



# SWPAG E-Newsletter



## CHAIR'S CORNER

### **REMINDER! VOTE NOW!**

Congratulation to all the candidates on running for these very prestigious positions and wish you a happy and successful campaign. The following officers are running for Chair Elect 2018/Chair 2019 SWPAG; and for 2018 Executive Secretary. Please take time to review the candidates information attached, and cast your votes using the link below. **Election will run through December 7, 2017. The election Results are to be announced December 21, 2017.**

- a. **2018 Chair-Elect/2019 Chair SWPAG:** (check only one in the link below)



Fields SWPAG  
Election Nominator

**CDR Marivic Fields**



CaldwellSWPAG  
Election Nominator

**CDR Deloris Caldwell**

- b. **2018 Executive Secretary: (Check only one in the link below)**



SWPAG Election  
Nomination form 20

**LT Oretade-Branch**

SWPAG Voting LINK: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DR7KMWR>

If the link above does not hyperlink to the survey, then please copy and paste the address to your web browser.  
For any questions, please contact your 2017 SWPAG Chair: **CDR Sonjia Howard LISW-CP, BCD**

Very Respectfully,  
LCDR Marriah Lombardo  
2017 SWPAG Secretary

## SOCIAL WORK IN ACTION

### ***Embedded Social Workers in an RDF during Hurricane Irma Response***

*By CDR Marivic Fields, LMSW, BCD and CDR Tina Bryant, LCSW, BCD*

Social workers stand ready when called to deploy! This was particularly true when we were called to respond to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. Social worker roles vary from disaster case management to patient movement and functions may also differ depending on the deployment team we support.

The two of us were deployed during Hurricane Irma and we were embedded with Rapid Deployment Force (RDF)-3. After two weeks of being on alert status, the anticipation of the deployment suddenly crept in and we were both ready to take on the challenge of utilizing our well-honed social work skills - and do what we do best, including advocacy, case management, and disaster mental health. As members the Services Access Team (SAT)-4, our primary mission as embedded SAT officers for this deployment was to provide discharge case management to flood victims who sought shelter at the Ray V. Pottorf Elementary School in Fort Myers, FL. This school was designated as a 'special needs' shelter during the hurricane for individuals with low-acuity medical needs, most of whom were accompanied by family members serving as the residents' non-medical attendants (NMAs). Most of the patients were elderly citizens who were displaced from their homes due to damage or loss of power to their residences. Imagine the how challenging the task of dealing with the loss of their belongings, displacement from their home, and having to adjust to a new environment – and even more so for those who were without family support in the area.

RDF-3 personnel were comprised of highly skilled officers with diverse medical care expertise. The two of us were thrust into this mission with some initial trepidation because it has been a while since we had direct patient contact. Nonetheless, we blended well within the team of dedicated officer and everyone worked hand in hand with the SAT personnel to ensure a smooth transition of each and every resident from the shelter to either their home or to an alternate location of their choice. The shelter was initially staffed by state (FL) health department

medical personnel who provided nursing care to the patients, though shelter operation was later transferred to RDF-3 for medical care; and to SAT-4 personnel for discharge case management responsibilities. We spent many hours interviewing every resident in the shelter to determine their specific needs including those who would be returning home and only needing assistance with transportation, to those needing FEMA services to relocate to a hotel until their homes were repaired. We made telephone calls to local utility companies; coordinated with local



Row 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left, CDR Marivic Fields, LMSW, SAT-4 Team Commander  
Row3, 5<sup>th</sup> from left, CDR Tina Brvant, LCSW, SAT-4 Member with the RDF-3 Team

state health department to verify if the residents' power was restored; and contacted FEMA for transitional

services, including hotel vouchers and emergency funds. We also collaborated with community based organizations and medical providers to reestablish home health services for residents who were returning home. Additionally, we contacted family members of the residents who have not seen their loved ones since the flooding and made further arrangements with them on behalf of the residents.

The deployment was a valuable experience-the residents and the local health department was grateful for the services we provided. It proved a key opportunity to understand how the local, state and federal agencies work together in a disaster setting for the benefit of those affected. Furthermore, it was a testament of camaraderie within the Commission Corps during a deployment as we integrated and became part of the team even before we left our home stations.

We both came to realize that our social work skills never fade, nor do we ever lose sight of the reasons for being a part of such a noble profession that is social work. It's engrained in us that we will always lend a hand to those who are in need, provide support to those who are weak, and advocate to those who may not otherwise be heard. And, we pledge to also take care of ourselves just as much as we take care of others!

### **Service Access Team – 4 (SAT-4) Deployment Team Recruitment Call**



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*SAT-4 is actively recruiting new members. So, for those who are interested in being part of a team of ready, willing, and exceptionally able providers who bring a variety of skills to deployment setting, then reach out to us, (at [maria.fields@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:maria.fields@acf.hhs.gov)) and remember, #SAT4BringsMore!*

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## LIFELONG LEARNING

### ***Continuing Education Resources for Professional Development***

By LCDR Sean Bennett, LCSW, BCD

This month we are highlighting two online resources to obtain training on models of integration and healthy system improvement.

1. The Agency for Health Care and Quality Improvement (AHRQ) offers the TeamSTEPPS train via the Learning Management System. TeamSTEPPS is an evidence-based teamwork system aimed at optimizing patient outcomes by improving communication and teamwork skills among health care professionals and staff. It includes a comprehensive set of ready-to-use materials and a training curriculum to successfully integrate teamwork principles into any health care system. You can either enroll to become a Master Trainer, or simply complete individual modules. In all cases you can earn CE upon successful completion. FMI please click the following link <https://tslms.org/>
2. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) provides access to the IHI's 'Open School' to support you in your quality improvement efforts. The Open School offers essential training and tools in an [online, educational community](#) to help you and your team deliver excellent, safe care and to build core skills in improvement, safety, and leadership. The Open School offers more than 30 online courses in quality, safety, leadership, the Triple Aim, and patient-centered care. FMI please click the following link <https://www.ihl.org/layouts/15/ihl/userregistration/userregistration.aspx?displayuserreg=full&ReturnURL=http://app.ihl.org/lmsspa/#/validatePasscode>
3. The CDC has a free CE program known as Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA). The purpose of COCA continuing education opportunities is to increase clinicians' knowledge and competencies of threats to the public's health, their effects on human populations, and evaluation and management strategies of these threats. COCA continuing education is free.

#### **How to earn continuing education (CE):**

- a. Go to the [CDC Training & Continuing Education Online System](#).
- b. Log in as a participant. If this is your first visit, you will need to register and establish a login name and password
- c. Click on "Search and Register"
- d. Under "keyword search" find the course you are interested in by entering:
- e. "WC2286" for calls hosted in last 30 days
- f. "WD2286" for calls hosted more than 30 days ago
- g. Select your course
- h. Complete evaluation
- i. Pass posttest at 50%
- j. Print your CE certificate

Consider signing up today for these professional development opportunities. Hope to see you around in the virtual classroom!

## SOCIAL WORKERS TO SOCIAL WORKERS (SW2SW)

### Feature Article

### ***NASW Recognizes Two Of Our Own As Trailblazers!***

*By CDR Barbara Olaniyan, DSW, LICSW, BCD*

Two Commissioned Corps social workers—one retired and one on active duty—were two of 17 newly inducted NASW Social Work Pioneers® at the 13th Annual Program and Luncheon held on October 28, 2017 at the Woman’s National Democratic Club in Washington, DC. CAPT (retired) Donald Soeken (*pictured on L below*) served from 1967 to 1994. CAPT Todd Lennon (*pictured on R below*) was commissioned into the Inactive Reserve Corps in 2005 and was called to extended active duty in 2007. The printed program for the event included these brief citations of their pioneering work. Dr. Donald Soeken was the first recipient of the Jack Otis Whistleblower Award presented by the Research and Education Fund of NASW (now the NASW Foundation). He received the NASW Health



Achievement Award for Legislation in recognition of sustained efforts to improve the mental health of the residents of metropolitan Washington, DC. He is an expert witness for whistleblowers and also an advocate for those persons who speak out about waste, fraud, and abuse of power in the government and industry.

Dr. Todd Lennon was responsible for leading the Council on Social Work Education into the digital era in the 1990s and early 2000s. The technology solutions he established improved CSWE’s business processes and advanced its mission. He is currently a captain and social work leader in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

It is worth noting that CAPT Lennon was cited for his work at CSWE, prior to his joining the Corps and that he and CAPT Soeken are not the first Commissioned Corps social workers to be recognized with this honor. They join Milton Wittman, the Corps’ first social work “Professional Liaison Officer.” A full list of Pioneers® and citations can be found on the NASW Foundation Web site at <http://www.naswfoundation.org/pioneers/>.

### ***Brief Note on Readiness and Preparedness: That Tedious and Constant State.***

*By CDR Carlos R. Castillo, LCSW, ACSW, BCD*

Soon, it will be that time again, where we will need to check our readiness compliance before the year is over. The

next readiness status check is on Dec 30, 2017. Do not get caught off guard.

Are you ready or prepared?



In order to be ready you have to practice preparedness. In other words, you prepare to be ready.

I have always struggled with the concept of being ready. Why is it that when you think you are ready, you find out that you aren’t? Or, why is it that one could be deemed ready today, but not necessarily tomorrow? It is simple.

Readiness is a concept, it is a state of being that is variable; it is relative to how prepared you are for a specific time



and a specific need or a specific situation. That is why is so challenging. It is a set of requirements that must be attained and kept alive all at once; a real juggling act.

For instance, how could one be ready if one does not know when one will deploy? And, are we really ready? If so, ready for what? Well, that is the constant challenge for commissioned officers. The state of being ready is like carrying insurance on your car. You can't drive your car if you don't have insurance, and you carry it in hopes you will never have to use it due to an accident. However, if you happen to be involved in an accident, because you prepared by keeping your insurance up to date, you are ready to have expenses covered, or at least, most of it.

Because you prepared yourself, you were ready when needed. Can you imagine if you did not pay attention to your insurance payments and the car accident happened the day after your insurance expired? If that is the case, it means you were not ready. You were preparing all year long, but not ready because you missed that one payment.

So, we prepare in order to be ready, but we do not know when our readiness will be put into practice. Readiness requires practice, training, attention to details and a continual reassessment of our current status. It also requires thinking things through, projecting into the future. It is a time sensitive concept.

In order to comply with Corps readiness each officer needs to meet at least 7 basic requirements: the Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT), the Basic Life Support (BLS), Immunizations, Licensure, Medical Exam, Readiness Courses, and Deployment Role. One would also need to comply with additional requirements if you are going before a promotion board.

Practicing preparedness:

So, remember. Are you practicing preparedness? Preparedness is an individual process that requires monitoring and progress. If you practice preparedness you can comply with readiness. I invite you to practice preparedness all year round, so you don't have to worry about being ready.

\*Please, check the Basic Readiness Checklist. You can download it at:

[https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/Forms/Basic\\_Readiness\\_Checklist.pdf](https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/Forms/Basic_Readiness_Checklist.pdf)



# Save The Date!

126th Annual AMSUS Meeting  
Joint Social Work Panel & Collaborative Sessions  
**Force Health Protection: From Battlefield to Homefront**  
1 DEC 2017 | 1200-1700  
NATIONAL Harbor, MD | DC Metro Region

This will be the first time in 3 years that **SWPAG** has developed a significant footprint such as having one full half-day of information packed seminars featuring our very own SWPAG members and other professionals in the field of Behavioral & Public Health as well as a panel of Uniformed Services Social Work Consultants with the opportunity to obtain **5** general CEs. We will also have posters displayed in the exhibit hall for your enjoyment.

Come out and support SWPAG!!

For more information, see <http://www.amsusmeetings.org/home-2/>

Please submit articles for future publications of the SWAG Newsletter:

- CDR Barbra Olaniyan – Chair SWPAG Communication Subcommittee at [bolaniyan@hrsa.gov](mailto:bolaniyan@hrsa.gov)
- LCDR Sean Bennett, Co-Chair SWPAG Communication Subcommittee at [sean.bennett@ihs.gov](mailto:sean.bennett@ihs.gov)
- LCDR Mariah Lombardi, SWPAG Executive Secretary at [marriah.lombardo@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:marriah.lombardo@hq.dhs.gov)