The Scientist

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Scientist Officer CDR Ruiqing Pamboukian (front row, fourth from the left) poses with the Texas DMAT team during a deployment to Ponce, PR, in October 2017 in response to Hurricane Maria. She was assigned as a Group Supervisor for the team, demonstrating leadership and collaboration with DMATs in disaster response. This hurricane season was characterized by an overwhelming response by the Corps with countless deployment stories to be shared.

Greetings from CAPT John Eckert, Chief Scientist Officer

CAPT John Eckert, Chief Scientist Officer

I had an earlier draft of this message; however, recent events have changed the focus of my greeting to the Category. I am excited to be the new Chief Scientist and hope to continue to build on the progress of my predecessors. CAPT Martin Sanders has provided me with a wealth of information to sift through as I get comfortable with this new role, and I thank him for his continued availability for consultation. Additionally, of course, the SciPAC is a strong and vital leader of our growth as a Professional Category and as a Corps. While I am the "Chief" Scientist, I am a Scientist Officer first, and I am prepared to roll up my sleeves to work alongside each of you.

The most pressing crisis we are facing as I write this is learning the whereabouts of our colleague and friend, CDR Timothy Cunningham. As I'm sure most of you know, Tim has been missing since February 12, 2018. The Atlanta police and community are actively searching for him, and we all continue to hope that he is safe and will be found soon. Hope alone is not enough, so I applaud those of you who continue to actively engage in the search for our fellow Scientist. His parents and siblings are stoic and an inspiration to us all. As I learn more, I will share what I am permitted to pass along.

My first draft greeting included my priorities, and then two other developments drove the narrative: the interruption in special pays for nearly half of the Corps' officers and the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget proposal. These events point to our need to 1) modernize our policies and the supporting information technology infrastructure and 2) enhance our Service's prominence in response and recovery efforts. As a Category, our officers will have many opportunities to contribute to each of these efforts in the months and years to come. Solicitations will soon come from Corps Headquarters for officers to participate in working groups that will chart the course to our 21st Century Corps. I encourage Scientist Officers to get involved and demonstrate our leadership.

I understand the anxiety throughout the Corps cascading from these back-to-back events. We now have to turn that anxiety into action. The budget language parrots a 1996 U.S. Government Accountability Office report that was critical of the Corps and was quickly refuted by follow-up studies and testimony to Congress. That said, we should note the impression some have of our Service and take active steps to, once again, prove them wrong. We are embarking on a "reform" of the Corps to better meet the needs of the vulnerable and underserved populations of the Nation and abroad. I believe that this reform will

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address many of the issues raised in the President's budget request. For the old-timers like me, you will recognize this toon. Many lived through "revitalization" and "transformation." Each of those initiatives moved the Corps in a somewhat new direction. Instead of thinking "here we go again," we need to recognize the "reform" initiative as evidence of an organization's continuous process improvement. Remaining stagnant means falling behind.

This will be an exciting four-year assignment…it's starting off that way at least. I look forward to working with the rest of the Scientist Officers on these issues, as well as the other items on my priority list. Having participated in the two most recent Officer Basic Courses, I have renewed pride in our service and confidence that we will meet these challenges. The new Corps officers, including a talented batch of Scientists, are enthusiastic about the Corps and committed to our mission. They are committed to maintaining basic readiness standards and working to modernize our Corps. Senior officers have an obligation to mentor and to learn from the new officers.

As the picture below shows, I will even roll in the mud in order to accomplish a task! Let's get to work in support of our leadership and ensure the continued vitality of the Corps.

By CAPT John J Eckert

CAPT John Eckert at "The Tough Mudder" in Southern California on November 5, 2017. "Physical fitness can be dirty work!"

Did you know?

Officers in the D.C. area can have free official photos taken with U.S. and PHS flags at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. If interested, please contact the Biomedical Photography Department at 301-295-1014 or medphoto4@med.navy.mil to schedule an appointment at 8901 Wisconsin Ave., Bldg. 4/6, Rm 2262, Bethesda, MD 20889. For officers who are not in the D.C. area, you may also check with the Biomedical Photography Department of your local military hospital to see if such a service is available to you.

Submitted by CDR Eric Zhou

Update on Efforts to Find Missing USPHS Officer, CDR Timothy J. Cunningham

As most of you may know, our fellow officer, colleague, and friend, CDR Timothy (Tim) Cunningham, has been missing since Monday, February 12. Tim has been an active member of SciPAC, serving as the Visibility Subcommittee co-chair since 2016 and as former lead for the Science and Practice Series. Many of Tim's friends, colleagues, and fellow officers have been engaged in efforts to find him; unfortunately, as of this writing, there is no news to share. We are not giving up hope, however, and additional efforts are being discussed. If you would like to remain aware of the latest efforts related to finding Tim and volunteer opportunities to help Tim's family, please consider joining the Facebook page #FindTimATL. (Please note: this is a "secret" page, so to join, you will have to be invited by a member. All of the authors of this article are members; feel free to contact any of us if you would like to be added to the page.) If you are interested in being actively involved in efforts to find Tim, please contact CDR Deborah Dee at 770-337-3197**.**

CDR Tim Cunningham with his friend and colleague LCDR Marcienne Wright at the 2017 USPHS Promotion Ceremony, Atlanta, GA

As time passes since Tim's disappearance, many of us are feeling upset and distressed and may have trouble sleeping or focusing on work or family. All of these things are understandable. We encourage you to make sure you are taking care of yourself during this stressful time. Resources are available to us – as USPHS officers and as CDC employees. If you are experiencing any distress or just need someone to talk to, please pursue obtaining assistance through the options below – that's what they are here for.

USPHS Officers: The Corps Care Program is available as a resource for you. Corps Care was created to help assist USPHS officers by increasing awareness of available resources to address physical, behavioral, and spiritual health needs of officers and their families. For more information or assistance with Corps Care, please contact:

LCDR Kimberly (Shay) Litton-Belcher, Psy. D.; Corps Care Program Manager; Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Email: Kimberly.litton-belcher@hhs.gov; Phone: 240-276-9616.

CDC Employees (officers and civilians): The CDC Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is also available. Services are available to officers based in the US and those based in international duty stations. Relevant contact information varies by CDC campus/location, so please go to http://intranet.cdc.gov/ossam.lifestyle-employee-assistance-program/index.html to identify the best contact information for you.

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If you work for CDC or are part of a CDC family: Go to: www.WorkLife4You.com. Click on the registration button; the registration code is CDC. Or you may call: (800) 222-0364.

Many of you may not know Tim personally. In addition to the SciPAC leadership roles described earlier, Tim is known for his dedication to junior officers; indeed, he is a formal mentor to a number of junior Scientist officers. For those who want to know more about our friend Tim, we have worked with Tim's family to compile the information below. Tim's family has given permission for all of this information to be shared on social media or through other venues as long as nothing is changed from the wording presented below.

We continue to hope that Tim will return safely very soon. In the meantime, please keep Tim and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Fast Facts about CDR Cunningham:

- CDR Timothy Cunningham earned his undergraduate degree at Morehouse College, and his master's and doctoral degrees from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. CDR Cunningham has a doctoral degree in public health; he is not a medical doctor.
- CDR Cunningham is a well-respected team leader and supervisor for the State Chronic Disease Epidemiology Assignee Program in the Epidemiology and Surveillance Branch in CDC's Division of Population Health, which is part of CDC's National Center on Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.
- CDR Cunningham's research relates to improving understanding of health differences related to race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and geography. CDR Cunningham has not worked in the areas of infectious disease or flu, nor has he conducted research in these areas.
- CDR Cunningham was not passed over for a promotion within the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps. In 2017, he was part of an elite group of officers selected for *early* promotion to the rank of Commander (CDR) in the USPHS. CDR Cunningham's selection for Exceptional Proficiency Promotion in the USPHS is a testament to his outstanding performance as a Commissioned Corps officer and a CDC employee.
- CDR Cunningham had applied for an assignment to a position as a branch chief, but was not selected. CDR Cunningham was one of the highly qualified candidates for the position, and it was communicated to him on or around February 1 that not being selected did not reflect on his performance as a Team Lead or his expertise as a public health professional.
- CDR Cunningham actively participated on deployment teams, which is among the duties expected of USPHS officers, and assisted with a number of public health emergencies, including Superstorm Sandy, the Ebola outbreak, and the Zika outbreak.
- CDR Cunningham's family, friends, and colleagues miss him very much and are engaged in efforts to find him and bring him home safely.
- A reward of **$15,000** has been offered. Information can be submitted anonymously to Crime Stoppers Atlanta at 404-577-TIPS (8477).
- If you have information about CDR Cunningham's disappearance or his whereabouts, you may also call 9-1-1 or the Atlanta Police at 404-546-4235.

By CDR Deborah Dee, LCDR Zewditu Demissie, LCDR Erika Odom, LCDR Marcienne Wright

Demonstrating Compassion through Service

USPHS Scientist Officers fill many important roles in our personal and professional lives. However, being the Nation's public health responders is truly one of our most critical service attributes. In October 2017, LCDRs Charlotte Francia and LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick deployed in support of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response Patient Movement mission as part of the response efforts for Hurricanes Irma and Maria. During this deployment, many officers conducted needs assessments, case management, patient tracking and movement, and comprehensive care coordination activities, as members of the Service Access Team (SAT). SAT teams were established at the Federal Coordinating Centers (FCC) in Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Puerto Rico. Each SAT team is equipped with officers possessing a background in case management and discharge planning who can assist vulnerable populations with urgent health needs arising from major disasters or other events. SAT teams assist individuals who may be unable to plan, self-advocate, or secure resources and services to support basic health and safety needs. Despite having very different professional responsibilities, LCDR Francia (Chief Psychologist, Bureau of Prisons) and LCDR Wilson-Frederick (Statistician, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) both served on a SAT Team in Atlanta and assisted with care coordination for over 300 dialysis and critical care patients evacuated from the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Additional case management responsibilities included coordinating housing, food, medical support, transportation, and discharge planning. As with any disaster of this magnitude, the losses experienced by those affected were immense. However, the resiliency and gratitude displayed by the evacuees made this mission fulfilling.

A mountain home owner's enthusiastic proclamation: "Who says we can't help ourselves? Let's go Puerto Rico!"

LCDR Wilson-Frederick was deployed to Atlanta for three weeks. After one week in Atlanta, LCDR Francia redeployed for three additional

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weeks to Puerto Rico where she performed discharge planning for U.S. Virgin Island evacuees in hospitals in San Juan and outlying towns. This was not a simple task and required multi-level coordination with local hospital staff, patients, and their families. However, significant challenges further complicated an already challenging situation. Damage to the local infrastructure resulted in loss of phone communications through much of the island, travel to hospitals was time consuming in post hurricane street conditions (e.g., flash floods, missing street signs, no traffic lights, and road damage), and lack of resources (e.g., no electricity and generator-run hospitals) introduced additional problems. Given the damage to homes in the U.S. Virgin Islands, numerous evacuees could not return to livable conditions and had to make arrangements to live with relatives in the mainland. Despite many hospital workers still dealing with challenges of their own, as many of their homes lacked power or had been significantly damaged, they still were in good spirits and ready to assist evacuees who arrived in Puerto Rico.

Rural road 45 minutes south of San Juan, coming out of the Central Mountain Range

Overall, serving on a SAT team was a valuable first deployment experience for both junior officers. It provided hands-on engagement, delivery of compassionate care, and essential services. A particular highlight for LCDR Wilson-Frederick was receiving news that evacuees she assisted had either successfully returned back to U.S. Virgin Islands or been united with family in the mainland. LCDR Francia recollects the excitement she felt after receiving a phone call expressing gratitude and appreciation from an elderly couple who returned to St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. They were happily sitting in rocking chairs, on the front porch of their home, watching a ship sail by on the ocean. These moments make deployments and the awesome work we do as Scientist Officers even more memorable.

By LCDRs Charlotte Francia and Shondelle Wilson-Frederick

Successful All-hands Meeting and Holiday Celebration at NIH

On December 13, 2017, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) PHS Liaison Office and the Social Subcommittee successfully co-organized an all-hands meeting and holiday celebration in Bethesda, Maryland.

Approximately 50 of 263 PHS Officers at NIH attended the meeting. After CAPT Tiffany Edmonds, the PHS Liaison at NIH, provided the welcome remarks, RADM Richard Childs, Clinical Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, gave the *State of NIH Commissioned Corps Address*. RADM Helena Mishoe (Scientist Officer, retired) presented the PHS Bell as her gift to PHS Officers at NIH, in gratitude to her distinguished PHS career at NIH. CDR Eric Zhou (Scientist Officer) and CAPT Josef Rivero (Health Services Officer), Chair and Co-Chair of the Social Subcommittee, introduced the members of the Social Subcommittee and announced the future launch of the 220th PHS Birthday Celebration at NIH on July 16, 2018. RADM Susan Orsega, Chief Nurse Officer, made the closing remarks. RADM Peter Kilmarx (Medical Officer), Deputy Director of the Fogarty International Institute, also attended the meeting.

Officers also donated holiday gifts to the Children's Inn at NIH, whose vision is to "fully and consistently meet the needs of children and families participating in groundbreaking research at NIH."

By CDR Eric Zhou

RADM Helena Mishoe (Retired, left) donated the PHS Bell to PHS Officers at NIH. Pictured on the right is CAPT Josef Rivero, 2017 HSO PAC Chair.

A New Home for the Holidays

This time last year, I was living in my home state of Georgia working at CDC Headquarters and doing interviews for a CDC job overseas. When an email offer came from Namibia's country office, a whirling dervish of activity began: trainings, briefings, paperwork and more paperwork along with medical and security clearances. The processes were all new to me, though others, including my SciPAC Mentor CDR Matt Murphy, had gone through it before. While the collective guidance of those who were already in the field were helpful, a permanent change of station (PCS) overseas is truly a learning-by-doing experience.

LCDR Miller (second from the left) was a guest on a national current events television show "Let's Talk" to spread health education and prevention messages about the Hepatitis E outbreak.

By 1 April, I left my job as an Epidemiologist on the Global Rapid Response Team and started a position with the Division of Global HIV/TB. This placed me in the new division where I would be working and allowed me to get to know the Namibia team and program better. I began having weekly calls with the person whose job I would be taking in Windhoek. He was coming to Atlanta to work in headquarters so we were able to exchange tips about our respective new homes.

By June, I was ready to ship out to Windhoek, Namibia. The actual move for an overseas PCS is similar to other housing moves in that it upends life, including every closet, drawer and cabinet! It is different from other moves in that many of your possessions go into storage because the U.S. Embassy provides furnished housing. There are four major categories for sorting your belongings: 1) luggage you fly with 2) Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB) 3) Household Effects (HHE) and 4) storage. By now, the first three categories are all with me in Namibia; storage items remained in Atlanta, my last duty station. I packed my luggage to fly with in advance and locked it in my car during packing day. I labeled the other items with colored paper tags. For future moves, I would physically separate items into different rooms by category in order to minimize the chance for items going into the "wrong" category. Delivery timeframes for categories 1-3 ranged from immediate (luggage I flew with) to 4 weeks for UAB and 10 weeks for HHE. As mentioned, there was some confusion during the move so I ended up with a few items in Namibia that I intended to store and vice versa. Overall, I had no substantial damage or loss, which made me grateful for the care multiple people paid across the oceans in packing, handling and shipping my belongings. Overseas moves are costly; it is a tremendous benefit that USPHS supports this expense.

During my lifetime, I have lived overseas numerous times; this is my first time as part of the U.S. government Chief of Mission. This means I

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am under the authority of the Ambassador and support the entire U.S. government mission with efforts to protect, promote and advance health and safety. For Namibia, our portfolio is primarily the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). This is invaluable because 13.8% of adults aged 15–49 have HIV. When I am in a crowd in Namibia, it is humbling to realize that between one in seven and one in eight faces is a person living with HIV (PLHIV). Across the U.S. government, our key objective is to reduce this number and ensure that PLHIV get life-saving ART drugs.

Being part of the U.S. Mission means each person contributes to the whole; teamwork is common to USPHS Officers so this felt like a natural transition. There is one other USPHS Officer in Namibia, our CDC Director (Medical Officer). Outside the U.S., we do not wear the uniform so we lead by example and strive to uphold the values of leadership, service, integrity and excellence. For Veteran's Day, we shared the history and mission of the Commissioned Corps with our colleagues. People responded with recognition of our service and appreciation for the organization. There is not a similar Public Health Service in Namibia so it was an interesting cross-cultural exchange to explain the benefits of what we do.

During the holidays, I hosted Christmas and had five family members travel to explore Namibia's desert, dunes and wildlife safaris. We ended up having a Hepatitis E outbreak in an urban slum area of Windhoek during the holidays, so similar to other times during my USPHS career, I was on-call and on-duty for part of the time. I still managed to have some fun! Overall, being an overseas Officer allows for a rewarding and challenging chance to bring your whole self to work, while being of service and experiencing a new country and culture.

By LCDR Leigh Ann Miller

Source: https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/africa/na.htm

Namibia Fast Facts

At half the size of Alaska, with a population of roughly 2.48 million, Namibia has one of the lowest population densities in the world.

The country gained independence from South Africa in 1990.

Life expectancy is 64 years (62.4 male; 65.6 female)

HIV prevalence 13.8%

People living with HIV ~230,000

HIV/AIDS deaths 4,300

Source: CIA World Factbook

The Importance of Role Models: A Day with Braddock Elementary School Students

On a cold Friday morning in November 2017, a group of nine USPHS Officers embarked on a road trip from all corners of the DC/Maryland/ Virginia area to participate in the Braddock Elementary School Walk-a-Thon event in Annandale, VA. The Walk-a-Thon is an annual health event held at the school to educate the children about healthy living and healthy eating. The children went through a series of activities both individually and in small groups. The event encourages school-wide participation, with approximately 879 children, 62 teachers, and many parents in attendance.

The event coincided with the Veterans Day celebration, a perfect opportunity for Officers in uniform to lead the physical activity and health education stations of the Walk-a-Thon event. Officers wore a variety of uniforms, with the Service Dress Blue uniform being the most impressive to the children. Our goal was to educate the children, teachers, and families on who we are and our mission, and to stress the importance of handwashing and staying physically active. USPHS Officers led one of three activity stations: the (1) "army crawl" station, (2) team building station, and (3) health education station. Officers motivated the children to complete the physical activity challenges and encouraged them to live healthy and physically active lives. At the health education station, Officers taught participants about the USPHS, and about the importance of handwashing, including a handwashing demonstration. The flow of the event was rapid; with a group of about 20 children accompanied by about 3 adults cycling through one of the 20 activity stations every 5 minutes.

LCDR Rivera Rosado teaching the Spanish-speaking students about germs and the importance of proper handwashing. From Left to Right: LT Timothy Martin, LCDR Rivera Rosado, and LT Tramara Dam

The majority of Braddock Elementary School's students are students whose first language is not English. As part of the cadre of participating Officers, LCDR Leslie Rivera Rosado (Scientist Officer), served as the Spanish-speaking Officer for the activity. LCDR Rivera Rosado engaged with the students, during the health education portion of the event, in Spanish. It was delightful to see the faces of the students when she addressed them in Spanish! Their entire attitude changed, they became more involved and were more willing to answer and ask questions. It was an amazing experience that reminds us the importance of strong

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Scientists Assisting the 20th Surgeon General of the United States

LCDR Erika Odom and LT Tanesha G. Tutt recently assisted the 20th U.S. Surgeon General, VADM Jerome M. Adams, as aides-de-camp during his visit to Atlanta for the American Public Health Association (APHA) conference, CDC Health Equity Forum, and Morehouse School of Medicine Fireside Chat. The CDC Commissioned Corps Activity office leads the Aide-de-Camp Program, which consists of a volunteer cadre of officers who serve as assistants to flag officers (i.e., O-7 or higher) or other high-ranking officials (the President, the Secretary, etc.). These special dignitaries can request the support of an aide-de-camp when they're on official business. During the week of November 6, 2017, LCDR Odom and LT Tutt assisted VADM Jerome M. Adams. They were featured on VADM Adams's Twitter page (https://twitter.com/Surgeon_General) because of their excellent service. LCDR Odom's and LT Tutt's duties included assisting the Surgeon General with his transportation and coordinating logistics to ensure his timely arrival and departure at each meeting location. Each day was different, fast paced, and filled with opportunities to engage with people from all over the country. At the APHA conference, VADM Adams recorded an interview (https://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/annual/attend-virtually/apha-tv), met with colleagues and attendees, gave opening remarks for the awards ceremony, and crashed a live social media event.

On day two, VADM Adams attended the CDC Health Equity forum held at CDC's Chamblee Campus, where he gave remarks on the value of health equity in public health research and about his personal experiences with the need to consider social determinants of health in his work as Indiana State Health Commissioner. After attending the forum, several meetings were held with CDC officials, including then-Principal Deputy Director of CDC, RADM Anne Schuchat; Director of the Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services, RADM Michael Iademarco; and Director of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Dr. Ursula Bauer. In these meetings, VADM Adams shared his interest in the portfolio of CDC's work; developing Surgeon General's reports; and his platforms on Health and the Economy, Opioids, Mental Health, Obesity, and Readiness.

From left to right: LT Tanesha Tutt, VADM Jerome Adams, & LCDR Erika Odom at the CDC Health Equity Forum

The day ended with an intimate discussion and Fireside Chat at the Morehouse School of Medicine with Dr. David Satcher, who previously served as CDC Director, Assistant Secretary of Health, and 16th Surgeon General of the United States.

On his final day at Atlanta, VADM Adams attended meetings with officials at the HHS Region IV office. During these meetings, VADM Adams learned about the ongoing response to support medically displaced hurricane victims who are being cared for in the metro-Atlanta area. He visited the command leadership of the response team and the victims' families, and showed his commitment to service and his understanding

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the needs of the people the USPHS serves. At every meeting and every location, VADM Adams made it a priority to stop, shake hands, take pictures, and talk to the underserved population he has pledged to help. The most exciting part of the entire three days for the officers serving as his aides was "actually getting to know the 20th Surgeon General of the United States and learning more about the experiences and triumphs that led him to where he is today. The words of wisdom and knowledge he shared are nuggets we will carry with us for a lifetime."

By LT Tanesha Tutt

VADM Jerome Adams and LCDR Erika Odom at the CDC Health Equity Forum

VADM Jerome Adams and LT Tanesha Tutt at APHA

Further Insight into the T-O6 Promotion Process

Background: Officers continue to have many questions surrounding the process of developing a promotion package and how packages are evaluated by promotion panels, particularly given recent declines in promotion rates. Mentors are an important source of guidance on how to prepare a successful promotion package. To strengthen mentoring resources and to supplement individual experiences of current SciPAC mentors, the Mentoring Subcommittee developed and launched the Promotion Panels Initiative to generate data-driven insight into factors that may relate to success or non-success of promotion-eligible officers. The Promotion Panels Initiative team sought to address this goal by talking to officers who were successfully promoted within the last few years to gain insight into the factors that likely contributed to their success. In 2016, the first panels were held consisting of officers recently promoted to T-O5. In 2017, building off the success of the T-O5 work, the Promotion Panels Initiative team interviewed officers who were successfully promoted to T-O6, the results of which are summarized in this article.

Methods: Nineteen Scientist Officers were successfully promoted to T-O6 during the 2014–2016 promotion cycles, of which 18 participated in this initiative. Information was obtained primarily through discussion panels held by teleconference, with 2–3 officers and 2–3 subcommittee members participating on each panel. Standardized questions were developed and provided to the participants prior to discussions. Notes were collected by the subcommittee members during the teleconference and analyzed after all of the panel discussions were complete. Separate panels were held for officers promoted by exceptional proficiency promotions (4 officers), officers promoted on their first attempt (9 officers), and officers promoted on subsequent attempts (5 officers). Several officers provided written responses to the standardized questions and one officer was interviewed individually. Billets held at the time of promotion included: 16 officers with O-6 billets (11 were supervisory billets) and two officers with O-5 (supervisory) billets. Noted disciplines included eight epidemiologists and six psychologists; duty stations included CDC (7), DoD (9), and one officer each stationed at DHS and FDA.

Qualifications Reflected in Promotion Package: The panel discussion explored the similarities and differences in positions and qualifications that the officers reflected in their promotion packages. Topics included the importance of being in a supervisory billet, the nature of the position, and publication history. More than 75% of all officers were in supervisory billets at the time of promotion success. Two officers showed leadership in other ways, such as being a recognized subject matter expert and having very visible publications. Supervisory positions were viewed among the panelists as a favorable attribute for promotion. However, holding a non-supervisory position was not required for promotion success, as all five officers who held non-supervisory billets at the time of promotion were promoted either on an EPP or on their first scheduled attempt. One of three officers promoted during a subsequent attempt had changed positions to a supervisory role before their successful attempt. Regarding publications, nearly 90% of officers (15

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out of 17 officers) reported publishing scientific reports during their USPHS career. Some officers stated that early in their career, they tended to be first author on their publications, whereas later they were more likely to be a co-author. Officers also disseminated their scientific findings through presentations, program proposals, book chapters, or writing entire books.

Officership and USPHS Involvement: The Promotion Panel discussion also focused on activities and accomplishments that were not directly related to duty assignments. These could include activities in SciPAC, COA, or other service organizations. All of the officers were active in committees, subcommittees, and/or working groups at the time of their O-6 promotion. Officers perceived participation in these organizations to be important for promotion.

Awards: The panelists had a wide range of awards, both in numbers and types. They agreed that one needs a combination of individual and unit or other service awards. All but three of the officers who were promoted had an Outstanding Service Medal (OSM) or equivalent award from one of the other Uniformed Services. In general, the level of the awards was considered significant, primarily because of the published SciPAC benchmarks for promotion to the T-O6 level.

CV: The CV tells the officer's "story" and is considered a crucial component of the promotion package. Helpful tips and advice included, but were not limited to: 1) have your CV and coversheet reviewed by officers outside of your field and outside of your category, 2) maximize the use of the CV Summary, 3) use plain language, and 4) highlight the impact of your accomplishments and their relation to the benchmarks.

Mentorship: All officers on the panel agreed that mentorship was an important factor in promotion success. Many had formal mentoring agreements through SciPAC, while all of them had other formal or informal mentor relationships with co-workers or other officers. Many of the panelists advocated for and were actively mentoring junior officers.

Deployments: Even though the category-specific benchmarks don't include deployments, all officers felt deployments contributed to promotion success. Some officers mentioned that deployments were an additional avenue to demonstrate how their work has impact on public health, a way to highlight participation in a wide range of public health missions, and a demonstration of an officer's readiness and willingness to participate in responding public health disasters. All interviewed officers had participated in a deployment, either through their agency or through the USPHS. On average, officers had participated in 2.5 (median = 2) PHS deployments and 5.4 (median = 1) agency deployments.

Mobility: On average, officers experienced more than three moves during their career (average 3.3 moves; n=15). The officers' opinions varied on the importance of moves during the course of a career. Most officers felt programmatic moves were more important than geographic moves, especially if the move demonstrated an increasing level of responsibility and leadership. Some officers mentioned that their specialization made it either easier or more difficult to achieve mobility, and approximately half of officers reported that they had not experienced a geographic move.

Continuing Education: The majority of interviewed officers had minimal comments regarding the impact of continuing education on pro-

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motion. One officer stated that continuing education credits/units were a requirement for maintenance of a licensure, while the majority just highlighted the need for documentation to meet benchmark requirements.

Officer Statement and Reviewing Officer Statement: Panelists were asked what information they included in their OS and ROS and how it compared to the information included in their CV. The majority of the officers who responded stated there was overlap between their OS and ROS, but with some differences in emphasis areas. Some panelists remarked on the need to align descriptions in the OS to the benchmarks as well as officership, leadership, and participation in PHS activities including SciPAC. In comparison, other officers felt the ROS should focus on the impact of the officer's accomplishments, how the officer's accomplishments contributed to the agency's success, and the leadership and promotion potential of the officer. One panelist described the OS and ROS as the narrative to the CV, telling the officer's story. Approximately two-thirds of the officers drafted the ROS for their Reviewing Official to edit and finalize or worked very closely with their Reviewing Official to develop the ROS.

COER and Supervisory Support: The panelists emphasized the importance of having high COER scores and a strong narrative that supports the scores. This is in line with the consensus that supervisory support is a must, as reflected in high COER scores, a good ROS, and concurrence for deployments, additional duties, TDYs, etc.

Expected/Unexpected Comments Regarding Promotion Process: During discussions with the panelists, many comments and pieces of advice were noted to be consistent with the available guidance on promotion. As expected, many senior officers believed that early preparation was key to a successful promotion. This included being proactive by knowing and striving to meet all benchmarks, creating an award strategy early in your career, and finding good mentors. Building a professional network for feedback and guidance was also seen as critical for success. Officers also highlighted the importance of demonstrating leadership, growth in your career, and excellent performance in your job. One officer noted that a PHS career is "a marathon not a sprint." A few unexpected insights also emerged during the promotion panel interviews. For example, officers thought that you should not worry too much or second-guess yourself. Expect that promotion success may take several attempts. Another interesting finding was that some senior officers had not documented letters of appreciation or certificates in their eOPF over many years; one officer even stated "letters of appreciation can clutter the eOPF." This goes hand-in-hand with the advice to strive for balance between quality and quantity and to focus your efforts on impactful contributions that align with your professional strengths. Some senior officers also mentioned that you should assume that other officers up for promotion have checked the benchmarks several times over and you should strive to also hit all of the benchmarks, sometimes more than once. Your promotion package should "tell your story" in a way that is clearly understandable to those outside your agency and field of specialization. As one panelist put it, "use terms that you would use to explain your job to a grandparent."

Conclusion: The goal of this initiative was to increase understanding of the promotion process to assist SciPAC mentors in their roles. This was accomplished by holding a series of discussion panels with officers recently promoted to T-O6 who were happy to share their experiences. While much of the information shared by the panelists was expected,

(Continued on page 19)

A Tribute to RADM Helena Mishoe

RADM Helena Mishoe served as our 8th SciPAC Chief Professional Officer (CPO) from 2005–2009 and I had the pleasure of serving as the SciPAC Chair during her tenure. Therefore, it is an enormous honor for me to share this tribute with our scientists. RADM Helena Mishoe loves science and is a phenomenal scientist, but she also loves scientists. She worked on numerous issues throughout her tenure as our CPO to address concerns impacting scientists including:

-Leading an effort to address inequitable appointment standards for Scientists Officers.
-Directing the creation of brochures, articles and information tools to raise awareness about the important work scientists do in the Corps, giving us great visibility.
-Leading Billet Beta Testing, updating and improving Appointment Standards and Promotion Board criteria and leading the COER Transformation.

She was committed to Junior Officers—reaching out to those in need, opening her door to questions, and sending personal welcome letters to every officer newly called to active duty within their first month. These are only some of the many efforts she led during her tenure as our CPO.

RADM Mishoe's commitment goes beyond the work she did at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and to further the work of science and scientists. For example, in 2013, RADM Mishoe led a march for violence prevention leading 600 people through our iconic national parks in DC to advocate for health, honor history, and uplift hope as steps to reduce violence and encourage our youth to learn the compelling stories of their history through the parks and monuments cared for by the National Park Service.

RADM Helena Mishoe (left) was the presiding officer for CAPT Sara Newman (right) at her promotion ceremony in April 2014.

What makes RADM Mishoe stand out as a leader is not only the phenomenal work she did at NIH, the tireless work she did for our Scientist category and the Corps, and her advocacy for critical public health issues impacting our communities nationwide, but rather, the *type* of leader that she is.

Let me explain:

Every word coming from RADM Mishoe, whether in speech, or email, is always gracious and positive. You will never see a frown or hear an angry word.

RADM Mishoe is always available to her officers, always timely and responsive in her communications, no matter the day.

RADM Mishoe sees the strength and capacity around her and feeds it,

(Continued on page 18)

(A Tribute to RADM Mishoe, Continued from page 17)

inspires it and motivates it.

RADM Mishoe is always prepared.

RADM Mishoe does not seek attention nor visibility. She gives visibility to others, because for her, it is all about the mission and how she can boost others to support that mission.

The subtle lessons one can learn from simply observing, being with, and experiencing working with RADM Mishoe are more profound than imaginable – how she interacts and listens to others, considers issues carefully with respect for all, is open to creative solutions, and how in a powerful yet unassuming way, she gets the job done.

RADM Mishoe is forever a champion of her officers, and her commitment to our mission is extraordinary. The day she started her tenure as our CPO, she was deployed to FEMA during the Katrina response, but from her deployment post she still jumped into her duties as CPO.

And even when she was no longer our CPO, RADM Mishoe called in for the SciPAC monthly calls from her post in Africa—she rarely missed a call!

RADM has the respect and admiration of those around her not because she seeks or demands it but because she earns it.

When I reached out to several colleagues in the Scientist Category to prepare these remarks, here are the words they used to describe RADM Mishoe:

PHS officers at RADM Helena Mishoe's retirement ceremony held in Bethesda, MD on September 22, 2017. Front row from left to right: RADM Helena Mishoe, CDR Helen Cox, CAPT Kimberly McIntosh-Little, CAPT DeLoris Hunter, CAPT Sara Newman. Back row from left to right: LCDR Richard Johnson, LT Latasha Turner, CAPT Tiffany Edmonds, CDR Jill Hammond.

Approachable	***Available***
Committed	***Role Model***
Positive	***Awesome Person***
Kind	***A Friend***
Gracious	***Advocate***

RADM Mishoe's retirement is an enormous loss for the Corps, because honestly, we still need her kind of leadership. However, I know there are many of us who had the honor of working and learning from RADM Mishoe and will take the many lessons she taught us and practice them daily. We, in turn, will pass these lessons on to our officers—preserving and promoting the legacy RADM Helena Mishoe so selflessly left for us.

By CAPT Sara Newman

(The Importance of Role Models, Continued from page 11)

role models for underserved and minority populations. We are looking forward to next year's event!

This was a Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE) program event lead by LT Timothy Martin (Engineer) and LT Tramara Dam (Pharmacist). Other participants included, CDR HyeJeong Bolan (Nurse), CDR William Bolduc (Health Services), LCDR Leslie Rivera Rosado (Scientist), LT Edward McDonald (Pharmacist), LT Aaron Patterson (Nurse), LT Yajun Tu (Pharmacist), and LT Jennifer Weekes (Health Services).

By LCDR Leslie Ann Rivera Rosado

(Further Insight into the T-O6 Promotion Process, Continued from page 16)

there were a few unanticipated observations. Many officers did not have a clear understanding of what elements were most critical to their promotion, and officers who were not promoted until after multiple attempts were not able to point to what changes, if any, led to their eventual promotion success. Overall, though, the officers agreed that long-term career planning, early preparation of promotion materials, and perseverance are essential for promotion success.

Acknowledgments:

The SciPAC Mentoring Subcommittee would like to acknowledge the time and contributions of the recently promoted T-O6 officers who participated in the promotion panels, as they were critical to the success of the promotion panel initiative. We would also like to acknowledge the work of other Promotion Panel Team members who were involved in this effort, including CDR Tracy MacGill, LCDR Cara Halldin, LCDR Lana Rossiter, and LCDR Alice Shumate.

By CDR Matthew Newland, CDR Jacqueline Sram, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LCDR Rory Geyer, and LCDR Leslie A. Rivera-Rosado

Scientists Out Front During the Hurricane Maria Response – Team Coqui

Long days, longer nights, and a new appreciation for electricity, water, and cell phone service. The destruction and subsequent response to support Puerto Rico is unprecedented. Several PHS Scientists deployed to Puerto Rico, many of whom had already deployed to Texas and/or Florida. Scientists served in a number of different roles, understanding that being flexible, remaining positive, and supporting the overall mission were the most important priorities.

The hardest part of deploying may be the waiting, and then getting out your agency door. “Having just joined PHS-2 in the summer of 2017, I was really itching to help with hurricane response. I was activated in August, and awaited travel orders for Texas, and then for Florida. Finally, in October, I got the call saying I was headed to Puerto Rico,” said LT Shayne Gallaway.

Officers traveled to Atlanta to stage before their charter flight to Puerto Rico. Officers had one last restful night of sleep in a fancy hotel bed, a hot shower, and a good meal before rising at 0400 to begin the “hurry up and wait” that would define the next couple of days of travel. Communication and details changed by the hour, and leadership did the best they could to relay that information when it was mostly final. That meant being comfortable with an incomplete picture, uncertain of where we might be going, what we would be doing, and where we would be sleeping. Ultimately, it meant being completely flexible and open to anything.

After arriving in Puerto Rico, officers were shuttled to and billeted at the Convention Center on cots in a giant open area with other responders from various organizations. As individual missions became clearer, officers were moved. Team Coqui, starting with Coqui-1, and followed

Scientist Officers responding to Hurricane Maria in Ponce, Puerto Rico From Left to Right: LT Jason Caballero, LCDR Cara Halldin, and LT Shayne Gallaway

by Coqui-2, were primarily responsible for managing Field Medical Stations (FMS) in Bayamón (in the north, near San Juan) and Ponce (in the south), Puerto Rico. Each team and each Federal Medical Station (FMS) had unique daily challenges: obtaining necessary medical supplies, traveling to and from the FMS, team communications, billeting changes,

(Continued on page 21)

(Scientists Out Front During Hurricane Maria Response, Continued from page 20)

figuring out when/where/what to eat, laundry, and long hours, to name just a handful.

An FMS operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Officers worked a day or night shift. Factoring in the time required for transportation to the FMS, and a "hand-off" between shifts to share relevant information, officers worked about 14-15 hours per day, every day. "It was like Groundhog Day. Work. Eat. Sleep. Repeat," noted LT Gallaway.

Working toward a common mission, officers from across categories and agencies, many of whom had never met or worked together previously, had to quickly figure out their role and how to work with and support each other. All would agree it was a great experience, and general thoughts from some Team Coqui Scientists are included below.

"I worked in logistics, starting at the Bayamón FMS. I volunteered to work night shift, not knowing that doing so would have a profound impact on my overall deployment. After about a week, when the inbound backfill for Ponce FMS lacked logistics support, I was asked to transition to that group. It was the best thing that could have happened. It offered great perspective, and I saw how these two FMSs, each constrained by unique challenges, differed. Meeting and being part of two teams that supported response efforts in two different parts of Puerto Rico far exceeded my expectations for this PHS deployment."
– LT Shayne Gallaway

"I joined PHS-2 a week before Hurricane Harvey hit my hometown of Houston, Texas. I was eager to render aid to my local community and any other areas where the developing hurricanes would make landfall. I was activated and deployed as a Logistics Officer for teams VIPR (Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico), ATL-1, and Coqui-2B. During the four months of deployment, I have staged, trained, and executed mission-specific tasks in Orlando, Deerfield, and Miami, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; and Ponce, Puerto Rico. I loved every minute of it. Each moment was a learning experience and, in my mind, established what it truly is to be an officer with USPHS. My mindset as a Scientist and a Logistics Officer was one of flexibility; we must be ready to execute any task or assume any role we are given. I served as a Logistics Officer, acting logistics chief, acting deputy team leader, and night shift team commander. As non-clinicians, we must be able to fluidly adapt to any intellectual and physical challenge we experience "down range" on deployments. I believe this is what makes deploying as a Scientist exciting. The friendships I developed while on deployment and the lessons I learned will be lifelong." -LT Jason Caballero

"Immediately following Hurricane Maria, I recalled the media reports of desperate calls for help and the need for additional resources in Puerto Rico. I was eager to be part of the USPHS response team, and felt very fortunate to be a part of Coqui-2. I was assigned to the FMS in Bayamón, where I found myself in logistics, a vital function of any FMS, but one in which I had no prior experience. Serving the needs of our patients and clinical staff, the logistics team at FMS Bayamón tackled a variety of problems, not the least of which was water abatement for a severely damaged roof on the hospital we occupied, which resulted in a reoccurring deluge of water on the floor immediate above our spaces. Also challenging were the frequent power outages and the absence of municipal services, including trash removal. Throughout our deployment however, we collectively sought to improve the conditions of those we served, many of whom reminded us of how grateful they were for us being there to help in their time of need. In the end,

(Continued on page 22)

((Scientists Out Front During Hurricane Maria Response, Continued from page 21)

it was an emotionally moving and incredibly rewarding experience; one I will not soon forget. Thanks to all my friends and colleagues on Coqui-2, and to the friends whom I met from Puerto Rico." – LCDR Neil Bonzagni

"I think my favorite phrase from the 2017 hurricane season was "stand by to stand by." I served as Deputy Logistics Chief for PHS2 and Logistics Chief for Coqui2, and I uttered that phrase too many times to count over the past three months. I am still perplexed by how much sitting around an officer endures while waiting for the next stage of a mission. You go from waiting to get activated, to waiting for your itinerary, to waiting for a mission/patients/the bus to get you back to billeting, and ending with waiting to demobilize. Patience is the key if you are going to be successful on a deployment team. In my opinion, Scientists are uniquely positioned to excel during these times due to the very nature of their training. Obtaining a Ph.D. is very similar to a deployment in that it involves grinding things out for long periods of time with intermittent bursts of chaos at other times. This is a deployment in a nutshell, and Scientist Officers are used to this kind of environment and are capable at following standard procedures during the repetitive times, but also have the flexibility to come up with practical solutions when things go awry, just like in graduate school. It is the flexibility and the ability to think outside the box that make or break an officer on deployment, and I have yet to run into a USPHS Scientist who was not exhibited these traits. Moreover, the organizational, administrative, and communication skills inherent to our training explain why you can find Scientists in every non-clinical branch of deployment team. We are truly the Swiss Army knife of the USPHS and I am proud to be part of this group."-LCDR John Pesce

"As with other deployments, the Puerto Rican humanitarian assistance mission challenged officers through uncontrollable circumstances and by the overwhelming nature of the need; however, it is at those times that we can reflect, adapt, and succeed. As part of Coqui-1, I witnessed and heard stories about the resourcefulness and ingenuity of Puerto Ricans and first responders. Similarly, my team members and I took on new tasks to make the mission successful. I served in a new role, as Public Information Officer, and assisted on various other liaison, administrative, and logistics activities. I believe most Scientists inherently enjoy these challenges; we are experimenters at heart, and each challenge teaches us something about our surroundings and ourselves. However, the experiences of camaraderie among team members, other first responders, and the Puerto Rican population are what I will cherish most. Although there were language translation challenges at times, a smile, a handshake, and nod of encouragement are all universal. I can't wait to go back to Puerto Rico to see the improvements and the island again." -LCDR Tyann Blessington

"I had been part of RDF-1 for nearly 4 years; however, deploying in response to Hurricane Irma was my first PHS deployment. If I could give my pre-deployment self a bit of advice, it would be to emphasize patience, flexibility, and bring something to read or work on. I, too, was activated for Hurricane Harvey, waited, didn't deploy; activated for Hurricane Irma, waited, eventually deployed to Florida; activated for Hurricane Maria, waited, deployed to Ponce, PR. Deployed as an epidemiologist, I was quickly moved into the Safety Officer role, which required me to exercise flexibility and quickly get up to speed on the roles of my new position. It's easy to lose sight of the mission and become frustrated during the "hurry up and wait" parts of a deployment. However, in reflecting on the support that non-clinical Scientist

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((Scientists Out Front During Hurricane Maria Response, Continued from page 22)

Officers provided to ensure that clinicians had the tools they needed to care for the patients who desperately need our assistance, these deployments have been the most rewarding experiences I've had an opportunity to be part of, reinforcing the pride that I have in being a Scientist Officer in the USPHS. As a scientist who sits in an office crunching numbers and writing manuscripts for most of the year, it was inspiring to witness the selfless work of PHS officers, DMAT teams, and local responders, and to experience the unwavering spirit and hope of those who were displaced." – LCDR Cara Halldin

By LT Shayne Gallaway, LCDR Neil Bonzagni, LCDR John Pesce, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LT Jason Caballero, LCDR Cara Halldin

Scientist Officers responding to Hurricane Maria in Bayamón, Puerto Rico
From left to right: LCDR Neil Bonzagni, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LT Shayne Gallaway, and LCDR John Pesce

SciPAC Fist Bump

A new initiative from the SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee

Scientist Officers are truly a unique and amazing group of people. Unfortunately, so much of what we do goes unrecognized. The SciPAC Fist Bump has been created as a way to track and highlight the awesome things you do as a PHS Scientists, public health professionals and community members.

We want you to brag a little and tell us about the noteworthy — professional or personal—things you do. Tell us what you are proud of so we can *fist bump* you by featuring your accomplishments in an upcoming issue of The Scientist Newsletter.

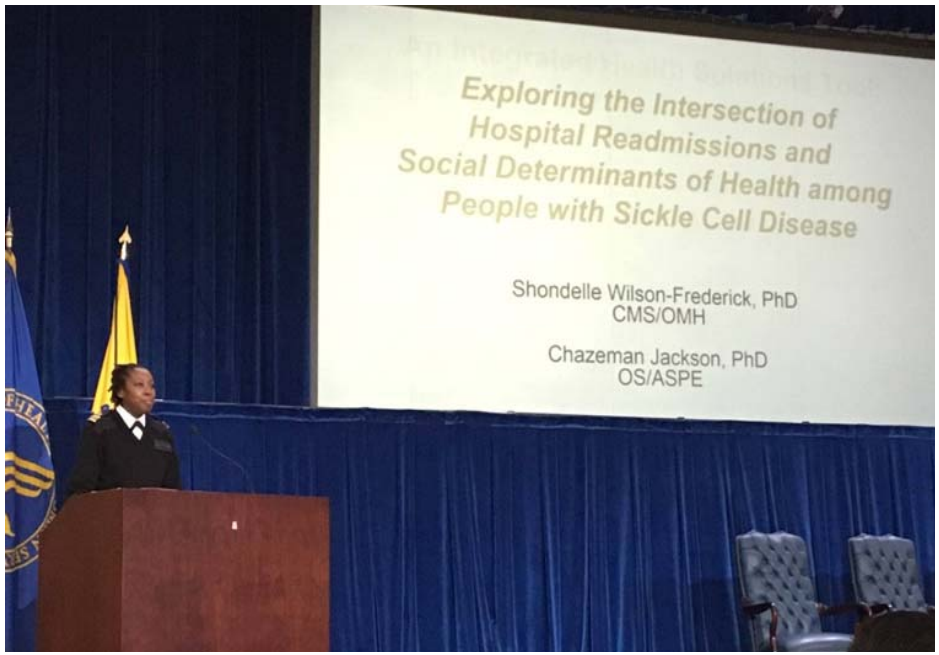
All you need to do is take a moment to review the instructions describing eligible activities then enter your information in the SciPAC Fist Bump Tracker. Once the SciPAC Fist Bump Committee has reviewed and made their selections, you will be notified if you are selected to receive a celebratory Fist Bump. Please feel to submit questions to LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick, Shondelle.Wilson-Frederick@cms.hhs.gov

Instructions: https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/SOP_SciPAC_Fist-Bump-Tool_2018.doc

Fist Bump Tracker: https://goo.gl/forms/rOMW5h0RUAWY72Sy1

SciPAC Fist Bump for LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick

In September 2017, LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick was selected to serve as the Team Lead for a team developing an innovative HHS project to examine how conditions where people live, learn, work, and age impact hospital readmissions for people living with sickle cell disease. The team, composed of LCDR Wilson-Frederick (CMS, Office of Minority and Health) and Dr. Chazeman Jackson (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation), was one of 14 selected for the highly competitive seventh cohort of the HHS Ignite Accelerator.



LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick presenting at the 2017 HHS Innovation Day

LCDR Wilson-Frederick notes, "The HHS Ignite Accelerator offered a great opportunity to identify bold solutions to improve the quality of care of patients living with sickle cell disease. Although rare in comparison with heart disease or cancer, sickle cell disease has one of the highest 30-day readmission rates. Thus innovation is needed to both reduce the hefty financial burden on the health care system and to improve patient care."

Sickle cell disease, which disproportionately affects Blacks and Latinos, refers to a group of genetic disorders in which a patient's red blood cells undergo a change in shape known as sickling. This shape change inhibits tissues from receiving oxygenated blood, thereby impacting every bodily system. Most people living with sickle cell disease experience both chronic and episodic pain identified as pain crises (the most common reason for hospital visits).

From conducting multiple interviews with providers, payers, researchers and patients, LCDR Wilson-Frederick's team frequently heard that sickle cell patients experienced a lack of empathy for their severe pain by health care professionals. To address this, the team developed a quality improvement prototype which includes: 1) issuance of a unique badge for sickle cell patients following hospital admission from the emergency department, and 2) completion of an Assessment Tool to link the patients to various support services prior to discharge, in an effort to reduce a hospital readmission. LCDR Wilson-Frederick showcased the project at the 2017 HHS Innovation Day on December 13, 2017, at the Hubert Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services Headquarters in Washington, DC.

By LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick

The Newsletter team congratulates LCDR Wilson-Frederick on her first celebratory SciPAC Fist Bump!

Pearls of Wisdom

...excerpts from Scientist Officer Deployment Narratives, 2016-2017

By LT Teresa Wang, LCDR Amy Freeland, LCDR Kathleen Hartnett, LCDR Kelsy Hoffman & LCDR Jessica Cleck-Derenick

Remain flexible while on deployment and [be] willing to do things outside of your area when asked. Even those seemingly insignificant tasks to support operations are of value to the team as a whole.

-LCDR Neil Bonzagni

Take on the challenge! If you haven't deployed or are still fairly new, do not despair. There will be more experienced deployers there to help guide you along the way.

-LCDR Zewditu Demissie

Work hard and maximize your down time to avoid burnout. Listen upon arrival, work as a team, and BE IN THE MOMENT!

-LCDR Israel Cross

If you have a deployment or TDY "kit" you have prepped to take with you (or take with you regularly) - make sure you check it before each deployment/TDY!

-LT Colleen Scott

Earplugs are priceless.

-LCDR Eduardo O'Neill

IS-300 and IS-400 are really important for IRCT deployments and they total 5 days of on-site trainings so need to be worked in as you can.

-CAPT Kate Brett

Read the full narratives

http://bit.ly/2B1FBFn

Submit Your Deployment Narrative! **Share your experiences and contribute to the readiness of fellow officers.**

The Readiness Subcommittee's Response Narrative Workgroup is collecting narratives from officers who have recently deployed. To submit your narrative, please fill out the form at https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/deployment-narrative-form.pdf and send it, along with media attachments (e.g., your portrait, deployment photos) to scipacnarratives@gmail.com**.** Have questions? Please contact LCDR Jessica Cleck-Derenick at Jessica.Cleck-Derenick@fda.hhs.gov.

SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee: Bringing Officers Together in Atlanta

The purpose of the SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee is "to inform SciPAC and Scientist Officers on scientific activities, accomplishments, and opportunities available throughout the USPHS and to increase the visibility of the Scientist Category." To meet this goal, the Subcommittee promotes esprit de corps activities and plans social events for Scientist Officers. Since October 2015, the Visibility Subcommittee has planned 2 Atlanta BeltLine walk/runs (led by LCDR Zewditu Demissie), 2 hikes at area national parks (led by LCDR Erika Odom), 4 Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer socials (led by LCDR NaTasha Hollis, CDR Anne Purfield, and CDR Kamil Barbour), and 6 Team Trivia events (led by CDRs Kamil Barbour and Timothy Cunningham). More than 75 Scientist Officer-contacts have resulted from these visibility events. Given the success of the DC-area Mad Scientist Halloween Party (hosted by CDR Robin Toblin, SciPAC Chair), Atlanta hosted a Mardi Gras Bash. This event took place on February 10, 2018 and was hosted by LT Ruth Link-Gelles and LT Alaine Knipes. (See article on page 28.)

Team Trivia is a live-hosted trivia competition played by teams across the nation. Trivia occurs across the Atlanta Metro Area in several venues on any day of the week. The SciPAC team competes against up to 20 other teams at a local pizza restaurant, guessing the answers to questions on varied topics such as movies, television, music, sports, history, literature, geography, science, and more. The first place team wins a $50 certificate. The second and third place finishes are also rewarded with gift certificate prizes.

Each trivia event is attended by Scientist Officers and friends or family members (6–15 people for each event). Some Scientist Officers have become quite the regular competitors – including, CDR Kamil Barbour

Atlanta Scientist Officers gather at the December 2017 Trivia Night at Mellow Mushroom. Pictured seated from left to right: LT Kathleen Chapman Harnett, LT Jessica Tomov, CDR Kamil Barbour. Pictured standing from left to right: CDR Timothy Cunningham, LCDR Zewditu Demissie.

(Visibility Subcommittee Chair), CDR Timothy Cunningham (Visibility Subcommittee Co-Chair and Atlanta Socials Team Lead), and LCDR Zewditu Demissie (Atlanta Socials Team Member). Team Trivia provides the opportunity for Scientist Officers to network and socialize, but also to learn more about each other's interests, backgrounds, and life experiences. Having a diverse team of Officers has been critical in helping SciPAC finish well during trivia events. The SciPAC team typically places in one of the winning positions; the team has had 4 top 3 fin-

(Continued on page 27)

(SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee, Continued from page 26)

ishes over 6 events. Regardless of the end result, attendees have a wonderful time together while they compete.

By LCDR Zewditu Demissie

Trivia question: What was TV character Punky Brewster's real first name?

See next page for answer.

Pictured above are officers at the Epidemic Intelligence Service Fall Course 2017 Social. First row, left to right: LT Leora Feldstein, LT Ruth Link-Gelles, CDR Kamil Barbour. Middle row, left to right: LT Sarah Luna, LT William Davis, CDR Anne Purfield. Back Row: LT Jamie Eugene, LT Ian Kracalik.

December DC Social Event

LCDR Iman Martin, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LT Andrew Brown and LCDR Jonathan Leshin waiting for their turn to roll and bowl at Pinstripes in Rockville, MD at a social event organized by the DC Socials Team. A fun evening was had by all officers.

First Annual 2018 Scientist Officer Mardi-Gras Bash to Celebrate the Warming Weather in Atlanta!

From left to right: LT Francis Annor, and LCDRs Oliver Ou and Zewditu Demissie shared laughs!

Sixteen Atlanta-area Scientist Officers met up on February 10 to enjoy some delicious food, colorful beads, and a surprisingly sweet King Cake! The first annual Scientist Officer Mardi Gras Bash, organized by LTs Alaine Knipes and Ruth Link-Gelles, along with the Visibility Subcommittee Chairs CDRs Kamil Barbour and Timothy Cunningham, and the ATL Social Team Leads LCDR Jonathan Leshin and LCDR Zewditu Demissie was a hit. Officers enjoyed the company of the Director of CDC's Commissioned Corps Activity Office, CDR Deborah Dee and her husband Eric Combest.

Atlanta-based CDC and Athens-based USDA officers mingled and laughed. Officers wore colorful beads and enjoyed festive food and beverages. Silly group photos were taken in front of the colorful Mardi Gras-themed streamers and balloons, while candid shots captured cheer and conversation. LCDR Terrence Lo found the baby in the King Cake.

A big thanks to CDR Kamil Barbour for providing food and drinks and LCDR Zewditu Demissie for providing decorations. Also thanks to the Scientist officers for raising over $200 for the SciPAC fund.

By LT Alaine Knipes and LT Ruth Link-Gelles

Scientist Officers mingling at the First Annual 2018 Scientist Officer Mardi-Gras Bash.

From left to right: LTs Shayne Galloway and Francis Annor struck a pose with LCDR Terrence Lo and CDR Kamil Barbour.

From left to right: LTs Kathleen Hartnett, Jessica Tomov, and Matt Stuckey engaged in serious conversation!

Answer to Trivia question on page 27: Penelope

Personal Updates

Birth announcements!

Left: Both LCDR Jonetta Mpofu and husband David Mpofu are excited to be new parents to baby boy David Thabo Mpofu Jr. who was born on October 29, 2017. He weighed 7lbs, 14oz and was 21 inches long.

Right: Jacqueline Ariel Blumberg was born on January 17, 2018 at 5:20 pm. She weighed 8 lbs 1.5 oz and was 20.5 inches long. CDR Robin Toblin and spouse, Brian Blumberg, are thrilled by their first child!

Celebrating 40 years in Active Duty

CAPT Murray recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of his original call to active duty. He reported for duty at Grand Forks Air Force Base in October 1977.

Left photo: CAPT Murray as a LT serving at Grand Forks Air Force Base in 1977.

Right photo: A recent photo of CAPT Murray after serving 40 years as an active duty uniformed services officer.

Join Us for the *2018 USPHS*

Scientific and Training Symposium

June 4–7, 2018 at the Renaissance Dallas Addison Hotel.

SciPAC Category Day is June 6!

For More Information: https://www.phscof.org/symposium.html

IMG Source: https://www.facebook.com/111762725508574/

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scipacnewsletter@gmail.com

Check out past issues of *The Scientist Officer* at:

https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/scientist/newsletter.aspx

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