

The Scientist Officer

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Scientist Category Day 2016, Oklahoma City

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2016 SciPAC Category Day Social—Dinner & Mini-Golf!

By LCDR Iram Hassan, LCDR Jorge Muñiz Ortiz, & CDR A. Danielle Iuliano

During category day at the 2016 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium in Oklahoma City, OK, the Scientist Professional Advisory Category (SciPAC) held two events planned by the Social Subcommittee: an icebreaker and an evening dinner/mini-golf activity. The icebreaker event, which was held during one of the breaks on Category Day, gave Scientist officers the opportunity to catch up with each other or to meet in person for the first time. The event was attended by approximately 30 officers, who were split into 5 teams. Each team was given a bingo-style sheet, and to win the game, the team had to fill as many boxes on the bingo sheet as possible in the allotted time. Prompted responses on the bingo cards included items such as having a tattoo, being a twin, having parachuted out of a plane, and more! The event was marked by plenty of laughter and camaraderie.

In the evening, more than 20 Scientist officers gathered at Brickopolis Bar and Grill Restaurant near the Bricktown Canal in Oklahoma City to celebrate a successful and informative Scientist Category Day and a rewarding USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. While enjoying food and drink, Scientists enjoyed time to network, discuss diverse research and public health-related projects, share stories about deployments, and chat about their families and hobbies. After dinner, several officers participated in mini-golf, while other officers attended the combined category social event. The mini-golf

teams played for about two hours; Team 1 reportedly performed best, and LCDR Alice Shumate was recognized as the best player. CDR Robin Toblin commented, “The best score was 45 and we hit our golf balls off the putting green an abnormally large number of times. Maybe hand-eye coordination isn’t Scientists’ strong suit!” LCDR Oliver Ou stated that LCDR Eric Jamoom impressively played mini-golf while simultaneously holding a beverage in one hand without spilling it, likely attributable to the inherently steady hands of laboratory scientists.

In sum, the social events planned by the Social Subcommittee were a tremendous success. The Social Subcommittee would like to express its gratitude for the support received from the SciPAC Category Day Committee and all those who participated in the events in Oklahoma City. Until 2017 in Chattanooga...!



chat about their families and hobbies. After dinner, several officers participated in mini-golf, while other officers attended the combined category social event. The mini-golf



Deployment Vignette: Scientist Officer Reflects on Experiences Assisting with Humanitarian Crisis

By LCDR Luis Iturriaga

On June 30, 2014, President Obama declared a “humanitarian crisis” in the Rio Grande Valley region of the United States due to a large influx of women and children from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, who were crossing the border from Mexico into Texas. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) opened a new family residential facility in Artesia, NM, to manage the surge. I was detailed to the area as a Subject Matter Expert to create and launch a mental health program for this population that would meet National Policy and Residential Standards.

Upon arrival, I was provided with housing in the barracks, which is when I first noticed that the community around me appeared to be a barren area with no other accommodations nearby. I entered into the space that would eventually become the clinic; it was an empty storage building. When I stepped inside, I heard some other PHS officers talking about how they had never previously worked with children and families; indeed, most officers had limited experience working with minors and found this new assignment to be a potentially daunting task. There was a sense of trepidation and disorientation, but also excitement about the opportunity to serve this group in need.

Although the task seemed at times overwhelming and formidable, all officers were able to come together as a team and complete the mission’s objectives. For the next 30 days, working at least 15 hours per day, the team of medical, administrative, and mental health professionals would create a medical and mental health program for this very vulnerable population. Through the hard work and experiences we shared, the team developed a strong bond, one that remains intact today. In addition to the everyday rigor of creating a clinic, as part of this high-profile, high-visibility of this mission, officers met with officials from international governments and agencies, dignitaries from

the United Nations, U.S. Senators, DHS cabinet members, and media outlets. Each day, officers, including myself, worked tirelessly in extreme heat and challenging conditions, moving and stocking supplies, modifying building structures, training government officials, and creating policies and procedures, all while trying to maintain a sense of sanity. We were under pressure to have the clinic ready before the arrival of the first 200+ residents, who would include infants, children, adolescents, and adults. Our efforts were met with some community resistance, likely in part due to concerns about who would be housed in the facility and potential impacts on their community, and for this mission, officers were asked not to be in uniform when traveling to the city, and were vigilant about bearing in mind the community concerns pertaining to the mission.

Hundreds of residents arrived on the first day, scared and confused. After meeting with them, it seemed a giant weight was lifted off their shoulders and a sense of relief was apparent once they realized they would have sustenance and a temporary place to stay. This sense of calm and appreciation among the families we served is a vivid memory I will never forget. There was never any training that could have prepared me for this experience, as hundreds of desperate women and children were looking at me for answers about what was to come. The transition back from this fulfilling deployment to my daily life and work was smooth; however, I will never forget the faces of those I was able to provide for, especially the faces changing from desperation to appreciation.



LCDR Luis Iturriaga

CAPT Sally Hu—2016 SciPAC Senior Scientist of the Year

By LCDR Iram Hassan

CAPT Sally Hu, PhD, MBA, is currently a Senior Licensing and Patenting Manager at the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) in NIH, where she is responsible for managing patent prosecution, marketing, and licensing activities for all NIDCR technologies/inventions. Prior to her current position, she served as a senior licensing and patenting manager at the NIH Office of Technology Transfer, managing over 200 pending or issued patent families related to HIV therapeutic technologies. She has completed more than 100 license agreements with companies and organizations from, but not limited to, the USA, United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Mexico, China, and India. One of these license agreements led to Prezista®, which was the first FDA-approved anti-AIDS oral drug for patients with drug-resistant HIV, resulting in many lives saved worldwide and accruing hundreds of millions of dollars in royalty income for NIH to date.

CAPT Hu earned her undergraduate degree from Wuhan University in China, doctoral degree from Boston University School of Medicine, and MBA from Boston University Graduate School of Management. She converted from the civil service to the USPHS Commissioned Corps in May 2006. She joined the USPHS for a number of reasons, including being excited by an opportunity to expand the focus of her career beyond the mission of her agency. Additionally, as a Commissioned Corps officer, she feels she is able to make a positive impact on public health on a global level through deployment opportunities.

CAPT Hu has consistently demonstrated outstanding leadership and dedication to the USPHS, serving as commander of the National Capital Region (NCR) team, which is part of the Tier 1 Regional Incident Support Teams (RIST). She has led 29 deployments since 2010. In addition, CAPT Hu has a well-established record of Scientist Professional

Advisory Committee (SciPAC) leadership, serving as a SciPAC voting member for two terms, chairing six different SciPAC subcommittees, and serving on the 2010 SciPAC Executive Board. She also chaired multiple SciPAC Appointment Boards. She has received 29 USPHS honor awards, including two Outstanding Service Medals and four Commendation Medals, as well as numerous NIH awards for her continued and exemplary achievements to the advancement of the nation's public health.

CAPT Hu is highly dedicated to the career development of fellow officers and her NIH employees. As a USPHS senior officer and an NIH senior manager, one of the most rewarding aspects of her career has been mentoring junior officers and NIH employees and she finds personal fulfillment through their success. She sees a mentorship relationship as mutually rewarding because the mentor can always learn something from the mentee and vice versa. She advises junior officers to enjoy themselves in all USPHS support activities and to support fellow officers in any way possible, including taking on tasks that others may not want, and leading by example.

In her spare time, CAPT Hu enjoys spending time on her favorite hobby, which is horseback riding at the level of cross-country jumping. She is also certified in scuba diving, plays the piano, holds a motorcycle license, and is fluent in Chinese.



CAPT Hu & CAPT Sanders

Officers Collaborate to Support PACE Event at 2016 College and Career Expo in Maryland

By LCDR Neil Bonzagni

On Saturday, April 9, 2016, DC-area U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps officers involved in the Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE) program staffed an information table at the 2016 College and Career Preparation Expo held at Montgomery College in Germantown, MD. Parents and more than 700 students in grades 6-10 in Montgomery County, MD, attended the event, which was held to inform students of career, educational, and vocational options available to them following high school.

Among the officers on hand were three Scientists and one Pharmacist from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, all of whom provided the parents and students an overview of the U.S. Public Health Service. The dialogue included a description of the history and evolving public health mission of the Commissioned Corps, the professional vocations

represented by PHS officers, and the role of the service in supporting emergency and disaster relief functions. Pictured in the photograph below, from left to right: LT Kevin Ninan (Pharmacist), LCDR Shiny Mathew (Scientist), LCDR Luz Rivera (Scientist), and LCDR Neil Bonzagni (Scientist).



USPHS Commissioned Corps Officers Supporting PACE

Revised Annual Physical Fitness Test— Reminder of What’s New

Adapted by LCDR Tajah Blackburn, CDR Yi Zhang, & CDR Deborah Dee

The President’s Challenge option for physical readiness for USPHS Commissioned Corps officers was eliminated on 1 July 2015. All PHS officers are now required to complete the Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) to maintain the physical fitness basic readiness requirement. The revised APFT became effective on 1 January 2016 following an evaluation of existing policies and practices, other uniformed service standards, and scientific evidence. The revised APFT includes new exercise options, evidence-based standards based on current science, an increase in the number of age bands in 5-year increments up to age 65, flexible options for documenting APFT results, parity with other services for scoring, and recognition of high achievement. A comparison of key elements in the past and current APFT is detailed in the table, with changes noted in ***bold italics***.

PHYSICAL FITNESS COMPONENT	FORMER APFT EXERCISES	REVISED APFT EXERCISES
Cardiorespiratory Endurance	Run - 1.5 miles Swim - 450 meters/500 yards	Run - 1.5 miles Swim - 450 meters/500 yards <i>Elliptical – 12 minutes</i> <i>Stationary Bike – 12 minutes</i>
Upper Body Endurance	Push-ups - 2 minutes	Push-ups - 2 minutes
Core Endurance	Side-bridge (timed) Sit-ups - 2 minutes	Side-bridge (timed) Sit-ups - 2 minutes <i>Plank (timed)</i>
<i>Flexibility</i>	None	<i>Seated Toe Touch</i>

Officers who are unable to complete any of the exercise options within a component of the APFT (e.g. Cardiorespiratory Endurance) due to a medical limitation can request a medical waiver for that component, but the officer is still required to complete the remaining components of the APFT (e.g. Upper Body Endurance, Core Endurance, Flexibility).

See next page for APHT opportunities!

APHT Opportunities—Schedule Yours Today!

Looking to complete your APFT?

- Partner with another PHS officer and sign up for one of the scheduled APFT events. After your walk or run, complete your push-ups and sit-ups or side-bridge. Each month, you will have opportunities to complete your APFT on a preferred date/campus location with a USPHS APFT Proctor.
- POC: CDR Irvin-Barnwell jcx0@cdc.gov

Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) Scheduled Events

- Complete and score the APFT with your peers. Whether you need to pass the APFT or just train for the next APFT, this event is for you. We will complete the core APFT exercises (Run, Push-ups, Plank, and Seated Toe Touch). The alternative APFT exercises will not be administered in this event.
- http://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/REDDOG_APFT_m.aspx (Note: if CCMIS is down, contact any POC on this page)

Event Leaders

- To reserve a spot for an upcoming APFT event or ask questions, please contact:
LT Danny Benbassat at (234) 759-9001 or CDR Tom Ellis at tbellis@bop.gov.

Where

- Meet at the front entrance of The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), which is located on the east end of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). The WRNMMC is easily accessible from the Medical Center station on the Red Metrorail line.
- http://www.wrnmmc.capmed.mil/Shared%20Documents/Base_Map.pdf

When

- APFT events are typically administered on the second Saturday of each month at 1100 hours.
- Next scheduled APFT event: **Saturday, November 12 @ 1100 hours.**

Attire

- Warm weather gear: PHS t-shirt and blue or black shorts
- Cold weather gear: Blue or grey sweatpants and grey or black sweatshirt

Scientist Category Day 2016—A Huge Success!

By LCDR Tajah Blackburn (Photos courtesy of LT Victoria Jeisy Scott)



Dr. Vicki Tall Chief

The 2016 Scientist Category Day, held during the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, was both informative and encouraging. Category Day started with excellent presentations during the morning session from fellow Scientists, CDR David Huang, CDR Loren Rodgers, and LCDR Jessica Cole. Scientists also had the honor and pleasure of hearing from

special Category Day Speaker, Dr. Vicki Tall Chief (Professor Emeritus, Department of Health Promotion Science, College of Public Health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center) discussed "The Southwest Preparedness and Emergency Response Learning Center (PERLC)" and their commitment to community-based approaches to public health issues among Native American populations in Oklahoma.

To close the morning session, CDR Anne Purfield discussed changes in Scientist officer recruitment and retention rates, and included projected scientist numbers in the future. CAPT Martin Sanders informed us about the "State of the Category," while reminding us to "resist the urge to pile on" during challenging times in the Commissioned Corps, and dedicated a



CDR David Huang

large portion of his time toward responding to questions Scientist officers submitted prior to the Symposium. Scientists also enjoyed other interesting opportunities, including a discussion panel, speed networking, and roundtable mentoring. The final event was a presentation by LCDRs Mark Miller and Iram Hassan, capping off a tremendously enjoyable, informative, and successful Category Day.

In addition, CAPT Sanders presented awards to the following Scientists:

- PSYPAG Senior Career Psychologist: *CDR Tony Satterfield*
- Scientist Mentor of the Year: *CDR James Kenney*
- Scientist Responder of the Year: *LCDR Jason Wilken*
- Junior Scientist of the Year: *LCDR Mark Miller (photo - right)*
- Derek Dunn Memorial Senior Scientist Officer of the Year: *CAPT Sally Hu*



Speed networking session in action, SciPAC Category Day 2016

Scientist Officers Deployed for 2016 State of the Union Address

By CDR Eric Zhou & CDR Qiao Bobo

Five scientists from the Regional Incident Support Team-National Capitol Region (RIST-NCR) were deployed to Washington, DC, to support the health and medical needs of persons attending and participating in the 2016 State of the Union Address. Of 13 RIST-NCR team members deployed, five were Scientist officers, each of whom served in important roles on the Incident Regional Coordination Team (IRCT). CDR Fei Xu served in the Operation Section, CDR Eric Zhou in the Planning Section, CDR Qiao Bobo in the Finance and Administration Section, CDR Charlene Maddox as a Liaison Officer, and CDR Judy Facey as a Safety Officer.

The RIST-NCR was created in 2009 to respond to and support public health emergencies, threats of national significance, and natural- and human-caused adverse events in the national capital region. The team is led by CAPT Sally Hu, Team Commander, and CDR James Kenney, Deputy Team Commander. The RIST-NCR team is one of 11 RISTs and includes approximately 30 PHS officers. The team has been deployed more than 39 times to support health and medical needs in the capital region, and is proud to serve their own local community. If you are stationed in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area and interested in joining the RIST-NCR team, please contact CAPT Sally Hu (Sally.hu@nih.gov).



**RIST-NCR Team deployed for 2016 State of the Union Address. Scientist members, left to right, by row & position:
CDR Judy Facey (back 3); CDR Charlene Maddox (back 4); CDR Qiao Bobo (front 5), CDR Eric Zhou (back 6), CDR Fei Xu (front 7)**

Select High-Impact Publications by Scientist Officers

By LCDR Kamil Barbour, CDR John Pesce, CDR Loren Rodgers, LCDR Angela Thompson Paul, LCDR Oliver Ou, LT Shiny Matthew, LT Luz Rivera, LCDR Scott Steffen, LT Jonathan Leshin, CDR Gelio Alves, LCDR Lana Rossiter, LCDR Theodore Garnett, & CAPT Fuyuen Yip

Scientist officers regularly publish quality original research in high-impact journals. These publications often fill major gaps in the literature and have important public health impact. The Scientist Newsletter Team is highlighting some of these publications, including six published in 2015 on which a Scientist officer was first author. (for this issue: In 2014, impact factors for these journals ranged from 3.234 (PLOS One) to 7.764 (Arthritis and Rheumatology). Officers were interviewed about their manuscripts to obtain information about their articles. Let us know if you have an article published recently that you would like to share in the newsletter!

Hip osteoarthritis linked to increased risk of all-cause and cardiovascular disease mortality via its impact on physical function¹

A study published in a recent issue of *Arthritis and Rheumatology*, led by LCDR Kamil Barbour, which followed 7,889 women (age ≥ 65 years) for an average of 16 years, showed that even after adjusting for many confounders, hip osteoarthritis (OA) was associated with a significant increased risk of all-cause (HR: 1.14; 95% CI, 1.05–1.24), and cardiovascular disease (HR: 1.24; 95% CI, 1.09–1.41) mortality. These associations were partially mediated by physical function. LCDR Barbour indicated, “This is the first study of its kind to examine the longitudinal association between hip OA and mortality. To confirm our novel findings, more studies are needed that examine hip OA and risk of mortality, particularly in different populations.” His team’s take-away message: adults with hip OA can improve their physical function and potentially reduce their mortality risk by engaging in recommended arthritis interventions, including physical activity and self-management interventions.

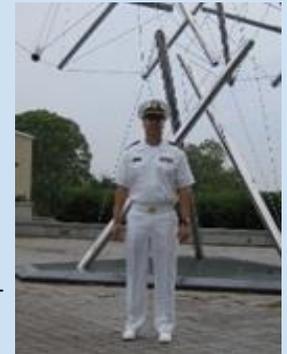


LCDR Kamil Barbour

Novel Methodology Developed for Accurate Statistical Significance Assignment to Identified Proteins²

A study in *Bioinformatics*, written by CDR Gelio Alves and colleagues, highlights a new methodology for accurate statistical significance assignment to

identified proteins. CDR Alves stated, “This may be the first study to provide accurate statistical significance assignment, *P*-values, to identified proteins in mass spectrometry based proteomics. We hope that our study will motivate other researchers to use to employ *P*-values in the way we described to help control the false discovery rate.” CDR Alves indicated, “This research has a major benefit for researchers in the field of proteomics, given that mass spectrometry is currently the instrument of choice to study proteins on a large scale.” Because of this study, researchers in proteomics may be required to compute *P*-values for identified proteins when trying to publish their results.



CDR Gelio Alves

Prevalence of marijuana use and perceptions of risk among pregnant and non-pregnant women in the United States (2007-2012)³

Little information is available regarding marijuana use among pregnant women. Thus, LCDR Jean Ko and colleagues examined prevalence of use and women’s perceptions of the risk associated with marijuana use. For their article published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, Ko’s team used combined public-use, cross-sectional data from the 2007-2012 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health. During 2007-2012, marijuana use was reported by ~11% of pregnant and 14% of non-pregnant women of reproductive age in the past year, and by ~4% of pregnant and 7.6% of non-pregnant women in the past month. Nearly 70% of pregnant and nonpregnant women believed there was slight or no risk of harm in using marijuana 1-2 times per week. Additionally, 18.1% of pregnant and 11.4% of non-pregnant women met criteria for abuse and/or dependence. LCDR Ko concluded that comprehensive screening, treatment for use of multiple substances, research, and patient education are needed.



LCDR Jean Ko

Continued on next page

Cost-Benefit of Federal Investment in Preventing *Clostridium difficile* Infections Using a Multifaceted Infection Control and Antimicrobial Stewardship Program⁴

LCDR Rachel Slayton and colleagues determined the economic value of implementing a multifaceted *Clostridium difficile* infection (CDI) control program at US acute care hospitals. They used a Markov model with a 5-year time horizon; in simulations, they used patient data only from hospitalized Medicare beneficiaries aged ≥ 65 years. “Our study highlights the sizable potential benefits of federal investment in a multifaceted national CDI prevention program,” says LCDR Slayton. “It suggests CDI prevention is cost saving; we estimated the cumulative economic benefit in reimbursements for Medicare and Medicaid programs over 5 years would be \$2.5 billion (95% credible interval: \$1.2-\$4.0 billion), with 509,000 CDI cases averted nationally. Even when assuming the intervention’s effectiveness to be half that seen in the United Kingdom, cost savings were demonstrated.” She concluded, “Given the body of evidence supporting antimicrobial stewardship for CDI prevention, major efforts to ensure widespread implementation of antimicrobial stewardship are warranted.”



LCDR Rachel Slayton

Evaluation of Measles Vaccination Campaign, Jharkhand, India⁵

As part of measles-elimination efforts in India, a 2010-2013 vaccination campaign was conducted, targeting 131 million children. “We needed to evaluate campaign quality using the percentage of children in the target age group who were reached; the global standard is 95%,” says LCDR Heather Scobie. Using a multi-stage, household-level cluster survey with weighted coverage analysis to account for sampling design, LCDR Scobie was surprised to find that “the measles vaccination campaign coverage in Jharkhand state was low — 61%,” and only half of children <10 years received the WHO-recommended 2 doses of measles vaccine. For measles elimination, WHO recommends achieving and maintaining >95% coverage with two measles vaccine doses in every district. More catch-up measles vaccination campaigns tar-

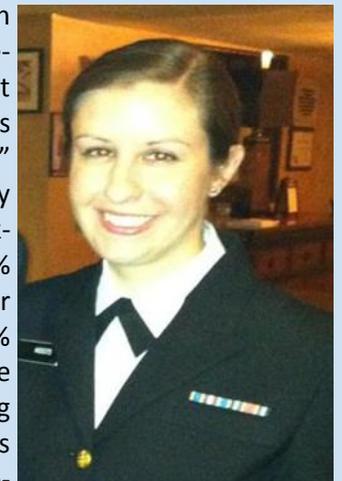


LCDR Heather Scobie

getting a wide age-range of children are needed in India. Measles-rubella vaccination campaigns targeting children 9 months-14 years are planned for 2016,” she reported.

Early Linkage to HIV Care and Antiretroviral Treatment among Men Who Have Sex with Men⁶

To address a component of the 2010 White House National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS), a comprehensive plan with measurable HIV targets to be achieved by 2015, LCDR Brooke Hoots and colleagues examined early linkage to HIV care (HIV clinic visit within 3 months of diagnosis) and antiretroviral (ARV) treatment among men who have sex with men (MSM) in 20 US cities. Using data from CDC’s National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System, LCDR Hoots found that the “prevalence of early linkage to care among this sample of MSM was relatively high, at 83% in 2011.” ARV treatment was also high (79%) but differed by race. LCDR Hoots explains, “We observed a black-white disparity in MSM in ARV treatment, with a 9% higher prevalence of ARV use among whites. Our analysis suggests that the NHAS goal of linking 85% of MSM to early care is feasible among HIV-positive MSM. However, younger, HIV is increasing among black MSM, so it is important to monitor disparities in ARV treatment and decrease barriers to ARV provision and adherence.”



LCDR Brooke Hoots

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Congratulations to All Newly Promoted Scientists Officers!

By CDR Deborah Dee

Congratulations to all of the Scientist officers selected for temporary grade promotion in the 2016 promotion year! As we all know, promotion remains challenging; in the 2016 promotion year, the CCMIS website indicates that success rates for temporary promotion, by grade, were as follows: O-6: 20% (as compared to 29% for medical, dental, or research officer group categories); O-5: 29%; O-4: 75%. If you were not selected for promotion this year, please keep in mind the competition is tough – we are a category of exceptional officers! But also, please don't be discouraged; instead, heed the advice we've heard from our Chief Professional Officer, CAPT Sanders, and other senior officers during our SciPAC calls, which is to keep doing excellent work, and consult with your mentor, another senior officer, SciPAC's Career Development Committee, or one of the recently promoted Scientist officers (see below), for advice on how to improve your 2017 promotion package. The list below includes all Scientist officers selected for temporary grade promotion. Promotions are effective July 1, 2016, unless otherwise noted.

Captain

Karon Abe (10/1/16)
Mark Douglas Clayton
Danice Kathryn Eaton

Jeffrey Louis Goodie (1/1/17)
Ingrid Birum Pauli (1/1/17)
Michael Eugene King (1/1/17)

William Anthony Satterfield
Fuyuen Yvonne Yip

Commander

Kamil Elie Barbour (4/1/17)
Frances Elizabeth Belcher
Qiao Yu Bobo (12/1/16)
Eduardo Ong Cua
Seth Austin Green (1/1/17)

Arlin Lambie Hatch
David Tien Huang (8/1/2016)
Angela Danielle Iuliano
Carrie Frances Nielsen
Ruiqing Yang Pamoukian

Sharyn Elaine Parks-Brown
Cria Gregory Perrine
Kenneth Scott Phillips
Anne Elizabeth Purfield
Sukhminder Kaur Sandhu

Matthew James Walters (1/1/17)
Ellen Elizabeth Yard (4/1/17)
Eric Xin Zhou (10/1/16)

Lieutenant Commander

Andrea Grafton Battle (1/1/2017)
Jorielle Regina Brown (*EPP)
Israel Hethlon Cross
Shane Templar Eynon
Andrew Christopher Hickey

Brooke Elizabeth Hoots
Gwendolyn Naquia Hudson
Luis Iturriaga
Eric Wayne Jamoom

Lisa Dewan Jarvis-Durham
Folasade Adeola Kembi (10/1/16)
Kimberly Shay Litton-Belcher
Jonetta Johnson Mpofu

Jorge Gerardo Muniz-Ortiz
Leslie Ann Rivera-Rosado (1/1/17)
Geoffrey K. Wu
Xinshi Zhang (10/1/16)

*EPP: Exceptional Proficiency Promotion

GOOD LUCK TO ALL SCIENTIST OFFICERS UP FOR PROMOTION IN 2017!

PHS Officers Honored at First PHS Promotion Ceremony at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in Four Years

By LCDR Julia Zucco and LCDR Joe Christ

Last year, 17 Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officers were promoted at Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) locations in Dallas, Atlanta, San Francisco, and the central office in Baltimore. Using video conferencing technology, CMS was able to involve officers from the Dallas, Atlanta, and San Francisco regions.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services is part of HHS, and establishes the rules and regulations for the 100 million beneficiaries of Medicare, Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, and the health insurance marketplace. Commissioned Corps officers have an increasing presence within CMS; at s of August 2015, there were 184 officers assigned to CMS offices throughout the nation.

RADM Schweitzer, Chief Pharmacy Officer, initiated plans for the ceremony and coordinated with several officers to bring it to fruition. No promotion ceremony had occurred at CMS in the prior four years; RADM Schweitzer, however, emphasized to all officers the importance of reinstating the tradition of an annual promotion ceremony at CMS. In attendance for the ceremony at the central office were RADM Scott Giberson, RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams, RADM Pamela Schweitzer, and our Chief Professional Officer, CAPT Martin Sanders.

Several PHS officers assisted in making the ceremony a success. LT Fred Butler served as Adjutant, and CAPT Sanders provided the invocation. RADM Schweitzer gave welcoming remarks and introductions, and RADM Giberson spoke on the significance of pro-

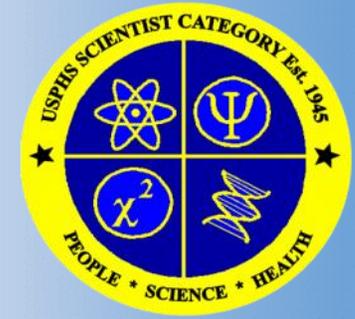
motion in the Commissioned Corps. In addition, acting CMS Administrator, Mr. Andrew Slavitt, also provided remarks and sent a note to each promoted officer, personally thanking them for their service to CMS in “strengthening and modernizing the nation’s health care system and providing access to high quality care and improved health at lower cost.” Other highlights of the ceremony included the presentation of the colors by the first-ever PHS CMS honor guard (LCDRs Joseph Christ and Jeanette Joyner; LT Israel Cross); and the PHS Choral Ensemble, who sang the National Anthem and PHS March. The event was widely attended by PHS officers, CMS civilian colleagues, and family and friends of the promoted officers. A wonderful reception was held immediately after the ceremony and many officers took the opportunity to have pictures taken with the VIPs who attended.



L to R: RADM Sylvia Trent-Adams, RADM Scott Giberson, CAPT Martin Sanders, & LCDR Julia Zucco



ATTENTION ALL SCIENTIST OFFICERS!



Want to Learn More about What Is Required To Submit an Article to the Newsletter?

Please join the SciPAC Newsletter Subcommittee!

Do you like to share information with others by writing about it?

Or do you have graphic design skills?

Or do you want to contribute to SciPAC?

If so, The Scientist Officer newsletter needs you!

To learn more about how you can get involved, please contact

LCDR Neil Bonzagni or

LCDR Iram Hassan

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Thank you!

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Chief Editors, *The Scientist Officer* newsletter

Scientist Officers Successfully Complete U.S. Fire Administration Type 3 Incident Management Team Training

By CDR Qiao Bobo (sel), CAPT Ross Spears, & CDR Dominic Frasca

Incident Management Teams (IMT) play an essential role in the management of, and response to, local/regional/national emergencies, natural disasters and public events. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) provides professional development support to help IMT members obtain the knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively as a team under stressful, dynamic conditions.

Three scientist officers participated in the USFA Type 3 Incident Management Team Course (also known as the All-Hazards Incident Management Team [AHIMT] Response Course [AHIMT O-305 Course]) November 30-December 4, 2015. The course is sponsored by the Office of Emergency Management under the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).

Training is a key requirement for responders within the Incident Command System (ICS) because PHS officers are often deployed alongside ASPR resources. CAPT Ross Spears from Rapid Deployment Force 3 (RDF-3), CDR Dominic Frasca from the FDA Emergency Operation Center, and CDR (sel) Qiao Bobo from the Regional Incident Support Team – National Capital Region (RIST-NCR) took advantage of this valuable opportunity and successfully completed the training.

This 5-day course serves as a basic introduction to the activities and processes of a USFA Type 3 IMT and is designed for those who are assigned to function in a Type 3 IMT during a large/complex incident, typically extending into the second operational period. The Type 3 IMT can either support an existing ICS structure, or can assume command of an incident if requested to do so. The Type 3 IMT can ease the transition to a Type 2 or Type 1 IMT for incidents of national significance.



CAPT Ross Spears (seated); then L-R: CDR Andrew Chen (HSO), CDR Dominic Frasca, CDR (sel) Qiao Bobo

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The Type 3 IMT course consists of five days of team-specific training designed to prepare its members to better serve ASPR with the capability to manage large or complex emergency incidents. The course consists of interactive lessons and exercises covering training in accordance with FEMA's NIMS National Integration Center, and USFA Emergency Response Support Branch. Forty emergency responders from ASPR, CDC, FDA, NIH, DoD, VA, and other agencies participated in the training at the Mission Support Center in Frederick, MD; among them were nine USPHS Commissioned Corps officers. The training was led by Mr. Timothy Zernick, who is a training supervisor and Dr. Ty Vannieuwenhoven, who is an ICS instructor as well as Chief Veterinary Officer; both are from OEM/ASPR. A number of mentors from various groups also assisted with the training.

This course provides emergency responders with a robust understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of effective leaders during an All-Hazards Incident Management Team response. Exercises, simulations, discussions, and a final exam enable participants to learn, process and apply their new knowledge.

During the course, CAPT Spears (CDC, RDF-3) served as Safety Officer, CDR Frasca served (FDA) as Deputy Planning Section Chief, and CDR Qiao Bobo (FDA, RIST-NC) served as Admin/Finance Section Chief. We all learned a lot from this experience. CAPT Spears also shared his years of experience as a Safety Officer in CDC and Planning Section Chief in RDF-3.



L to R: CDR Qiao Bobo (Scientist, FDA), CDR Dominic Frasca (Scientist, FDA), CAPT Ross Spears (Scientist, CDC), Tim Zernick (Instructor, ASPR), Ty Vannieuwenhoven (Instructor, ASPR), Dennis Wood (Mentor, ASPR) John Caprio (Mentor, ASPR).

Atlanta-Area Scientist Officers Build Camaraderie & Network During 2 Fun Social Events

By CDR (sel) Kamil Barbour



Atlanta-area Scientist officers have enjoyed two social events already this year, spending time to get to know one another and building *esprit de corps*. The first event took place on January 13, when more than 10 Atlanta-area Scientist officers gathered at Mellow

Mushroom for a riveting night of trivia, fellowship, and good food and drinks. Scientists in attendance included CDRs Deborah Dee, Kamil Barbour (sel), Anne Purfield, and Loren Rodgers; and LCDRs Timothy Cunningham, Zewditu Demissie, Erika Odom, and Tracy Powell. Although the team did not take the top prize, they played very well and just barely missed the win. All in all it was a successful and enjoyable night, and provided a much-needed break in routine. (photo above)

The second Atlanta SciPAC Social, coordinated by CDRs Barbour and Purfield, was held July 13 at Tin Lizzy's, with a special emphasis on welcoming incoming Scientist officers from the Epidemic Intelligence Services (EIS) program. As we heard during the 2016 SciPAC Category Day, retention of Scientist EISOs has been an issue over the past few years. Scientist officers shared

information and tips on how to improve career prospects in the Corps, and offered their support and mentorship to the more junior scientists, while touting the long-term benefits of staying in the Corps beyond EIS. In total, four newly commissioned Scientist officers attended: LTs Jaymin Patel, William Davis, Ruth Link-Gelles, and Sarah Luna. In addition to CDRs Purfield and Barbour, LTs Alaine Knlipes and Colleen Scott were in attendance to give their support to the new Scientist officers and network with their colleagues. The event was a big success. (photo below)

We look forward to the next Atlanta-area social! Please join us! For more information about Atlanta-area SciPAC events or to help plan the next event, please contact CDR (sel) Kamil Barbour at iyk1@cdc.gov.



Scientist Officers Provide Leadership During 2016 Independence Day Deployment of RIST-NCR

By CDR Minglei Cui, LCDRs Xinzhi Zhang & Karen Chaves, and CAPT Sally Hu

Under the leadership of the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Regional Incident Support Team-National Capital Region (RIST-NCR), including seven Scientist officers, successfully supported the 2016 Independence Day deployment by serving as the Section Chiefs for the first time.

RIST-NCR has supported Independence Day through deployments every year since the team was formed in the summer of 2009. RIST-NCR is a Tier 1 team and thus required to be available to deploy within 12 hours. RIST-NCR provides a coordination role during deployment by integrating into the various positions of the Incident Response Coordination Team (IRCT) to support public health emergencies, threats, and nationally significant events in the NCR, such as Independence Day. RIST-NCR is one of the key resources for ASPR, the ASPR Emergency Management Group (EMG), and the ASPR Regional Emergency Coordinator (REC) in the National Capital Region.

Monday, July 4, 2016, marked the annual Independence Day celebration on the National Mall in Washington, DC, beginning with a parade along Constitution Avenue in the early afternoon and ending with an evening fireworks display over the Washington Monument. The celebration attracted approximately 750,000 visitors. Several other major events also took place in the area, including the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, a Washington Nationals baseball game, and a Capitol Fourth Concert on the West Lawn of the US Capitol. The US National Park Service and the US Capitol Police, lead federal agencies for the events, requested support from all federal departments, including HHS, to provide public health and medical resources. ***(continued on next page)***



Members of RIST-NCR —2016 Independence Day Deployment

Sixteen RIST-NCR team members, including seven Scientist officers, served key roles in the IRCT at its HHS coordination center and staged medical strike teams to meet the medical and public health needs during this high-profile national special security event. For the first time, six RIST-NCR members served as IRCT Section Chiefs (CDR Qiao Bobo and LCDR Vicky Chan – Admin-Finance; CDR Minglei Cui and LCDR Karen Chaves - Planning; CDRs Tara Goen Bizjak and Paula Murrain-Hill). The Section Chiefs

worked closely with their ASPR mentors and successfully conducted two operational periods by assisting the Incident Commander to accomplish all of the objectives.

Additionally, they led meetings for each corresponding section, including those for Tactics and Planning, as well as the Operational Period Briefing. Moreover, they directed the execution of the Incident Action Plan, mentored their respective staffs, and evaluated activities undertaken during the deployment. All RIST-NCR team members worked extended hours to complete their assignments and the team received positive feedback from all levels of leadership regarding their performance. This successful deployment showed the potential of the team and demonstrated that RIST-NCR can take on future leadership responsibilities in the IRCT. RIST-NCR fulfilled its ESF #8 role through the IRCT structure at all levels during this deployment, can do so as needed in the future, and brought de to the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service.

Get ready for the 2017 USPHS Symposium—Join us in Chattanooga, Tennessee!

<http://symposium.phscof.org/>

SciPAC Category Day Abstracts Due November 14—Consider Presenting a SciTalk!

Save the Date

June 6-9, 2017

Chattanooga, Tennessee



Image courtesy of Choice Hotels

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Submit an article, announcement, new, or photos to *The Scientist Officer*!

Share your ideas for articles by contacting the Editorial Team at:

scipacnewsletter@gmail.com

Submission Deadline for the next issue will be announced soon!

Note: All contributors receive acknowledgment via thank you letters at the end of the year, which you can submit to your eOPF, in support of officership.

Past issues of the newsletter: <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/scientist/newsletter.aspx>

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