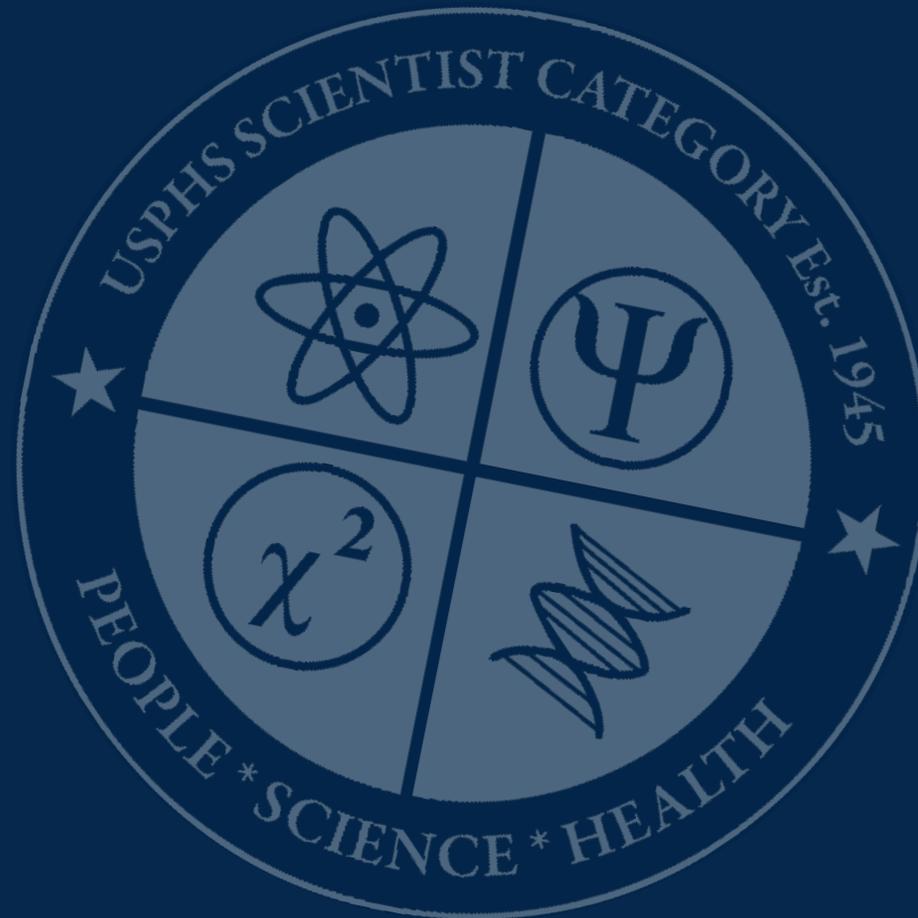


The Scientist Officer



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Your Life is Not a Treadmill

LCDR Patrick Sears



LCDR Patrick Sears surprising his sons by returning home from deployment.

Some of the most incredibly talented, hard-working, and tenacious individuals I know are United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Scientists. Why then, are so many of us dissatisfied? We earn impressive credentials, publish articles in prestigious journals, land difficult promotions, and finally secure that coveted subcommittee leadership position, only to find, months later, we feel about the same as always. Psychologists refer to this process as habituation, which is the propensity for people to get accustomed to things over time. The things we worked so hard for, that meant so much to us at one point in our lives, eventually fade into the background. We find ourselves wanting something else and we feel unsettled because we do not have it. It is as though we are on a perpetual treadmill of seeking the next big thing, with hopes that maybe it will give us a bit more satisfaction, only for the process to repeat itself.

While we are all Scientist Officers, more importantly, we are all human beings. We all want to be happy and avoid suffering. We feel discontented when we become accustomed to the valuable things in our life because they become normal and unremarkable to us. How then can we learn to feel more satisfied with our lives? We can choose to intentionally practice thankfulness, to practice gratitude, by being more aware of the good things already in our lives. They are right in front of us—take some time to notice and appreciate them. Being grateful is not about ignoring what is wrong, it's about noticing what is right.

Let's put gratitude into action. If you are grateful for specific people in your life, you could express this sentiment so they know how much they mean to you. Pick up the phone, send a text message or e-mail, or schedule a meal together. Give them your time. If you are grateful for your health, consider increasing the frequency of health-related behavior you enjoy, such as jogging, yoga, meditation, or weightlifting. Perhaps you could teach your children, spouse, or friends how to prepare one of your favorite healthy meals. How you put gratitude into action is up to you; it does not need to be complicated. The most important thing is intentionally spending a little more time in appreciation of what you have.

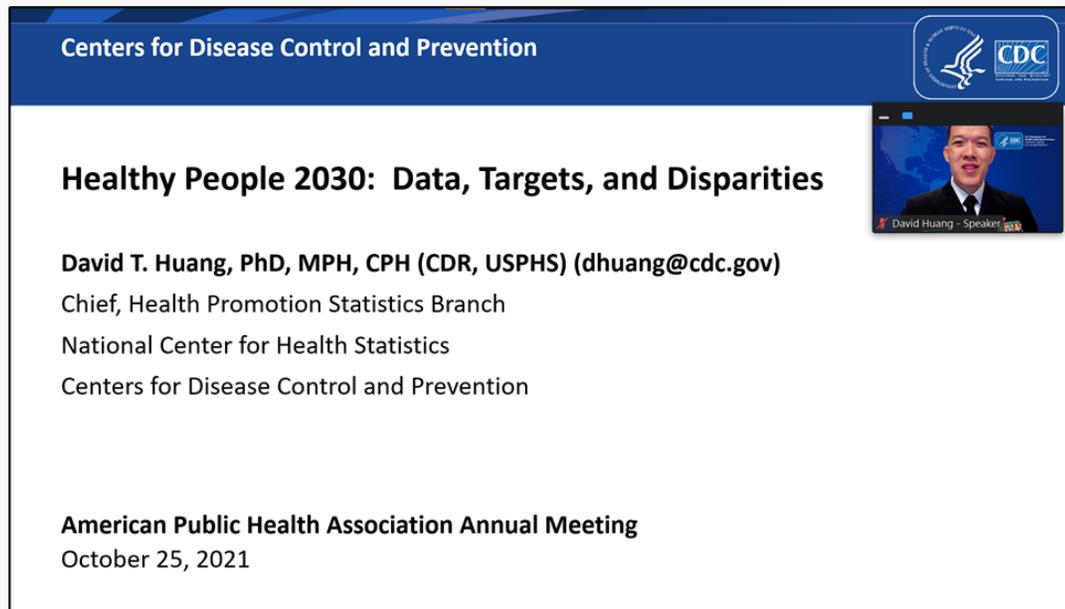
LCDR Sears is a member of the Psychologist Integration Subcommittee

Scientists Present at 2021 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting

By CDRs David Huang and Zewditu Demissie

The American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting & Expo is one of the largest meetings of public health professionals, bringing together a wide range of public health researchers, practitioners, and partners from around the world. After shifting to a virtual-only conference last year due to COVID-19, the conference this year was held in a hybrid format, with over 10,000 public health professionals attending in person (Denver, CO) and/or online. The theme for this year's meeting, held October 24-27, was "Creating the Healthiest Nation: Strengthening Social Connectedness."

CDR David Huang led three oral presentations at this year's conference. The first two presentations were part of an interactive half-day learning institute, which are half-, full- and two-day courses that focused on professional development and building on knowledge and skills. He served as one of four faculty members for a learning institute titled, "Strengthening Social Connectedness: Leveraging Healthy People 2030 Resources," and his presentations were titled, "DATA2030 presentation" and "Exploring disparities in the nation's health." CDR Huang also participated as the author and oral presenter for a presentation titled, "Healthy People 2030: Data, Targets, and Disparities" as part of an APHA-sponsored session, "Implementing Healthy People 2030 to Improve the Health and Well-being of the Nation."



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Healthy People 2030: Data, Targets, and Disparities

David T. Huang, PhD, MPH, CPH (CDR, USPHS) (dhuang@cdc.gov)
Chief, Health Promotion Statistics Branch
National Center for Health Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

American Public Health Association Annual Meeting
October 25, 2021

CDR Huang provides an introduction for his presentation, "Healthy People 2030: Data, Targets and Disparities."

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Scientists Present at 2021 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting

By CDRs David Huang and Zewditu Demissie

CDR Zewditu Demissie hosted two scientific sessions this year. She served as moderator for the session “Epidemiology of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE),” highlighting associations between ACE and behavioral outcomes in adolescence and adulthood. She also served as Co-Host for the session “School Health & Wellness: Addressing Reproductive and Sexual Health and Identity in Schools,” driving the conversation around needs and programs in schools related to the reproductive and sexual health and identity of diverse groups of students.

Next year promises to be an even more momentous event, as it marks the 150th APHA Annual Meeting. The theme for next year’s Annual Meeting will be “150 Years of Creating the Healthiest Nation: Leading the Path Toward Equity.” Here’s hoping conditions will allow for a full in-person conference experience in Boston, MA, November 6-9, 2022!

Q & A



- Submit questions through the Zoom chat box.
- In front of your question, indicate the name of the presenter to whom you are directing your query.
- Keep your questions short and to the point.
- After the session, visit the presenter’s abstract page in the Meeting Platform to **leave a comment on their discussion board.**

CDR Demissie conducts the Q&A portion of the session “School Health & Wellness: Addressing Reproductive and Sexual Health and Identity in Schools.”

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The Varied Role of Psychologists in Deployments

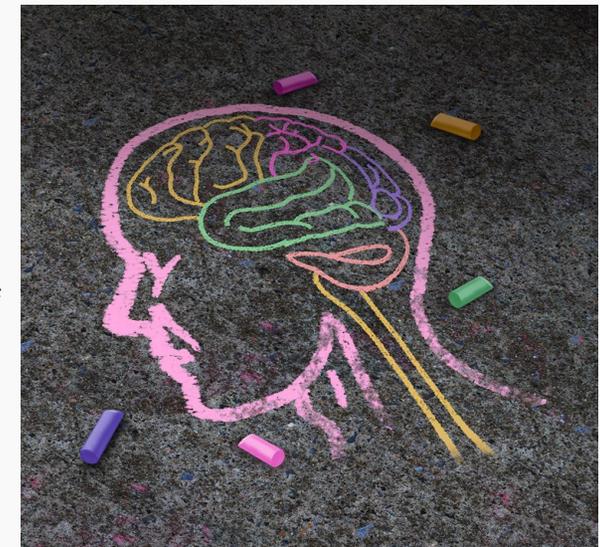
By LCDR Adriana Restrepo

With the recent influx of psychologists into the Scientist category, a breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, and expertise have also arrived. Psychologists work in various diverse settings and are actively involved in understanding mental processes and behaviors. This knowledge and understanding further enhance the category's strength in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

Deployment roles vary among Officers based on their background, skillset, and training. Sometimes psychologists, serving alongside other PHS Officers, deploy in roles to care for communities affected by disasters and other public health emergencies. When working with individuals during and after a disaster, we are working with people who may be experiencing reactions of confusion, fear, hopelessness, sleeplessness, anxiety, grief, shock, guilt, shame, and loss of confidence in themselves and others. Any community can experience a disaster and many traumatic events occur without warning. The importance of addressing mental health and establishing early contacts with the affected populations can help alleviate painful emotions and promote hope and healing. Psychologists can be an essential resource assisting in psychological support for individuals and communities and facilitating disaster mental health as well as psychological first aid.

Another unique role that psychologists play in deployments is that of providing force health protection and force support with other Officers. During deployments, psychologists can monitor individual and group response to stress and well-being, provide support to Officers as needed, facilitate implementation of positive coping mechanisms among team members, provide input to command leadership, and provide education on compassion fatigue. On deployments, psychologists form part of multidisciplinary teams where each professional brings special knowledge, skills, and perspectives that can be shared with one another and with leadership to help meet the mission.

Lastly, there have been instances in which psychologists function outside their standard clinical roles. This would include logistical management, strategic planning, leading response teams, and providing training to first responders or disaster response personnel. Flexibility, resilience, and adaptability are all common traits that emerge among psychologists and other PHS Officers during deployments. Although deployments can be stressful, the challenges, opportunity for growth, and relationships formed lead to overall positive experiences. Psychologists serving alongside other Officers collaborate together towards having a successful mission and developing lasting relationships. The skills and level of knowledge that psychologists bring to the table now form part of a category that plays an instrumental role in protecting, promoting, and advancing the health and safety of the Nation.



LCDR Restrepo is a member of the Psychologist Integration Subcommittee

Retirement of CAPT Kate Brett

By CDR Andrea McCollum and LCDR Matthew Steele

CAPT Kate Brett retired from the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps in August 2021 after 30 years of service as an Officer. CAPT Brett obtained a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina (1991) and entered PHS as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1991. Since 1993, she has held positions with the Health Resources and Services Administration and CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). In her positions, she has provided senior leadership in women's health and data dissemination to help states evaluate metrics and performance in women's health. CAPT Brett is also a recognized expert in the areas of menopause and utilization of menopausal hormone therapy. CAPT Brett has been a member of a National Incident Support Team (NIST) since 2009, including as Team Commander from 2014–2016. She has mentored Officers throughout her career and was a member of the SciPAC Career Development Subcommittee from 2006–2017. CAPT Brett deployed 19 times as an Officer, including for 9 hurricane or storm responses. She was recognized as the 2020 Scientist Responder of the Year.

CAPT Brett received the Retiring Scientist Outstanding Service Award for her remarkable and honorable service to the Scientist Category and the USPHS in October 2021.



CAPT Kate Brett

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

Retirement of CAPT Kate Brett

By CDR Andrea McCollum and LCDR Matthew Steele

CAPT Brett was asked a series of questions regarding her career and advice she may be able to offer other Officers.

1. What advice do you have for new Calls to Active Duty?

I would recommend that you remember it is an honor to be a Commissioned Officer, but with that are duties and expectations that you will be expected to carry out. You will be asked to do more than your civilian colleagues, such as deploying when called on, working both for your agency and for the USPHS, and frankly, being expected to help your fellow Officers throughout the course of your career. It is important to embrace these expectations and anticipate that over the long run, it will make your life that much richer.

2. Tell us about the best (or your favorite) career decision you made as an Officer.

When I was commissioned, the only Officers that I knew were deploying for the USPHS was the one Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT), PHS-1, composed only of Officers in USPHS. During Hurricane Katrina, that changed and as an epidemiologist, I was selected to join a team that was to drive through Louisiana to do active disease surveillance at some of the small shelters that were operating. However, just before we traveled, Hurricane Rita made landfall and our team along with several others were repurposed to perform medical and public health incident management. I found that work very hard and at the same time satisfying and so sought out the opportunity to take the Secretary's Emergency Response Team (SERT) training the following winter. That decision opened the door to my being a member of one of the National Incident Response Teams. Many of the terms and names associated with HHS response management and support have changed since then, but the work continued to be something I am proud to have carried out. It also gave me the opportunity to rise in the team ranks from a planning section augmentee, to Deputy Lead, Team Lead, and finally Senior Coordinating Officer, working directly with Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response to position USPHS teams to be right sized and trained for use as needed.

3. What has motivated you to work hard?

I am not happy when I am not busy. Thus, it doesn't take much to keep me motivated. In my work with CDC, the motivation has been to support the agency to provide health and health care data that are useful, accurate, reliable and granular enough to be used to make a difference in the health of the nation. NCHS does not provide opportunities to directly change health but rather provides the necessary information so that others can direct policy and programs effectively. USPHS work was motivated by the fact that everything that I did, including being a SciPAC mentor, scientist Applications and Transactions board member for CCHQ, and deployment team member, helped others either with their careers or with their health and welfare.

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Retirement of CAPT Kate Brett

By CDR Andrea McCollum, LCDR Matthew Steele

4. Do you have any suggestions on how to balance the requirements of the day job and USPHS? I have a very supportive partner, who fortunately works from home and was always willing to step in when I was away to care for our daughters, so I rarely felt torn by extra work. He did manage to be the only parent home each time one of the girls started menstruating, something I will never live down! Seriously, I did spend evenings working on USPHS efforts but tried to keep that to circumscribed times. I almost always used lunchtime for either exercising or non-agency efforts, eating while working. Finally, I had the luxury of being able to schedule agency work so that I could do USPHS work as needed. That was just something that worked out for me.
5. What are you most looking forward to about retirement? I wish I could say that I am retiring right away. Instead, I am taking my 75 days of terminal leave and then expect to be brought back as a civil service fellow to continue my work at CDC. After 60 days of leave, I can say that I am more than able to keep busy, traveling in our teardrop camper trailer, reading, and playing music and banjo. Now that I have had a taste of weeks of time away from work, I will know to plan for the next time that will be longer in duration so that I have active roles with volunteer organizations to jump into.



CAPT Brett with members of NIST-B in 2016. Left to right (using ranks at the time the photograph was taken): CAPT Kate Brett, CDR Jessica Hensley (now Havranek, EHO), CDR Joseph Tomao (HSO), LCDR Kelly Abraham (HSO), LCDR Chris Sheehan (HSO)

If you are retiring soon, please reach out to CDR Andrea McCollum (amccollum@cdc.gov) and LCDR Matthew Steele (matthew.steele@fda.hhs.gov).

Recognition of Scientist Officers who Achieved Permanent Promotion

Permanent Captain (O-6)

Karon Abe

Danisha Robbins

Permanent Lieutenant Commander (O-4)

Amy Freeland

Joanna Gaines

Cara Halldin

Amee Schwitters

Alice Shumate

Rachel Slayton

Nancy Tian

Jason Wilken

Permanent Lieutenant (O-3)

Evan Brown

Angela Coulliette-Salmond

Dianca Finch

Brett Forshey

Brandi Freeman

Jayleen Gunn

Marisa Hast

Hana Kim

Taneshia Knight

Ana Lauer

Xia Lin

Olivia McGovern

Brian Reiner

Amy Schuh

Janna Whitworth

Congratulations!

Permanent Commander (O-5)

Frances Belcher

Samuel Dutton

Christopher Hunter

Ryan Novak

Eduardo O'Neill-La-Luz

Margaret Riggs

William Satterfield

Andrea Sharma

Fei Xu

Fuyuen Yip

Lauren Zapata

Yi Zhang

SciPAC Halloween Happy Hour



By LT Lacreisha Ejike-King

The Socials Team hosted a virtual Halloween happy hour on October 29, 2021. The event was attended by 9 Officers stationed in Maryland, Georgia, and Thailand. CAPT Eckert served as the event's guest bartender and demonstrated how to make a "Blurry Vampire," a drink akin to a Bloody Mary. The Blurry Vampire contained unique ingredients such as goat eyeballs, A-positive blood, and the cerebrospinal fluid from infected DC rats. CAPT Eckert graciously provided suitable substitutions so the drink can be made with ingredients that can be found in the kitchen or at the local supermarket. After the drink demonstration, Officers discussed their Halloween plans and engaged in pro and college football banter before playing a spirited game of Halloween-themed Family Feud. It was truly a spook-tacular affair!



*Top row: L-R - CDR Lana Rossiter, LT Lacreisha-Ejike-King, CAPT John Eckert;
Second row: L-R - CDR Deborah Dee, LCDR Colleen Scott, CDR Sara Vagi;
Third row: L-R - LCDR Eric Jamoom, LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick; Not pictured: LCDR William Davis.*

SciPAC Fist Bump

Congratulations to CDR Adrienne Goodrich-Doctor on being selected to receive the FDA Commissioned Officers Network (FCON) Admiral's Mentorship Award. This award recognizes PHS Officers at the rank of O-5 or O-6 who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to leadership development, mentoring individuals in public health, and advancing the mission of the FDA.

CDR Goodrich-Doctor has served in leadership roles within multiple federal agencies and has been at the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition since 2016. CDR Goodrich-Doctor takes great strides not only to lead within the USPHS and the FDA, but to encourage, promote, and inspire leadership and professional development in officers and civilians. CDR Goodrich-Doctor has served as a formal mentor to 10 officers since 2012, providing an average of 15 hours per month to guide her mentees in completing 2 doctoral degrees, 2 advanced certifications, 2 leadership programs, 9 programmatic/geographic moves; earning 14 awards; and being selected for 2 positions on Tier-1 response teams, 8 voting member appointments, and 4 Executive Board positions among 4 PHS chartered advisory groups.



CDR Adrienne Goodrich-Doctor

SciPAC Fist Bump

Don't forget to nominate yourself or another Scientist officer for a SciPAC Fist Bump! Whether you welcomed a new family member, delivered an impactful talk or service, or completed a COVID-19 deployment, we want to hear about it!

[You can find the Fist Bump Submission Form here.](#)

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Check out past issues of *The Scientist Officer* at <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/scientist/newsletter.aspx>