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Meet the HAPAG Leadership Team!

HAPAG Chair CDR Kimberley Hawkins works as the Senior Personnel Management Officer within the IPU Personnel Unit for the ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC). In this position she is the Eastern Regional Personnel Manager where she manages the on-boarding and recruitment of over 100 PHS officers to IHSC. She has over 20 years of experience within the public health and health administration industry. CDR Hawkins began her U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) career in 2009 with the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) in Rockville, MD. As an officer at HRSA she worked on various programs throughout the agency gaining additional health administration experience. She has worked as a Program/Public Health Analyst with the National Health Service Corps- Nurse Corps Scholarship Program where she provided assistance and service to over 200+ program participants, the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program overseeing 39 medical training grants, and finally the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program where she served as a project officer managing 10 public and nonprofit entities in the State of Texas for compliance with the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act of 2009.

CDR Hawkins has been a very active member of HAPAG since joining PHS and held many leadership positions within the PAG that include: Voting Member, Membership Chair, Communications Chair, and served as the 2019 Chair-elect. CDR Hawkins has volunteered and participated in various committees at HRSA, IHSC, as well as served on temporary duty assignments throughout her PHS career thus far. She has worked to establish a well-rounded career as a Health Services Officer (HSO) dedicating her time to both HSPAC & HAPAG volunteering for opportunities to advocate for and support PHS Officers while effectively advancing the PHS mission. She currently holds a Masters in Healthcare Administration (MHA), Masters of Business Administration (MBA) and certificates in Leadership and Human Resources Essentials from Cornell University.



LCDR Brandon T. Johnson, chair-elect for HAPAG recently completed his Doctorate degree in Psychology. He graduated from Capella University on Saturday, March 7, 2020 in Orlando, FL. "I almost did not make it with all the COVID-19 activity ramping up...they were just beginning to discuss limited domestic travel the week we departed," stated Johnson. On a brighter note, he is excited about how he can continue to apply the skills gained through the doctoral process to the USPHS mission. "I spent a significant portion of my career at SAMHSA and am passionate about access and quality of behavioral healthcare for America's communities. However, I also know that behavioral science has much to contribute to the broader public health issues." LCDR Johnson currently serves as an Assistant Health Services Administrator for ICE Health Service Corps in Elizabeth, NJ.



An Officer's Perspective on Embracing the New Normal

By LCDR Tracy Smith

Prior to the pandemic, our normal routines were relatively undisturbed; in January 2020, that changed for many Public Health Officers and everyone around the world. Covid-19 had hit our nation with a bang. As Public Health Officers we stand ready 24 hours a day 7 days a week, so we were prepared to come face to face with this deadly disease as we have done so many times before. However, many of us didn't realize that a new norm was emerging and how quickly it would change our lives.

Being one of many officers to deploy in support of COVID-19, it was truly an amazing experience but it came with mixed emotions. I was sad that I was leaving my family, I was fearful of the unknown, and I was excited to be able to support the COVID-19 mission alongside my fellow officers -- but I didn't realize once I returned home that our normal everyday lives would change so drastically.

COVID-19 has changed the way we live, work, and learn - ensuring that we are washing our hands for at least 20 seconds with antibacterial soap and water, using at least 60% or higher alcohol products to sanitize, keeping a distance of at least 6 feet or more between one another and wearing a mask. These were all things that we had to train our brain to remember in order to keep our friends and families safe. Then there's working from home and homeschooling; this was definitely a learning curve for all of us. On top of all that our gyms, libraries, social rooms, pools, and restaurants were all affected, so it felt like there was no place to run to relieve all the added stress that we were enduring. But in reality we adapted very quickly to this new norm and it has brought our family closer than ever. We have time to go on bike rides, participate in discussions that are affecting our communities, tackling chores we couldn't get to previously, and more importantly spending more time with our families. The bottom line is that many of us have to realize that life is fundamentally different, and for almost all of us it has shown that we can quickly change our daily routines, that we are adaptable, and that we are resilient.

Continuing Education Corner

The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) understands the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted healthcare professionals across the globe. To help healthcare leaders continue to grow and learn, ACHE is offering a 25 percent discount on the registration fees for all paid live webinars, webinar recordings and online seminars now through Dec. 31, 2020. See the ACHE website for additional details: <https://www.ache.org/learning-center/education-and-events/e-learning>



Maintaining Wellness During an Uncertain Time

We're in this together – the good intentioned coin phrase of the Coronavirus. Even though we are all in the same boat per se, we are all working with dissimilar crews, or may find ourselves as the Captain of our own ship, without a First Mate. Wherever you may find yourself during this pandemic, it may be a challenge to maintain focus as we are living the “new norm.” Self-isolation and working from home can put a damper on our mood and trigger depression if you thrive on human interaction – it doesn’t have to be this way. The importance of networking amongst your colleagues and checking in with one another, just to say hello, are paramount to your overall well-being as we continue to forge into the unknown future that lies ahead. This pandemic provides us an opportunity to get creative with maintaining our social relationships and helps us emphasize on kindling the human spirit through kindness and embracing gratitude.

To help you regain your focus as we tread the unknown waters of COVID-19, please refer to the links below for assistance:

Personal Well-Being

[CDC: Taking Care of Your Emotional Health](#)

[John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource: Practicing Wellness While You Stay at Home](#)

[Protecting Yourself From Depression During Self-Isolation](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Health COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)

[Resources for Healthcare Professionals](#)

Family Well-Being

[Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)

[Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

Let’s put a positive spin on isolation, as it can provide an opportunity for personal growth! In an effort to network and broaden our professional horizons, the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Committee is working to grow relationships with Health Information/Informatics and Healthcare Administration knowledge experts to provide insight on new trends and topics – stay tuned!

Practice mindfulness and gratitude by taking a BREATH: **B**reath.**R**est.**E**xercise.**A**ppreciate.**T**hank.**H**appy.

Take care and be kind,

LCDR Amanda Deering and LCDR Brandy Rose