



HSPAC News and Views

#WeAreCorpsSTRONG

Winter 2021 Newsletter

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Congratulations to the 2022 Senior Officer Consortium

Chair: CAPT Shelia Merriweather

Co-Chair: CAPT Raquel Peat

Executive Secretary: CAPT Maria Benke

CAPT Julie Erb-Alvarez

CAPT Robin Hunter-Buskey

CAPT David Lau

CAPT Tracy Branch

CAPT Tarsha Cavanaugh

CAPT Juanika Mainor-Harper

CDR Margaret Caulk

CDR Crystal Russell

CDR Antoine Smith

Congratulations to the 2022-2024 Voting Members

CAPT Darin Wiegers (FDA)

CDR Danielle DiDonna (FDA)

CDR Kimberly Nguyen (FDA)

CDR David Schwab (FDA)

CDR Chad Thompson (FDA)

CDR Jennifer Freiman (USDA)

LCDR Aaron Grober (CDC)

LCDR Mouhamed Halwani (FDA)

2022 HSPAC Subcommittees

The HSPAC has eleven subcommittees all HSOs are encouraged to participate. The Category welcomes volunteers.

Subcommittee	Role	Name	Email
<u>Analytics</u>	Chair	LCDR Aaron Grober	Analytics.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Jennifer Freiman	
<u>Awards</u>	Chair	LCDR Shannon Aldrich	Awards.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Kari Irvn	
<u>Career Development</u>	Chair	LCDR Chris Sheehan	CareerDevelopment.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	LCDR Mo Halwani	
<u>Communications</u>	Chair	CDR Brook Kerns	Communications.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Kimberly Nguyen	
	Co-Chair	TBD	
<u>Community Wellness</u>	Chair	LCDR Tracy Avila (Tilghman)	CommunityWellness.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	LCDR Pamela Ogonowski	
<u>Events</u>	Chair	CDR David Schwab	Events.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	LT Nathan Drew	
<u>Membership</u>	Chair	CAPT Rebecca Bunnell	Membership.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Danielle DiDonna	
<u>Mentoring</u>	Chair	CDR Erica Ruchard	Mentoring.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Jennifer Clements	
<u>Policy</u>	Chair	LCDR Eileen Bosso	Policy.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Alex Freiman	
<u>Readiness</u>	Chair	CAPT Jonathan Kwan	Readiness.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CAPT Darin Wieggers	
<u>Recruitment & Retention</u>	Chair	CDR Monique Salter	RecruitmentRetention.HSPAC@gmail.com
	Co-Chair	CDR Chad Thompson	

2022 HS Category Professional Advisory Groups (PAGs)

HS Category has formed ten PAGs. Together, they address discipline-specific professional issues and advise the HS Category and the Chief Professional Officer of the Health Service Officer Category.

Professional Advisory Group	Role	Name	Email
<u>Basic and Applied Science (BASPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR LaTonya Jiggetts	<u>baspag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Jennifer Grant-Smith	
<u>Dental Hygiene (DHPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Cynthia Chennault	<u>dhpag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Jen Eng	
<u>Healthcare Administration (HAPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Scarlett Lusk-Edwards	<u>hpag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Diane M Richardson	
<u>Health Information Technology</u>	Chair	CDR Apollo Wang	<u>hitpag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	CDR David Wright	
<u>Medical Laboratory Science (MLSPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR June Germain	<u>mlspag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Osamede Onaghise	
<u>Optometry (OPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Hanna Fylppa	<u>opag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Jill Thompson	
<u>Physician Assistant (PAPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Joseph Newcomb	<u>papag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	–	
<u>Public Health (PHPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Charlotte Kabore	<u>phpag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Ayana Stanley	
<u>Social Work (SWPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Robert Van Meir	<u>swpag.hspac@gmail.com</u>
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Monique Richards	

2021 HSPAC Chief Professional Officer's Remarks



CAPT Diedre N. Presley
Chief Professional Officer
Health Services Category

Dear Fellow Officers,

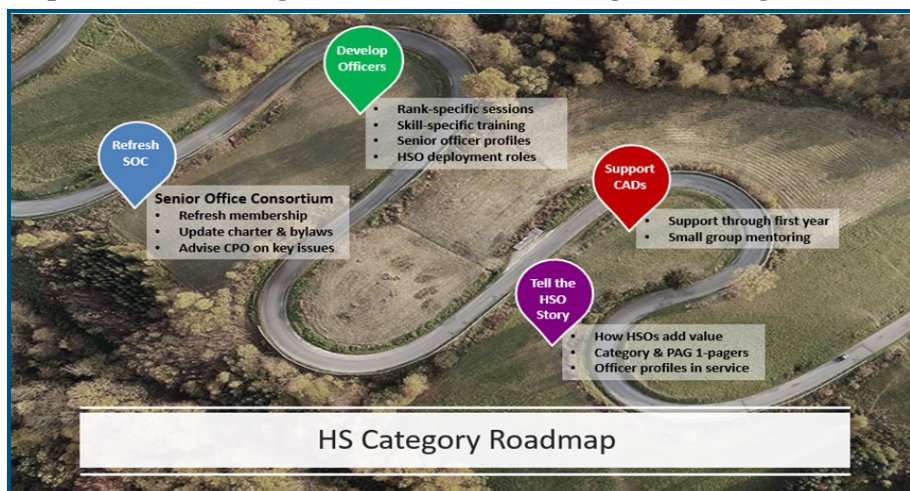
Happy New Year!!! I want to express my gratitude and thank all of you for your commitment and unwavering service as Commissioned Corps officers. While this was a challenging year in many ways, your hard work made, and continues to make, a real difference in the lives of many. We should take pride in the fact that as officers, we not only fulfilled our agency mission but continue to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the Nation. We have remained corps strong through this unprecedented year of change, and I am most proud of the comradery and support we provided to the Corps. Our Category has demonstrated the utmost in officership and leadership as we continue to contribute to the mission of the Corps. Let us salute another year of unprecedented growth and progress! I am especially appreciative of the Professional Advisory Committee and Senior Officer Consortium leadership who have been the architects of our success. As we transition into the new year, I am honored to continue to serve as your Chief Professional Officer.

As we look ahead to 2022, I'm filled with hope, optimism, and excitement for our evolution. As guiding principles that will define our growth and demonstrate our value within the United States Public Health Service, we will remain committed to these three tenants:

Operating with a top down and bottom-up approach that includes compassionate actions and stewardship of our resources and talents; **establishing standards of excellence** in public health, readiness, and leadership development; and **development of a cadre of highly trained and skilled Health Services Officers (HSOs)** who will demonstrate unwavering commitment to supporting the modernization process.

The **Health Services Category Roadmap** is how we will get there, and we will begin focusing our attention on development of initiatives to support our officers and future leaders within our category, our Call to Active-Duty officers and continuing to tell the HSO Story.

As we enter this new year and continue to strive towards developing leaders within the Health Services category, I would like to share excerpts from *Three Daily Resolutions of Effective Leaders*:



It's hard to resist the feeling of personal and professional rebirth that comes with the passing of one

2021 HSPAC Chief Professional Officer's Remarks

(cont.)

year into another. A fresh start is cathartic and motivating. Of course, as anyone who has resolved to change and failed by February knows, this feeling is fleeting as human nature runs smack into real life. That's why the most effective leaders understand that daily discipline always trumps annual resolutions.

Lead With Empathy

Start your day reminding yourself, *"Be kind for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle."*

Instead of bulldozing your way through people and issues take the time to uncover interests and find ways to design solutions that meet more than your own needs.

Prepare Your Attitude for Success

There is power in preparing your attitude to succeed with and through others every single day. Some interesting things happens when you take a few minutes needed to focus on being your best self throughout the day.

You will fail in moments—it's inevitable. However, you will succeed far more often because you took the time to purge the negative and start the day with a positive attitude dedicated to succeeding with and through others.

Resolve each day to bring your best attitude to your work, regardless of circumstances.

Succeed One Encounter at a Time

View the day as a series of discrete encounters where you commit to succeeding with each one; with the intent to leave the situation better off than you found it.

Common Threads of Success

These techniques are simplistic and powerful. They support the development of higher order leadership behaviors, promote continuous personal improvement, and success throughout the year.

Art Petty, *Three Daily Resolutions of Effective Leaders*, 2017, ARTPETTY, [Effective Leaders Know Daily Discipline Trumps Annual Resolutions \(artpetty.com\)](https://artpetty.com)

Let's continue to stand together as one category, one Corps, and begin this year in service with optimism for what the future holds. **#WeAreCorpsStrong!**

2021 HSPAC Chair's Corner

Dear Fellow Officers,

As we round out 2021, what a year it has been! I couldn't be prouder to serve alongside some of the most dedicated public health servants in the world - each and every one of you. I have had the opportunity to observe tenacity and resilience during this challenging year, filled with high frequency calls to deploy or engage during a pandemic with our skillsets, and also to embrace changes coming fast and furious from the Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) leadership levels. My fellow Health Services Officers (HSOs), I think I can say today that we have strived to handle those with poise and grace and overwhelmingly met the challenges amid large sacrifices. That, my friends in service, is the call of duty. Thank you can't be stated enough, as it is a choice we all choose to make.

Relative to our HSPAC leaders, we are fortunate to have such well-established subcommittees and Professional Advisory Groups (PAG) with a passion for service to our category in the areas they serve. And all this collateral work, while still supporting the United States Public Health Service mission and respective agency missions. While we showcase our respective disciplines, unique skills sets and unique perspectives based on the roles we are called to fill, let's continue to stand together as one category, one Corps, and finish this year in service with optimism for what the future holds. Some of that is up to us and how we choose to view moving forward with the many challenges and changes we must navigate. We have always been, and I am confident we can remain CorpsSTRONG! It is with extreme gratitude that I express my humble thanks for the opportunity to serve as your Category chair in 2021. I will truly miss the more direct engagement when I rotate off my term in a few short weeks, but I also know you are in good hands in 2022 with LCDR Goodger as the incoming HSPAC Chair and the consistent leadership of CAPT Presley!

V/r
CDR Beer



CDR Catherine Beer
2021 Chair, Health Services Professional
Advisory Committee

2022 HSPAC Chair's Remarks

Fellow Health Services officers,

Happy New Year! It is an honor to be serving as your HSPAC Chair for 2022. I am excited to help lead our Category alongside CAPT Presley and a tremendous group of Voting Members who are ready to support activities of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC), Professional Advisory Groups (PAGs), and U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) overall. I'd like to especially thank CDR Cathy Beer, 2021 HSPAC Chair, for her dedication to our Category and unwavering support of all officers.

Looking toward 2022, it's important to me that each of you feel engaged in our Category and our Service. I pledge to be transparent with information, develop and share useful resources through our PAC Subcommittees and discipline-specific PAGs, and respond to your questions as best I can. We also want to hear from you! We will be looking for additional ways to communicate more effectively and receive your feedback on a regular basis.

Several areas of improvement for our Category programs have already been identified. We'll be developing additional resources and touchpoints for participants in the Official Mentoring Program. We'll also be revisiting our Professional Core Competencies and looking at ways to build leaders through longer-term career planning. I also urge us to collaborate more amongst each other – across Subcommittees, across PAGs, and across Categories. We're stronger together! If you aren't involved in PAC or PAG activities yet, the new year is a great time to start. Please reach out to the [Membership Subcommittee](#) or your respective PAG leadership for available opportunities.

As we all know, the past couple of years have been especially challenging and the operational tempo remains fast-paced. Please continue to take care of one another and reach out to your colleagues and mentors. If I can be of any support, please always feel comfortable reaching out to me directly. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year!



In Service,
LCDR Elizabeth Goodger
egoodger@hrsa.gov

LCDR Elizabeth Goodger
2022 Chair, Health Services Professional
Advisory Committee

Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team

Spotlight: PHERST

CDR Stephanie Felder, LCDR Jamillah Bynum, and LT Christine Nappa



The Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team (PHERST) is comprised of a small, highly skilled, select cadre of full-time active duty United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps officers, including advanced practice medical providers, pharmacists, nurses, behavioral health officers, and environmental health officers. PHERST officers are trained, prepared, and ready to immediately respond and assess critical requirements in emergent situations such as outbreaks, domestic events, and natural disasters. PHERST ensures the Corps has resources to meet its mission for regional, national, and global public health emergency responses and ensures the Corps can rapidly respond to urgent and emergent public health operations with highly trained professional staff. PHERST reduces response time, minimizes stress on

the system, and allows officers to get ahead of the disaster. If needed, PHERST officers deploy for extended durations; thereby ensuring continuity of care and minimizing information loss that occurs during the rotation of personnel during a deployment. When not deployed, PHERST officers train, maintain their skills, and may fill short-term staffing gaps in priority agencies in the areas of greatest need providing public health and direct clinical care to underserved and vulnerable populations, including Indian Health Service (IHS), Bureau of Prisons (BOP), or Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Recently, PHERST officers were invited to attend highly technical joint service trainings at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Maryland. The trainings focused on managing chemical and biological casualties and were conducted by staff from the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD) and the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID). Officers attended the following courses: Field Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties (FCBC); Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties (MCBC); and were tentatively scheduled to attend Hospital Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive Incidents Course (HM-CBRNE). These courses included expert classroom instruction and addressed the following:

- team-based triage and decontamination field training exercises;
- how to don and doff Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) level 4 gear;
- the process of performing medical procedures in protective gear;
- signs, symptoms, risks, and treatment modalities for chemical and biological casualties;
- approaches to incident management such as the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Framework (NRF), and the Hospital Incident Command System (HICS); and
- routine and crisis hospital operations.

With the completion of these courses, PHERST officers will be better prepared to respond professionally, safely, and expertly not only to chemical and biological incidences, but to all crises that may require immediate action from PHERST.

In recent years, emergency management response demands have expanded considerably. In total, between 2013 and 2020, more than 47% of Corps officers deployed to support 154 different missions. The Corps has deployed over two-thirds of its officers in support of COVID-19, the highest historic deployment of officers to date. As the U.S. continues to experience natural disasters and other emergencies, and risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic or intentional threat, the Corps must engage in new strategies to better protect the Nation. PHERST is trained and ready to meet the immediate need.

Mentoring Program Debut

HS Officer Peer to Peer (P2P) Mentoring Program Debut LCDR Kimberly Goodwin and LCDR Jennifer Weekes

The Peer to Peer Mentoring Program (P2P) revised its mission and broadened - its recruitment efforts to include officers of all ranks and Professional Advisory Group (PAG) in the Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC). This resulted in renaming the program to HS Officer Peer to Peer Mentoring to coexist with the traditional HSPAC Official Mentoring Program focused on senior to junior officer matches.



In July 2021, the new P2P mentoring program was launched. The Data Management Team worked tenaciously to pair officers based on their rank and top two identified preferences. P2P was a part of the HSPAC Chair update during the first virtual HS Category Day. This initial recruitment effort yielded 140 applications, indicative of officers' desire and eagerness to receive support, network, and connect with peers of the same rank, similar interests, and career aspirations. Unfortunately, due to technical issues, changes were required with program registration and data collection. Within only six weeks a new enrollment process was created, and the program was re-launched. Since the re-launch, P2P has received 97 total applications and has completed 55 matches.

Peer mentoring fosters a co-learning environment with open dialogue to discuss professional development, officership, and networking. Participation in this program affords members the opportunity to meet the officership promotion precept on mentoring (part of "Other Commissioned Corps Professional Contributions"). Enrollment is easy and requires completing the [enrollment form](#) and submitting a copy via email to PHPAGP2P@gmail.com. Once matched, officers receive a welcome letter to connect with their peer and a detailed topics list to guide their discussions. Members will also be invited to a "Peer Rank Chat Session" which provides an informal opportunity to engage in rank specific career development. P2P looks forward to supporting all HS Officers in their career endeavors.

P2P co-leads, CDRs Elizabeth Garza and Neelam Ghiya, would like to thank the 2021 P2P Team outlined below for their outstanding work in launching this PAC-wide initiative. Thank you for all you have accomplished during another pandemic year with multiple deployments to offer a new support-system for our officers.

CAPT Guillermo Aviles-Mendoza	LCDR Stephanie Chiang
CAPT Simleen Kaur	LCDR Kimberly Goodwin
CAPT Carolina Lina-Pinto	LCDR Christopher Hooban
CDR Sherry Gracey	LCDR Heather Joseph
CDR David Hunter	LCDR Laura Vonnahme
CDR Patrick Neubert	LCDR Jennifer Weekes
CDR Michelle Sandoval-Rosario	LT Ngoc Kelsch
CDR Deidre Washington-Jones	LT Tia McClelland

For officers interested in having that one-on-one peer mentor to journey with, please consider making that your 2022 New Years' Resolution. We will match peers based on top preferences (i.e., agency, discipline, etc.) and we look forward to hearing from you!

Leadership in a Clinical Role

Leadership in a Clinical Role

CAPT Julie A. Niven

Frequently, we think of leadership in terms of large programmatic changes. However, leadership takes many forms and can impact staff and/or an individual patient. One must be aware of the potential impact a leader can have in his or her clinical role with individual patients. For those of you in a clinical role, I challenge you to be a leader with the individuals you see in your practice every day. This type of leadership entails proactive listening to discern a patient's needs, showing genuine concern and using your years of practice to positively impact your patient's lives. It also entails the commitment and fortitude to complete all tasks, particularly the tedious ones. **Leadership is seeing a task to completion!**

An effective leader may take a primary role in a project in which he or she is passionate but should not try to complete all the work themselves. Effective leaders motivate and organize a team to support projects to completion. This ensures everyone who participates in the project can share in the satisfaction of a job well done.

sharing ownership!

For example, what like a straightforward over a week worked with several different offices task more time with or telephoned Technician, Clinical Service Administrator and assistant,

and even the patient's peer (with the patient's permission) to finally resolve the patient's issue. In my interactions with these various individuals, I shared knowledge and fostered a partnership to accomplish the task at hand. **Leadership is teamwork!**

Of course, not all projects will be fully successful. Resilient leaders strive to learn from mistakes and/or failures. Leadership accepts accountability when projects fail, and leaders demonstrate stability by accepting praise and criticism equally. **Leadership is flexible!**

In summary, those of us in clinical roles can pursue leadership opportunities while working directly with our patients. In doing so, we not only provide better patient care, but build our clinical and leadership skills in the process. **Leadership is a win-win!**



Leadership is ship of the pro-

initially seemed ward patient need to resolve. I eral staff in several which made the consuming. I met a Medical Records Director, Health trator, Nurse Man-custody, patient

2021 Board of Certification Lab Hero Award Recipient

2021 Board of Certification (BOC) Lab Hero Award Recipient CDR June Germain

The American Society of Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (BOC) recognized two Medical Laboratory Science Officers in their 2021 Lab Hero campaign. LCDR Danielle Baquero was recognized as a **2021 BOC Lab Hero Award Recipient**. The Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Professional Advisory Group extends congratulations to LCDR Baquero!

LCDR Danielle Baquero received her MLS degree from University of West Florida located in Pensacola, Florida. She has served as an officer in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) for the past eight years. She currently works at the Food & Drug Administration performing inspections of human blood and tissue manufacturers.

What does being a BOC Lab Hero mean to you?

To me, a BOC Lab Hero means a medical laboratory scientist who is adaptable and flexible when it comes to the ever-evolving world of the laboratory. A BOC Lab Hero shows leadership through actions such as training new staff, providing continuing education, and accepting new challenges with a positive attitude and with great stride. In the laboratory, we work at many capacities so not only must you be willing to learn new assays, testing platforms, and techniques but you must be eager to learn these new developments within the laboratory setting. Also, it is not only the skill set that is important, but also how you work and communicate with others. In the lab, we work with many different people ranging from our department coworkers to physicians.

What is your vision for the role of laboratory medicine in a constantly evolving healthcare landscape? How do you contribute to that vision?

My vision is one that showcases how important medical laboratory scientists are to healthcare. Medical laboratory scientists tend to be overlooked and do not receive the credit they deserve. Their skills play a very important role in a patient's diagnosis. I contribute to this vision because as an MLS officer in the USPHS, I provide my laboratory skills to laboratories located in isolated and hardship areas. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has shown the world how valuable and needed our skills are, especially most recently with COVID-19 testing.

Describe the challenges of working in a laboratory right now in the midst of the COVID-19 and what you are doing to address those challenges?

I was recently deployed to Guam to provide laboratory skills at the public health laboratory and, specifically for this location, it was very hard to get reagents and supplies shipped out to the island. It was very important to have open communication about inventory when low and ordering supplies/reagents in advance. Another challenge I had on the island was the politics because everything is very heavily influenced by politics. For this reason, I had necessary metrics in place and provided raw data daily to provide the proof we needed to support the needs and resources for the laboratory.



2021 Board of Certification Lab Hero Runner Up

2021 Board of Certification (BOC) Lab Hero Runner Up CDR June Germain

The American Society of Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (BOC) recognized CDR Thomas Maruna as the **2021 BOC Lab Hero Runner Up**. The Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Professional Advisory Group extends congratulations to CDR Maruna!

CDR Thomas Maruna received his MLS degree from the George Washington University, Master of Science degrees in Biotechnology and Biodefense from Johns Hopkins University, and a Master of Arts in Defense and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College. He has served as an officer in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) for the past eight years and has five years prior service in the U.S. Navy. He currently works at the Food & Drug Administration where he is primarily responsible for directing the Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threat's intramural research program for Medical Countermeasures under the Office of the Commissioner.

What does being a BOC Lab Hero mean to you?

Being a Lab Hero allows me to showcase and highlight the variety, complexity, and national importance of the critical work being performed by laboratory professionals across the spectrum of roles and functions. With the USPHS I have deployed to a multitude of regions both foreign and domestic to perform laboratory testing, lab administration, operations, and management. Having the opportunity to highlight the broad swath of opportunities available aids profession recruitment and showcases opportunities for skill development, growth, and leadership; thus, supporting retention efforts and provides avenues for mentorship of next generation of laboratorians. I get to give back to my profession and expand the practical scope of the laboratorian's traditional public role.

What is your vision for the role of laboratory medicine in a constantly evolving healthcare landscape? How do you contribute to that vision?

Although laboratory medicine is integral to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and managing disease of patients, it suffers from poor visibility as a medical discipline and as a profession and offers few rewards for educational advancement compared to other medical disciplines. There is a need for a viable culture given the scientific background for implementing outcome research, and there is a need to act as knowledge managers as well as skilled clinical consultants. In order to highlight relevance in the healthcare environment, we as a discipline must assume an outward looking and innovative posture, and act as leaders, ambassadors, and mentors of our profession.

Describe the challenges of working in a laboratory right now in the midst of the COVID-19 and what you are doing to address those challenges?

There are structural and practical roadblocks that generate substantial hurdles in providing timely and efficient response to an infectious emergency such as COVID-19. Since March 2020, I have served operationally in a variety of roles on the national level to address in part some of these issues. Principally, I served as Chief Safety and Infection Control Advisor for the initial federal Public Health response that saw the construction and staffing of community field hospitals across the nation, implementing structural and administrative controls that keep staff and patients safe. Further, I have advised the Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services and the Assistant Secretary for Administration on environmental, testing, and contract tracing efforts that need to be implemented government-wide to ensure safe reconstitution of normal operations.



COVID-19 Missions: Unique Laboratory Support

Unique Laboratory Support Missions in the COVID-19 Pandemic

CDR June Germain, CDR Christopher Le, CDR Thomas Maruna, CDR Lundy Patrick, CDR Lisa Flores, LCDR Danielle Baquero, LCDR Fabian Chaparro, LCDR Samuel Motto, LCDR Pamela Ogonowski, LCDR Osamede “Chris” Onaghise

It’s hard to believe that we are two years into the COVID-19 pandemic. As much as we would like things to get back to normal, COVID-19 deployments have presented unique and interesting opportunities for Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS), taking them much farther than what is typical.

Most recently, a team of MLS Officers, CDR June Germain, CDR Thomas Maruna, CDR Christopher Le, LCDR Pamela Ogonowski, and LCDR Danielle Baquero, supported the Guam Public Health Laboratory (GPHL) during their COVID-19 surge. Guam is the largest island in Micronesia and is the southernmost of the Mariana Islands. Traveling to Guam takes over twenty-four hours from the east coast and the island is where America’s day begins. Upon arrival, the team was met with warm air and an even warmer welcome by the island’s laboratory team.

The staff at the GPHL have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic, often seven days a week for over twelve hours at a time. At the peak of the surge, the laboratory was analyzing 500-800 patient samples a day from clinics all around the island. They were extremely appreciative of the team’s assistance with molecular COVID-19 testing, utilizing a variety of analyzers including Abbott ID Now, Cepheid GeneXpert System, and manual reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction. The team also assisted with sample accessioning, finalizing requisition forms, and releasing patient results. The laboratory did not have a laboratory information system, so all patient results were documented manually using pens and rubber stamps. When you are on an island, you do the best you can with what you can get!

In December 2020, five MLS Officers returned from a 31-day deployment to the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) in Anchorage. CDR Lisa Flores, CDR Lundy Patrick, LCDR Osamede Onaghise, LCDR Samuel Motto, and LCDR Fabian Chaparro provided critical support to the lab at ANMC during a period of severe staff shortage. The team of five FDA officers integrated very quickly and provided testing support in all three shifts in specimen accessioning, hematology, chemistry, blood banking, and COVID testing. The laboratory needed the temporary personnel boost to allow the 173-bed hospital resume suspended clinical services while they worked out longer-term staffing solutions. ANMC was able to resume its regional trauma center services within days of the MLS officers’ arrival. The leadership and staff appreciated the timely support and went above and beyond in facilitating the USPHS team’s successful integration.

Whether it was a moose casually strolling through the parking lot or having to train your eyes to accept the near absence of color outside (everything was coated thick with snow), there was this constant reminder that you were very far from home. For one officer from Miami, indeed very far! The uniqueness of this deployment was beyond the snow and those turkey-sized Ravens; the breadth of the work done, the impact, and just how well five officers teamed up to accomplish the mission, was truly remarkable.

In recent years, from Puerto Rico to Liberia, from Alaska to Guam and Saipan, MLS officers of the United States Public Health Service have been responding to laboratory support needs in far and unique locations across both the Atlantic and Pacific.

Deployment and Cultural Awareness

Deployment and Cultural Awareness

CDR Katherine Demers and LCDR Gregory Bessette

With growing frequency, United States Public Health Service (USPHS) officers are being called to deploy in increasingly diverse situations. Officers are being regularly faced with challenging situations that necessitate a renewed focus on cultural competence, from responding to earthquakes in Puerto Rico, assisting unaccompanied children from our southern neighbors, to assisting with dislocated refugees from the other side of the world.

“Often, the cultural training that does exist is overly simplistic, focusing mostly on points of etiquette such as not to use the left hand or to show the bottoms of the feet. While these behavioral guidelines can be useful, they do not go nearly far enough, nor do they provide... an adequate understanding of the reasons behind these directives. Indeed, in some cases, soldiers trying to follow these rules focus more on avoiding offending someone than they focus on their mission.” –Excerpt from *Through the Lens of Cultural Awareness*. Combat Studies Institute Press Fort Leavenworth, KS

We cannot be culturally adept in all deployment scenarios, but learning how to navigate the differences and gather information quickly can be crucial to our continued excellence. This necessitates some level of cultural competence in healthcare which involves recognizing and understanding different beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviors well enough to ensure one can still deliver health care effectively and respectfully.

On our most recent deployment, language and the prevalence of significant barriers. Communication problems have been shown to lead to poor comprehension, decreased patient dissatisfaction and even Use of interpreters is a great step forward but unless they are in the healthcare field, they may struggle with some of the information if it isn't presented correctly. This is especially true if the interpreter also does not understand the culture of the provider, let alone medical language and culture.



CDRs Katherine Demers, PA-C; Aaron Simpson, LCSW; Wade Keckler, psychologist and Jose Gomez, psychologist. September -October 2021 deployment

Complicating matters, providers and medical case managers needed to be mindful of certain aspects of the culture that surrounded male/female interactions. Sending a male interpreter with a female patient was taboo and could result in multiple difficulties.

The cultural and language barriers were intriguing. Navigating these challenges while ensuring that the individuals got the highest level of care led to long days and sleepless nights (shout out to Corps Care!), but we hope that the impact our USPHS teams make will be evident as some of the people we helped move into our communities and enrich our society.

When you are called to serve, spend some time really orienting yourself to the culture that you will be serving. This will go a long way in increasing your capability and ability to provide care. Another way to increase your cultural competency is to apply for the Global Health Engagement certificate program through the Uniformed Services University. Applications will open on February 1, 2022. It takes a year-and-a-half to complete, is remote and free. <https://medschool.usuhs.edu/pmb/education/global-health-distance-learning-program>

2021 PAC Push-Up Challenge Results

The 2021 PAC Push-Up Challenge Results Are In! LCDR Kimberly Bissohong

The PAC Push-up Challenge was launched by the HSPAC in 2018 to support officer fitness, preparation for the Annual Physical Fitness Test to meet readiness requirements, and to promote camaraderie across the Corps. This year's Push-Up Challenge took place October 2021. The Environmental Health Officer category came in first place with a total of 48,788 push-ups, followed by the Nursing category with 32,473, and the Health Services Officer category with 27,148. Great effort by all officers who participated!

The 2021 overall winner and female champion is LCDR Corey Butler with a total of 20,666 push-ups, and the male winner is LCDR Dan Johnson with a total of 13,830 push-ups! Our two champions are featured below:

LCDR Corey Butler



LCDR Butler is an Environmental Health Officer and has always had an interest in weightlifting and before the challenge she already regularly incorporated push-ups in her daily routine. Her approach to the challenge included completing push-ups randomly throughout the day, such as while waiting for her coffee to brew in the morning, before walking the family dog, or before the start of a meeting. LCDR Butler aimed to complete increments of 50 push-ups. Her motivating force was her husband and children who sometimes joined her to do push-ups as well as the progress reported by officers on Facebook. She was inspired by other officers really putting in the effort and who may have started with only being able to do two push-ups in a row, working hard and over time improving to being able to complete 25 push-ups in a row.

LCDR Daniel Johnson



LCDR Johnson is a Dietitian Officer and started participating in the challenge when he saw that his category was in last place after week 1. He was determined to improve his category's ranking, despite joining the challenge a week late. With the idea of achieving success through repetition and pattern, LCDR Johnson set out to complete around 25-30 push-ups every 30 minutes or at the top of the hour. Being stationed at CCHQ and responsible for coordinating various deployment activities, sometimes at odd hours, this included completing push-ups in the wee hours of the morning or late at night. LCDR Johnson motivated his officemate, LCDR Brian Czarnecki, throughout the challenge who in turn also motivated him. LCDR Johnson can see the Push-Up Challenge expanding in the future to other Corps-wide challenges such as squats, mile runs and walks, or [CrossFit Murph](#) workouts.

We also had great representation from our Professional Advisory Groups (PAGs) with the following results:

- PHPAG - 9071
- DHPAG - 6519
- PAPAG - 3980
- MLSPAG - 2352
- HITPAG - 1775
- SWPAG - 1240
- OPAG - 0
- BASPAG - 194
- HAPAG - 1090

Congratulations to this year's PAC Push-Up Challenge winners and to another successful fitness competition that brought officers together, encouraged fitness, and inspired esprit de corps. We are already looking forward to next year's challenge!

2021 HSPAC End of Year Event Recap

2021 Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC) End of Year Event Recap CDR Neelam Ghiya and LCDR Janesia Robbs

The HSPAC hosted a virtual End of Year (EOY) Event on December 10, 2021 from 1100 to 1300 ET to highlight the accomplishments of Health Services Officers (HSOs), enhance personal and professional connections with fellow officers, and increase excitement about the upcoming year. This year's event provided an opportunity for HSPAC officers to come together via Zoom and hear critical updates from HSPAC leadership, celebrate the category's top performers, and learn from officer's first-hand experiences. Over 200 U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) officers participated in the event. Thank you to the following HSPAC Events Subcommittee and End of Year Event Planning Team members who coordinated and executed the successful event: HSPAC Events Subcommittee Chair and Co-Chair - CDR Jennifer Clements and LCDR Janesia Robbs; and End of Year Planning Team - CAPT Todd Alspach, CDR Margaret Caulk, CDR Neelam Ghiya, CDR David Schwab, and LCDR Anca Preda.

As a high-level recap, the HSPAC Chief Professional Officer (CPO), CAPT Diedre Presley, kicked off the event with a special recognition for the past HSPAC CPO, CAPT Jeanean Willis-Marsh. CAPT Presley also acknowledged the 2021 HSPAC Chair, CDR Catherine Beer, for her dedication and hard work throughout the year to further the mission of the Health Services Category and USPHS. She also introduced the 2022 HSPAC Chair, LCDR Elizabeth Goodger. Next, CAPT Presley discussed the State of the Category Survey which is a tool to help describe the strengths of the category and better understand our diversity, capabilities, successes, and challenges. She encouraged all HSOs to participate in future surveys to better articulate our value to the Corps.

CDR Beer then provided brief remarks on the importance of resiliency as an HSO, presented the 2021 HSPAC Subcommittee and Professional Advisory Group accomplishments, and showcased the 2021 HSPAC Top Performers. CDR Beer also introduced the 2022 HSPAC Leadership Team and previewed the 2022 HSPAC Vision which focuses on three themes: engagement, leadership, and collaboration. CDR Beer thanked all HSOs for the great work completed this year and noted her excitement for the year ahead.

The end of year event ended with a plenary presentation on the "Building Blocks of an HSPAC Officer."

CDRs Nicole Bell, Michael Bowens, John Diehl, and Niketta Womack provided a comprehensive picture of how to be a successful USPHS officer and have a meaningful career, focusing on career progression, mentoring, networking, and readiness best practices.

To access the [2021 HSPAC End of Year Event Recording](#) and [PPT presentations](#), please visit [Max.gov](#).



Popular HSPAC Facebook Posts



Megan Morgan Brose

December 27, 2021 at 12:07 PM · 🌐

Happy Holidays from snowy Montana! During extremely cold weather, staying warm and safe can be a challenge. Learn how to prepare for winter storms, prevent cold temperature-related health problems, and protect yourself during all stages of a winter storm and cold weather. Whether your duty station is in one of the northern states or you deploy to one of these areas, now is a good time to prepare for winter weather and how to keep safe and healthy in cold environments. Check o... See more



2 Comments



Lindsay Hatch

December 1, 2021 · 🌐

National Influenza Vaccination Week is coming soon, and is on December 5-11. If you haven't done so already, please consider getting your flu shot! It can help keep you and your loved ones healthy this flu season. Plus, all officers are required to get a flu shot by December 31, 2020 to maintain basic readiness.

Please help support this important public health initiative! More information can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/nivw/index.htm>.

Megan Morgan Brose

Like

Comment

Award

Write a comment...



Lindsay Hatch shared a link.

September 1, 2021 · 🌐

September is National Cholesterol Education Month! Did you know that high cholesterol has no signs or symptoms, and can lead to heart attack and stroke? The good news is that you can control many risk factors for high cholesterol through healthy lifestyle choices! So, take a moment to speak with your healthcare provider and loved ones about how you can help manage your cholesterol. Please visit the following link for some great information and graphics!



CDC.GOV

Cholesterol Communications Kit

What is cholesterol, and why is managing cholesterol important? R...

You and 2 others



Lindsay Hatch shared a link.

November 2, 2021 · 🌐

Did you know that 1 in 10 Americans have diabetes? It is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States.

November is American Diabetes Month. Please support this cause and help spread awareness of this disease! For more information, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/diabetes.html>.



CDC.GOV

What is Diabetes?

If you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin...

You and 2 others

Like

Comment

Award




Write a comment...

Popular HSPAC Facebook Posts (cont.)

Megan Morgan Brose
September 21, 2021 · 🌐

September is National Yoga Month, which aims to promote the health benefits of yoga and inspire a healthy lifestyle. According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), many individuals practice yoga to maintain their health and wellbeing, improve physical fitness, relieve stress, and enhance their quality of life. Check out the NCCIH National #YogaMonth Livestream on The Science and Practice of Yoga: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOB7pHRBXAY>



1 Comment

7

Lindsay Hatch shared a link.
July 27, 2021 · 🌐

Next week kicks off National Immunization Awareness Month! This is an annual campaign sponsored by CDC to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. Please join this effort throughout August to encourage everyone you know to get their vaccines and help spread the word! #ivax2protect



CDC.GOV
Recognizing National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)

Visit the COVID-19 Information Center for vaccine resources.
[Get Vaccine Info](#)

7

1 Comment

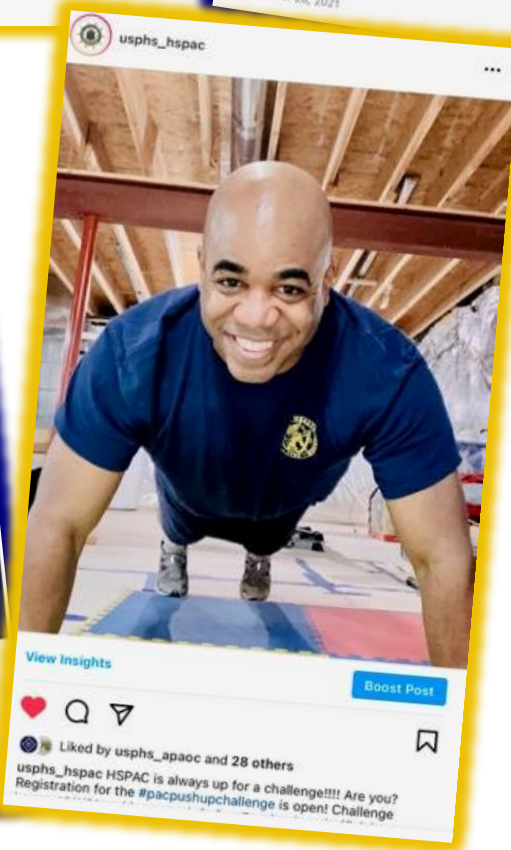
Megan Morgan Brose
August 19, 2021 · 🌐

Today marks the start of Contact Lens Health Week. Did you know that most contact lens wearers report a habit that puts them at risk for serious eye infection? Find out how you can prevent eye infections today at <https://www.cdc.gov/contactlenses/protect-your-eyes.html> #ProtectYourEyes

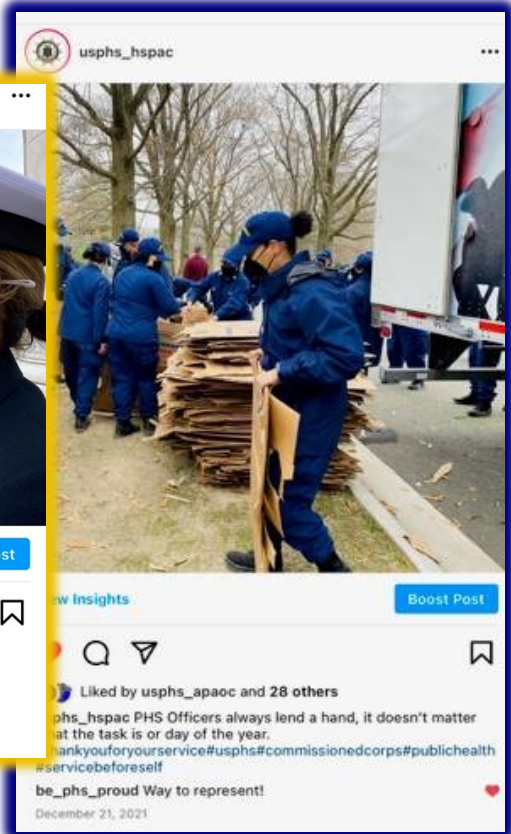
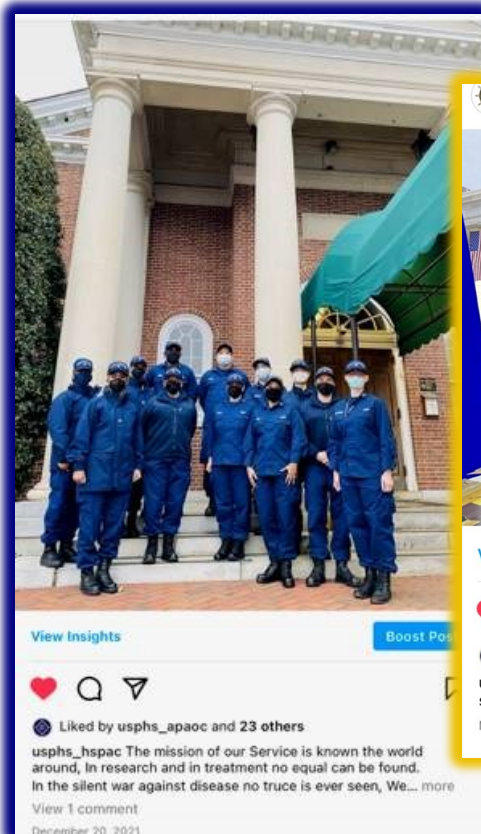


1 Comment

Popular HSPAC Instagram Posts



Popular HSPAC Instagram Posts (cont.)



Get Active with 12 Days of Wellness

HSPAC COMMUNITY WELLNESS

twelve days of wellness

- WALK A FLIGHT OF STAIRS TWICE IN ONE DAY
- EAT 2 SERVINGS OF FRUIT DURING THE DAY
- PRACTICE DEEP BREATHING FOR ONE MINUTE, TWICE DURING THE DAY
- DO SOMETHING NICE FOR A FELLOW OFFICER/FRIEND/OR FAMILY MEMBER
- DO YOGA FOR 15 MINUTES
- WALK 20 MINUTES DURING YOUR LUNCH BREAK
- EAT A HEALTHY SNACK IN THE MIDMORNING AND AFTERNOON
- TAKE A MOMENT TO ENJOY YOUR VIEW OUT YOUR WINDOW OR THE LANDSCAPE AROUND YOU
- DONATE A GIFT TO A COMMUNITY TOY DRIVE
- HOLD A PLANK FOR 30 SECONDS, TWICE IN ONE DAY
- TAKE 5 MINUTES TO STRETCH
- DRINK AN ADDITIONAL GLASS OF WATER DURING YOUR WORKDAY
- EAT LUNCH AWAY FROM YOUR WORKSPACE OR IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION
- DONATE FOOD TO YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK
- DO 30 MINUTES OF CONTINUOUS CARDIO IN ONE DAY
- MOVE ONCE EVERY HOUR
- EAT 2 SERVINGS OF VEGETABLES DURING THE DAY
- TAKE A MOMENT OF GRATITUDE FOR SOMETHING POSITIVE THAT HAS HAPPENED THIS PAST WEEK
- THANK A FELLOW OFFICER AND LET THEM KNOW HOW THEY HELPED YOU OVER THE PAST YEAR
- DO 10 CHAIR SQUATS TWICE IN ONE DAY
- ASK A FELLOW OFFICER TO JOIN YOU IN A WORKOUT (IN-PERSON OR VIRTUALLY)
- DO NOT EAT ANY SWEETS OR DESSERTS FOR 24 HOURS
- WAKE UP 10 MINUTES EARLY AND TAKE TIME TO RELAX BEFORE STARTING THE DAY
- CLEAN OR ORGANIZE YOUR WORKSPACE OR COMMON AREA
- SCHEDULE SOME TIME FOR YOU - A MASSAGE, THERAPY, OR EVEN A NAP.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank those who served as 2021 HSPAC Subcommittee Chairs and Co-Chairs.

2021 HSPAC Subcommittee		
Subcommittee	Role	Name
<u>Analytics</u>	Chair	LCDR Alex Freiman
	Co-Chair	LCDR Aaron Grober
<u>Awards</u>	Chair	CDR Kari Irvn
	Co-Chair	CDR Shannon Aldrich
<u>Career Development</u>	Chair	CDR Pieter Van Horn
	Co-Chair	LCDR Chris Sheehan
<u>Communications</u>	Chair	CDR Karen Chaves
	Co-Chair	CDR Brook Kerns
	Co-Chair	CDR Jessica Damon
<u>Community Wellness</u>	Chair	LCDR Tracy Avila (Tilghman)
	Co-Chair	LCDR Pamela Ogonowski
<u>Events</u>	Chair	CDR Jennifer Clements
	Co-Chair	LCDR Kate Morris
	Co-Chair	LCDR Janesia Robbs
<u>Membership</u>	Chair	LCDR Marquita Burnett
	Co-Chair	CAPT Rebecca Bunnell
<u>Mentoring</u>	Chair	LCDR Elizabeth Goodger
	Co-Chair	CDR Erica Ruchard
<u>Policy</u>	Chair	CDR Margaret Caulk
	Co-Chair	LCDR Eileen Bosso
<u>Readiness</u>	Chair	CAPT Jonathan Kwan
	Co-Chair	LCDR Nicole Bell
<u>Recruitment & Retention</u>	Chair	CDR Martin Guardia
	Co-Chair	CDR Monique Salter

Acknowledgements (cont.)

We would like to thank those who served as 2021 HS Category PAGs Chairs and Chair-Elects.

2021 HS Category PAGs		
Professional Advisory Group	Role	Name
<u>Basic and Applied Science (BASPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Tiffany Taliaferro
	Chair-Elect	LCDR LaTonya Jiggetts
<u>Dental Hygiene (DHPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Emily Warnstadt
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Cynthia Chennault
<u>Healthcare Administration (HAPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Brandon Johnson
	Chair-Elect	CDR Scarlett Lusk-Edwards
<u>Health Information Technology (HITPAG)</u>	Chair	LCDR Shakirat Apelogun
	Chair-Elect	CDR Apollo Wang
<u>Medical Laboratory Science (MLSPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Thomas Maruna
	Chair-Elect	CDR June Germain
<u>Optometry (OPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Greg Smith
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Hanna Fylppa
<u>Physician Assistant (PAPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Michael Chuley
	Chair-Elect	CDR Joseph Newcomb
<u>Public Health (PHPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Kimberly Nguyen
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Charlotte Kabore
<u>Social Work (SWPAG)</u>	Chair	CDR Stephanie Felder
	Chair-Elect	LCDR Robert Van Meir

Thank You!

2021 Executive Committee Members

CPO: CAPT Diedre N. Presley

Chair: CDR Catherine Beer

Executive Secretary: LCDR Mo Halwani

Executive Recorder: LCDR Chris Hooban

Deputy Executive Secretary: LCDR James Betz

Deputy Executive Secretary: LT John Jackson

Deputy Executive Recorder: LT Angela Hatzenbuhler

Advertisements/Announcements



Hope you enjoyed the HSPAC News and Views Winter Newsletter!
Thank you to all the officers who submitted articles and contributed to the winter issue!



Interested in contributing to the next issue of the HSPAC Quarterly Newsletter?

Submit articles and photos to:
Communications.HSPAC@gmail.com

When submitting articles, be sure to include:

- * "Article" in the subject line.
- * A descriptive title for the article.
- * 1-2 high quality photos with captions to help tell your story. Photos should be in .jpeg or .png files.

Special Thanks to the HSPAC Newsletter Team & Contributors!

2021 HSPAC Newsletter Team

Co-Lead: LCDR Janesia Robbs

Co-Lead: LCDR Kimberly Goodwin

Co-Lead Editor: CDR Keisha Bayne

Co-Lead Editor: CDR Samantha Fontenelle

Graphics/Layout Lead: LT Tia McClelland

Editors:

CDR Karen Beckham

CDR Erich Kleinschmidt

LCDR Alicia Sherrell

LCDR Belinda Slaughter

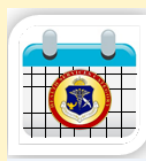
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https://www.instagram.com/usphs_hspac/



https://twitter.com/PHS_HSPAC



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAFgNP->