Jill Shugart, and CDR Chris van Twuyver for providing me with an opportunity to lend my junior perspective and contribute to the PAC’s hard work.

In the remaining month, I will be tying up loose ends. One item I am excited to provide an update on is the Commissioned Corps Overview & Resources for Supervisors & Reviewing Officials. Thanks to feedback received from many of you and our EHOPAC Voting Members, this updated version of our resource now reflects recent Corps policy and system changes. We hope this resource will be valuable to you, and helpful to your supervisors and reviewing officials in familiarizing themselves with the Commissioned Corps.

Again, thank you and I look forward to working with you and supporting the EHOPAC!

Commissioned Corps Overview & Resources for Supervisors & Reviewing Officials will be uploaded to the EHOPAC website ([https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/eho/default.aspx](https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/eho/default.aspx)) as soon as possible!

EHOPAC Subcommittee Highlights

Marketing & Recruitment
On Monday, October 22nd, 2018, the M&R subcommittee hosted the EHOPAC Fall Recruitment Webinar for students and faculty of all the accredited EHO schools to discuss recruitment for the EHO category, including the open application window for 2019, Junior Commissioned Officer Student Externship Program (JRCOSTEP) internships, and the general active duty application process for the USPHS. Speakers included: RADM Kelly Taylor, CAPT Stephen Piontkowski, CAPT Kenny Hicks, CAPT Jill Shugart, CDR Jessica Otto, CDR Elena Vaouli, LCDR David Bales, LT Erin Kincaid, and Ms. Cyndia Harroway.

Invited guests included representatives from the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH), Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) and the Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP). The webinar was well attended and some Officers were able to assist schools in their area. CDR Theresa Gallagher hosted the webinar at UNLV and was available to answer questions afterwards.
**Mentoring & Orientation**

The Officer Basic Course’s (OBC) Graduation Working Group, led by LCDR Monique Lester and LTJG Rachel Forche participated in one OBC this past quarter, welcoming an additional EHO to the PHS during OBC #105 in August 2018. Pictured below LCDR Gamola Z. Fortenberry (OBC Graduation Volunteer) welcomes aboard LT Karen Lumbu to the EHO category after graduation.

In addition, CAPT Timothy Jiggens volunteered to stand up and identify senior officer EHOs to staff an EHO booth during OBC’s Open House event at each OBC. This booth is an opportunity for our officers the meet and greet new PHS officers of every category during OBCs. Over the last few months, CAPT Jiggens has worked with the M&O Subcommittee Co-Chairs to finalize roll-out of this Working Group for the November OBC.

In case you are not aware, October marked the beginning of our 2018-2019 Mentoring Year. We want to encourage all EHOs to volunteer for the program. If you participated in past years and loved your Mentor/Protégé, we are very happy for you. **However, we are asking you seek a NEW mentor-protégé match for each new mentoring year.** You can always maintain an unofficial mentoring relationship with past Mentors/Protégés.

Remember, the Mentoring Program is designed as a one-year program. The benefit of the program is for Mentors and Protégés to expand beyond familiar comfort zones and learn from other officers. Over the last year we have seen a 20% increase in the Mentor Program with 72 Mentor Matches!

To register for the EHOPAC Mentoring Program for 2018-2019, please visit: [http://mentor.usphs-hso.org/](http://mentor.usphs-hso.org/) and select “New User Registration.” Complete the database application, select the “Environmental Heath” category, and apply.

Finally, on 2 NOV 2018, the M&O Subcommittee Co-Chairs conducted our second annual training for Mentors and Protégés utilizing an online Webinar. Trainings were recorded and the PowerPoint presentation is available. Please contact us if you are interested in either.

Have a great winter! - M&O Co-Chairs, CDR Carrie Oyster & CDR Monica Leonard

**History**

The History Subcommittee is looking for articles, photographs, letters and items of historical significance. Please submit any items that you think may be of interest to the current Subcommittee Chair, LCDR Matthew Deptola, at [matthew.deptola@nih.gov](mailto:matthew.deptola@nih.gov). Please include the following information with your submissions to help properly catalogue the item, and one of our volunteers will be in contact with you regarding your submission:

- Provide captions that identify agency, individuals, and describe the task/activity depicted in photographs if possible.
- Provide date including the year, month, and day along with a summary describing articles, letters and documents.

Thank you for your support of the PAC and helping us to document our history!
EHOPAC Subcommittee Highlights (continued)

Policies & Standards

The Policies and Standards Subcommittee, in partnership with the Executive Committee, recently revised the EHOPAC Charter to reflect changes made to the Bylaws and to more accurately describe the purpose and direction of the EHOPAC. The charter was approved by the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) on December 12, 2018.

Communications

Publications Team- Thank you to our Publications team for their hard work and dedication in the production of this edition of the EHOPAC Newsletter!

Social Media-

- **Summary for “Share Your Story” initiative**: Our Social Media Team continued the “Share Your Story” initiative to encourage EHOs to post about experiences they’ve had in their positions or deployments. From July to September, six stories were posted on topics ranging from vessel sanitation inspections to vector borne disease control. These stories sparked great conversations through comments, reactions, and shares and indicate that EHOs are interested in learning about the work of other EHOs.

- **Summary for the “Closed” Facebook Group for the third quarter**:
  - There were 35 total posts to the Facebook group USPHS Environmental Health Officers during the timeline. There are currently 264 members in the closed group.
  - The top 3 posts for the quarter (as indicated by likes, shares, and/or comments) were:
    1) Photo of EHOs at the National Disaster Medical System 2018 Summit;
    2) Post of photos from Category Day; and
    3) “Share my Story” and photo by LT Tyler White.

  The EHOPAC “Closed” Facebook Page can be accessed by clicking this link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/101483319904462

- **Summary for the “Open” Facebook Group for the third quarter**:
  - The page received 94 new likes during the quarter, bringing the total number of likes to 3,232.
  - The Social Media Team posted 2 posts during the timeline of this report, reaching 695 unique users. These posts included a solicitation for the EHO JRCOSTEP programs and a post from CDC about heat-related illness.

  The EHOPAC Open Facebook Page can be accessed by clicking this link: https://www.facebook.com/US-Public-Health-Service-Environmental-Health-Officers-180811921960576

- In partnership with the HSPAC Communications Team, the EHOPAC Communications SC offered a webinar on Social Media Hygiene on November 13, 2018. The presenters, from HHS Office of Security and Strategic Information, covered the proper use of social media and online presence for Commissioned Corps officers.
Meet the JOAG Liaison to the EHOPAC, LCDR Beth Wittry!

**Agency:** CDC (National Center for Environmental Health-Safe Food Section)

**Duty Station:** Atlanta, GA

**Past assignments:** CDC (Vessel Sanitation Program) & IHS (Whiteriver Service Unit)

**EHOPAC duties:** Training & Events Subcommittee Symposium Planner – 3rd year

**Hobbies:** hiking, sailing, snowboarding, scuba diving, & baking

I am excited to serve as your JOAG liaison to the EHOPAC. I commissioned in 2012 and have been involved with JOAG in different capacities since then. I recommend JOAG to all junior officers as there are multiple leadership opportunities and PHS volunteer experiences. It is a great way to network and build camaraderie within the PHS. Please reach out to me if you have questions or feedback (bwittry@cdc.gov).

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**NEHA Credentialing Exams**

**Have You Been Thinking of Taking One of NEHA’s Professional Credentialing Exams?**

The EHOPAC Training and Events Subcommittee Symposium Planning Team is excited to announce a proctored test site for officers interested in taking the NEHA credentialing exams during the 2019 USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium in Minneapolis, MN, May 6th to 9th.

Holding a NEHA credential has many benefits beyond showing an officer’s expertise in a field of public health. It is a milestone to reach within many of our respective category’s benchmarks as one or more may be required for future promotional success. NEHA credential exams being offered:

- Certified in Food Safety Supplier Audits (CFSSA)
  [https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/cfssa-credential](https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/cfssa-credential)

- Registered Food Safety Auditor (RFSA)
  [https://www.neha.org/node/59037](https://www.neha.org/node/59037)

- Certified Professional - Food Safety (CP-FS)
  [https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/cp-fs-credential](https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/cp-fs-credential)

- Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS)
  [https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/rehrsrs-credential](https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/rehrsrs-credential)

- Certified in Comprehensive Food Safety (CCFS)
  [https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/ccfs-credential](https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/ccfs-credential)

- Certified Foodborne Outbreak Investigator (CFOI)
  [https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/certified-foodborne-outbreak-investigator-cfoi-credential](https://www.neha.org/professional-development/credentials/certified-foodborne-outbreak-investigator-cfoi-credential)

If interested, please contact LT Sandra Carpio, EHO Symposium Planning Team Cross-Category Networking Lead, Sandra.Carpio@fda.hhs.gov by December 3rd to indicate your interest. Commitment needed by: December 21st.
2019 USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium
May 6-9, 2018
Better Health Through Better Partnerships
Minneapolis Convention Center

ANCHOR & CADUCESUS DINNER
May 6, 2019
6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

SG’S 5K RUN/WALK
May 7, 2019
6:00 AM – 8:00 AM

OPENING CEREMONY
May 7, 2019
10:00 AM- 11:00 AM

USPHS ENSEMBLE CONCERT
May 7, 2019
6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

COMBINED SOCIAL
May 7, 2019

EHO MENTORING SESSION
May 7, 2019

EHO CATEGORY DAY & AWARDS LUNCHEON
May 8, 2019
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

NEHA PROCTORED EXAMS
TBD

EHO SOCIAL
TBD

The EHO Symposium Planning Team is organizing EHO-centric events for an enjoyable experience to allow EHOs to network and augment their professional competencies. More updates and information will follow on these EHO-specific events.

Register today! https://www.phscof.org/registration.html
Awards Corner

Many of our Environmental Health Officers receive recognition from professional organizations, agencies, and other entities for their outstanding work in the field of environmental health. The following officers received awards in the previous year and represented our category with pride and distinction.

**CDR Eva McLanahan**, Technical Project Officer with ATSDR, received an **EPA Bronze Medal** for “Exceptional and innovative scientific assessment work on Benzo[a]pyrene and Trimethylbenzene IRIS Assessments.” While at EPA (her prior duty station), she was part of the trimethylbenzene IRIS assessment team and lead the efforts to evaluate and implement the physiologically based pharmacokinetic (PBPK) model in the assessment.

**Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) Distinguished Service Alumni Award** was given to IHS Officer **LCDR Matthew Ellis**. The award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exemplary service and accomplishment for the University, and who shows outstanding devotion to EKU. EKU has a distinguished record of more than a century of educational service to the Commonwealth. This award aims to honor this spirit in those who have fulfilled the obligations of their education through creative leadership in service that has benefited society and reflected credit on the University.

**CDR Christopher T. Smith**, CDC Project Officer, was recognized with the **2018 Division of State and Local Readiness (DSLR) Honor Awards in the category of Excellence in Procurement, Contracts and Grants Management** for the DSLR Crisis Cooperative Agreement Team in response to the general application for the hurricane response funding module. CDR Smith also served on the Objective Review panel which reviewed applications for emergency funding and supported DSLR Crisis Coordination team in downloading and archiving the applications from the grants management system.
Administrative Announcements

EHOPAC QUARTERLY MEETINGS!

Join our Quarterly Meetings! Listen for EHOPAC and Commissioned Corps updates. Hear leadership discuss pertinent EHOPAC issues. All are encouraged to submit questions to be addressed by EHOPAC leadership as well as any other information they wish to share with fellow EHOs. Have a question for EHOPAC Leadership? Submit it anonymously by using this link: https://goo.gl/Igy9TD

Upcoming 2019 EHOPAC Meetings:
March 12th & June 11th

Webinar: https://ihs.adobeconnect.com/ehopac/
Conference Line: 1-800-832-0736; Conference Room #: 6084616

ABOUT THIS EDITION
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DISCLAIMER
Any opinions or thoughts presented in this newsletter are solely those of the author and do not represent the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or any other government agency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Thank you to all the EHOs who contributed articles to this Newsletter!

Have an idea for our next EHO Newsletter?
Want to be a featured “EHO in Action” in the next Newsletter?
Submit your ideas to LCDR Jonathan Blonk at jonathan_blonk@nps.gov