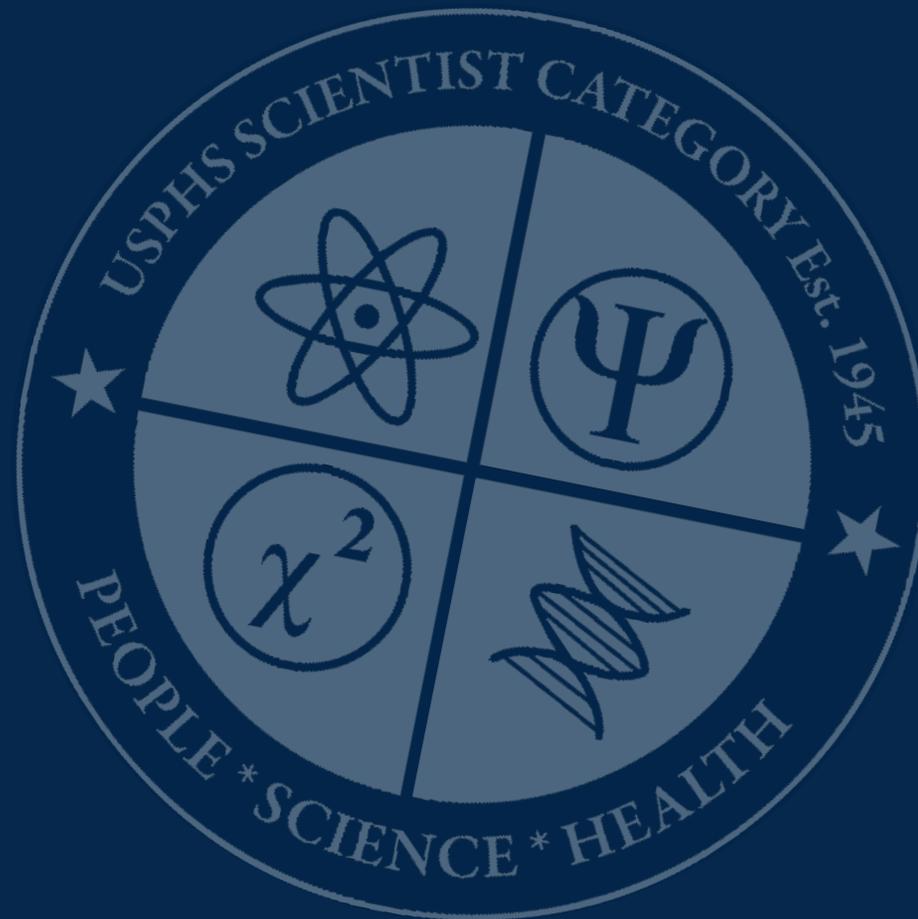


The Scientist Officer



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Congratulations to Our Promoted Officers

CAPT Jennifer Adjemian

CAPT Loren Rodgers

CAPT Kenneth Sekulic

CAPT Jacqueline Tate

CAPT Robin Toblin

CDR Matthew Lozier

CDR Leigh Ann Miller

CDR Eduardo O'Neill La Luz

CDR Erin Parker

CDR John Pesce

CDR Alice Shumate

LCDR Francis Annor

LCDR Samantha Dimisa

LCDR Ruth Link-Gelles

LCDR Jaymin Patel

LCDR Nazia Rahman

LCDR Erica Rose

LCDR Matthew Stuckey

LCDR Emily Ussery

LCDR Marissa Zwald



Scientists Deploy in First Wave of COVID-19 Response

By CDR Alison Halpin & LCDR Marcienne Wright

“Roll with it.” Truer words were never spoken by LCDR Chelsea Kleinmeyer (Nurse Officer) on the first evening of our (CDR Alison Halpin and LCDR Marcienne Wright’s) deployment to support a COVID-19 repatriation mission in late January 2020.

We initially deployed at March Air Reserve Base near Ontario, California, where we joined other Services Access Team (SAT) members in staffing round-the-clock shifts to fully support the repatriation needs of individuals undergoing federally enforced quarantine following their return from Wuhan, China. We were rostered to conduct initial case management for these evacuees on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Less than a week into the March Air Reserve Base deployment, our plans changed when SAT-4 and SAT-5 team members were re-deployed to multiple locations across the country to prepare for the next set of evacuees returning to the United States. With lessons learned in hand, we traveled with three additional SAT team Officers to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio to continue supporting the needs of repatriated individuals.

This multi-agency repatriation effort brought responders from all backgrounds and skillsets, and from across the country. As with any response, flexibility and willingness to pitch in were critical. SAT teams are responsible for monitoring and assessing the needs of individuals affected by a public health emergency – specifically their health and human services needs. However, at Lackland, case management would not be needed until after passengers disembarked. Thus, the early portion of the mission focused on logistics and planning for these needs. We and other SAT Officers worked as part of the larger team to anticipate and make arrangements for any health and human services needs that might arise in the first few hours after the plane landed, as well as over the course of the two-week quarantine. We joined others to tour, assess, and prepare facilities on base, including the hangar used to receive and screen passengers on arrival and options for housing.



LCDR Wright with and without personal protective equipment



From left to right, SAT team members CDR Nicolas Buhr (HSO Officer), LCDR Marcienne Wright, LCDR Nuri Tawwab (Pharmacist Officer), and LCDR Aaron Grober (HSO Officer) preparing for passenger arrival at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Scientists Deploy in First Wave of COVID-19 Response

By CDR Alison Halpin & LCDR Marcienne Wright

Donned in full personal protective equipment, we and the other SAT Officers helped welcome passengers as they landed in San Antonio, assigned housing, and distributed cell phones for temporary use so we could contact them during quarantine. Over the next few days as our two-week deployment was coming to a close, Officers on the first SAT team began to establish contact with all passengers to identify and address any issues or human services needs as they arose. In addition, we transitioned roles and responsibilities to the reload team before heading home.

Generally, small numbers of SAT Officers are inserted as a component into a multi-disciplinary team deploying in response to a public health emergency. A major highlight of this mission was SAT deploying as a single unit, which allowed for rare team-building opportunities and sharing of knowledge and experiences among SAT Officers.



LCDR Wright and CDR Halpin touring hangar for receiving passengers at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio



CDR Halpin setting up snacks for passengers upon arrival at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Go with Gratitude: Remembering Why You Wear the Uniform

By LT Patrick Sears

If you are reading this article you are most likely a highly trained, very accomplished, and very driven commissioned Officer. You likely have an extensive track record of professional successes. I want you to pause for a moment and think about how it felt to earn your high school diploma. What about your master's degree? Doctorate? Publishing your first article? Receiving your commission? How did it feel a month later? What about a year? If you are anything like me, I imagine you felt pretty good around the time of your accomplishment, but as time passed your level of joy and satisfaction returned to baseline. You likely feel about as happy as you have always felt, and you would not be the only one. A classic study by Brickman, Coates, and Janoff-Bulman (1978) found individuals returned to their baseline level of happiness even after winning the lottery or losing the use of their legs.

Promotions this year were scarcer than in previous years, and many Officers were not selected. I'm writing this article to remind you of something you intellectually know to be true but by which you may not live your life: your accomplishments will not make you happy. Indeed, this is common sense but not common action. Rather than painstakingly boring you with my treatise on the pursuit of happiness (you're welcome), I'm going to provide you with a word that has changed my life and, of interest to you scientists, is an evidence-based practice. Gratitude. Routinely and deliberately practicing gratitude for who you are and what you have can bring you satisfaction in your life in ways publishing your doctoral dissertation cannot.

My name is LT Patrick Sears and I was not promoted this year. However, I'm not going to look back on my career and reflect on the times I did or did not make rank. I'm going to remember midnight conversations in the pharmacy during Hurricane Florence. I'm going to remember walking the streets of Japan. I'm going to remember comforting a scared little boy in a Customs and Border Patrol facility. I have had the pleasure of helping people through some of the most difficult times of their lives, and I've met some incredible and kind Officers along the way. I'm immensely proud of the U.S. Public Health Service, and I'm so appreciative for the life-changing opportunities I have had while serving our country.

My name is LT Patrick Sears and I'm grateful.



COVID-19 Stories from the Field

By LCDR Erica Rose

LCDR Erica Rose (Epidemiologist, CDC) deployed to Geneva for the month of February 2020 to support the World Health Organization's (WHO) epidemiology team. She served on two sub-teams: data management and analysis. LCDR Rose's goal was to provide evidence to senior leadership to allow them to make decisions about recommendations for responding to COVID-19.

Data Management Sub-team. LCDR Rose's team received line list data from each country with reported COVID-19 cases each day. Over the course of her deployment, the data shifted from a handful of cases from approximately 20 countries per day to over 800 reported cases per day from more than 50 countries. Her team generated presentations for leadership on the data and patterns. The focus was on likely exposure location and whether cases had known or unknown exposure.

Analysis Sub-team. LCDR Rose's team set up R code to generate automated tables and figures that were often requested by leadership. LCDR Rose generated the tables and figures that went into the public-facing situation report each day as well as more detailed ones for daily, internal situation reports. Those reports were used to brief senior leadership before daily press conferences.

LCDR Rose's team was also tasked with other requests (e.g., generating slides, tables, and numbers) that often required turnaround times of 30 minutes for WHO's Director General. One such task included a detailed summary of the transmission chain in Singapore with the number of known clusters, size of the clusters, and number of epi- and non-epi-linked cases. Having pre-established automated code assisted the team in getting these tasks completed as quickly as possible.

As February saw a rapid change in the number and location of new COVID-19 cases, LCDR Rose and her team members had to tailor their work for senior leadership. Focus shifted from containment and mitigation to deciding whether to declare this a pandemic. LCDR Rose's work is an example of how Scientist Officers were at the forefront of COVID-19 response.

Scientists Officers Contribute to the 2019 E-cigarette or Vaping Product Use Associated Lung Injury Response

By LT Marisa Hast, LT Kerui Xu, LCDR Colleen Scott, & LCDR Iram Hassan

In July and August 2019, there was a sharp increase in severe pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette products across the US. By August 27, 2019, 215 possible cases of e-cigarette or vaping product use associated lung injury (EVALI) had been reported to the CDC from 25 state health departments. A massive public health response was undertaken across the country by multiple federal agencies and numerous state and local health departments in order to provide public health guidance, determine the cause of the lung injury, and mitigate the effects of the outbreak.

As part of this effort, at least 26 PHS Scientist Officers contributed over 5,000 hours to the response. This included Officers working on the response as part of regular duties in their home offices and Officers who deployed to emergency operations centers or health departments to support the response. Scientist Officers frequently served in leadership positions in this response, including Chief Data Scientist, Task Force Lead, Team Lead, and Situation Unit Lead. By the end of the outbreak, >2,800 hospitalized EVALI cases or deaths were reported to the CDC from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two US territories. Scientist Officers contributed novel methods to identify and track cases, investigated and identified the cause of the outbreak, and developed guidance used across the country to respond to this public health event. The work of Scientist Officers was featured in at least 12 publications in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, and *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

CEFOs taking the lead

Two of the Scientist Officers serving in leadership positions in the response were CAPT Aaron Fleischauer and LCDR Jason Wilken, the Career Epidemiology Field Officers (CEFOs) posted to North Carolina and California, respectively. CEFOs are CDC-trained epidemiologists placed in state and local health departments to strengthen emergency preparedness and epidemiologic capacity. These Officers work within their health departments to improve key principles of preparedness including incident management, countermeasures and mitigation, and community resilience.

With their expertise in preparedness and response, CAPT Fleischauer and LCDR Wilken each served as the Incident Manager for their state's response to the epidemic and managed interdisciplinary teams of 10-25 staff. Both Officers reported that their unique role as a CDC employee sitting in a state health department was beneficial for their role in coordinating response activities in their state. As they were familiar with both the issues in their regions and with the CDC network of subject-matter experts, they served as a liaison between CDC headquarters and their health departments, effectively advocating for support and guidance.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)

Scientists Officers Contribute to the 2019 E-cigarette or Vaping Product Use Associated Lung Injury Response

By LT Marisa Hast, LT Kerui Xu, LCDR Colleen Scott, & LCDR Iram Hassan

CAPT Aaron Fleischauer

CAPT Fleischauer has been a CEFO at the North Carolina Department of Public Health since 2008. He led the state of North Carolina's response to the lung injury epidemic from August through December 2019, contributing over 250 hours.

CAPT Fleischauer's accomplishments on this response include coordinating the health department's response activities and supervising a team of epidemiologists, subject matter experts, health educators, and laboratory professionals. He was instrumental in applying an outbreak investigation framework to a subject matter expertise that had not previously experienced an emergency response. His work on the response was featured in two publications in *MMWR*. CAPT Fleischauer attributes his effectiveness during this response to his longstanding networks within the health infrastructure in North Carolina, within CDC, and with other CEFO Officers around the country. He was able to apply his experience with the Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists to successfully advocate for the priorities of states within the response.



CAPT Aaron Fleischauer, North Carolina Department of Public Health

LCDR Jason Wilken

LCDR Wilken has been a CEFO in the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) since 2014. He led the response for the state of California from August 2019 through February 2020 and contributed an estimated 1,000 hours. As part of this role, he managed 25 staff working on the response with such varied roles as epidemiology and surveillance, clinical and public health messaging, clinical chart abstraction, and laboratory analysis.

LCDR Wilken's accomplishments on the response include activating the emergency response structure in California and helping connect epidemiologists and subject matter experts within this structure. Lcdr Wilken was instrumental in standing up the lab component of the response, which included toxicology work to identify unknown chemicals in vaping cartridges. His work on the response helped result in a \$6 million allocation to a media campaign for young adults and parents entitled "Outbreak" to address the lung injury epidemic and the dangers of e-cigarette use, and he was the senior author on a publication in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. Lcdr Wilken attributes some of his success in leading the CDPH response to his PHS training in emergency response and incident management and to his network of PHS Officers throughout the country.



LCDR Jason Wilken, California Department of Public Health

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

Scientist Officers Investigate an Outbreak of COVID-19 at a Correctional Facility

By LT Jayleen Gunn, LT Amy Schuh, LCDR Jason Ham, & LT Roberta Horth

It was late April, nearly three months after the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed in the United States, when I (LT Gunn) received a call to co-lead a deployment team to investigate SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurring at a correctional facility located in Arkansas. Without any hesitation, I started working on the team's protocol and began packing my bags. When I received the list of team members I smiled because in the 14 months I worked at CDC and after participating in two deployments, I immediately recognized a few names on the list, including two fellow Scientist Officers, LCDR Jason Ham and LT Roberta Horth. A few weeks later, Scientist Officer LT Amy Schuh joined the team. Together the CDC team comprised of 8 PHS Officers and 9 civilians who provided SARS-CoV-2 testing to 1,649 incarcerated persons and 128 staff over three weeks.

Incarcerated persons were tested inside their dormitory-style housing units. After providing informed consent and completing a questionnaire about symptoms, individuals were provided with a pre-labeled nasopharyngeal swab collection kit. Then, they were instructed to go to one of three specimen collection rooms where a clinician and laboratorian confirmed their identity, explained the procedure, and collected the specimen. After nasopharyngeal specimens were collected, the specimens were checked, packaged, and then shipped to CDC for SARS-CoV-2 testing. This process took about 4 hours to complete for each unit tested, which housed between 100 to 150 incarcerated persons per unit. After a long day of field work, team members worked late to enter questionnaire data into the database so that information could be quickly processed.

Testing of correctional facility staff presented other challenges. Mass testing of staff had never been provided for any disease at the facility. The team ensured staff confidentiality during the testing process while providing a convenient location for staff to be tested. The team offered testing over the course of three days to accommodate staff working early morning and night shifts, which involved starting as early as 4 am and ending as late as 9 pm.

Each Scientist Officer had a set of skills that was critical for the investigation. As a field safety Officer, LCDR Ham ensured the team's safety by providing personal protective equipment training, establishing and implementing a protocol for safe nasopharyngeal swabbing within a confined space, and implementing safe workflows and disinfection procedures. LT Horth used her epidemiology skills to help design and implement the testing strategy protocols, manage data, and work with facility officials to develop contingency plans for rehousing incarcerated persons when their test results were received. As a virologist, LT Schuh joined the team during the largest portion of the mass testing to assist with specimen collection and processing. LT Gunn, along with her civilian co-lead, oversaw all aspects of the deployment. Currently the results and lessons learned are being written up for publication.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

Scientist Officers Investigate an Outbreak of COVID-19 at a Correctional Facility

By LT Jayleen Gunn, LT Amy Schuh, LCDR Jason Ham, & LT Roberta Horth

An estimated 2.1 million adults are housed within approximately 5,000 correctional and detention facilities in the United States. Like other enclosed or confined settings, correctional facilities present substantial challenges for controlling the emergence and widespread transmission of respiratory pathogens, such as SARS-CoV-2. Dense populations, shared bathrooms and other shared spaces (e.g., recreation rooms, dining hall, library or reading rooms), daily entry of staff and visitors, and limited space available for quarantine and isolation make controlling the spread of SARS-CoV-2 difficult. Implementation of an evidence-based strategy, such as wearing masks or serial testing, within correctional facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic may help stop or lessen the spread of SARS-CoV-2.



LT Gunn and LCDR Ham watching the sunrise during early morning donning of personal protective equipment.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

Former FERS Employees: Do You Know Where Your Money Is?

By LT Patrick Sears

Like many Officers, I was a federal civilian employee before converting to USPHS. As a federal civilian employee, a portion of each of my paychecks was automatically contributed toward my Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension. This is not the same as Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contributions. The amount of money FERS employees contribute toward their pensions depends on when they were hired. If hired prior to 2013, they contribute 0.8 percent of their salary. If hired in 2013, they contribute 3.1 percent of their salary. If hired in 2014 and after, they contribute 4.4 percent of their salary. Of note, former FERS employees may be eligible for a deferred annuity at age 62 or the minimum retirement age if the former employee had at least five years of creditable service.

As a USPHS Officer, I am no longer a FERS employee. I had less than five years of FERS service so I did not have the option of considering a deferred FERS annuity. I decided to ask OPM for a refund of the contributions I made toward my FERS pension. I chose to roll-over my FERS pension contributions to my IRA, though I could have also chosen to roll-over the amount to my TSP. Had I received this money directly (i.e., as a check direct deposited into a checking or savings account) I would have had to pay taxes on the money received. Guidance on how to initiate the refund/roll-over process can be found here: <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information/former-employees/>. To put things into perspective, a GS-12, Step 1 FERS employee in Washington D.C. with five years of experience and hired after 2014 would have contributed nearly \$19,000 towards his/her FERS pension.

My refund/roll-over request was initially rejected because the OPM contractor was not familiar with the USPHS and thought I was still a FERS employee. I called to clarify and it was smooth sailing afterward.



DISCLAIMER: LT Sears is not a financial professional. This information is for educational purposes only and does not constitute financial advice.

Select High-Impact Publications by Scientist Officers in 2019

By LCDR Francis Annor, LT Tia Rogers, LT Matt Stuckey, LCDR Angela Thompson-Paul, and LT Marissa Zwald



Hughes MM, Reed C, Flannery B, Garg S, Singleton JA, Fry AM, Rolfes MA

Projected Population Benefit of Increased Effectiveness and Coverage of Influenza Vaccination on Influenza Burden - United States. Clin Infect Dis, 2019.

Using a mathematical model, LT Hughes and colleagues estimated the benefits of improving vaccine effectiveness (VE) or coverage for influenza on the burden of influenza illness and hospitalizations in the United States. The authors found that VE improvements would have the greatest impact in reducing hospitalizations in adults ≥ 65 years whereas coverage improvements would have the largest benefit in reducing illnesses in adults 18-49 years.



Mpfu, J.J., Smith, R., Patel, D., Gillespie, C., Cox, S., Ritchey, M., Yang, Q., Morrow, B., and Barfield, W.

Disparities in the Prevalence of Excess Heart Age Among Women with a Recent Live Birth. Journal of Women's Health, 2019. Journal of Women's Health, 2019.

LCDR Mpfu and colleagues estimated heart age, excess heart age, and factors associated with excess heart age among women with recent live birth. Authors found high prevalence of excess heart age among blacks, those without health insurance, obese/overweight,



Perrine CG, Pickens CM, **Boehmer TK**, King BA, Jones CM, DeSisto CL, et al.

Characteristics of a Multistate Outbreak of Lung Injury Associated with E-cigarette Use, or Vaping — United States, 2019. MMWR, 2019. 68(39):860-864.

CDR Perrine, CDR Boehmer, and co-authors found that 69% of lung injury cases associated with e-cigarette use or vaping were in males and 62% of patients were aged 18–34 years. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-containing product use was reported by 76.9% and 56.8% reported nicotine-containing product use. Patterns highlighted informed CDC's recommendation for refraining from e-cigarette use or vaping products containing THC.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13 CONTINUED ON PAGE 15)

Select High-Impact Publications by Scientist Officers in 2019

By LCDR Francis Annor, LT Tia Rogers, LCDR Matt Stuckey, LCDR Angela Thompson-Paul, & LT Marissa Zwald



Groenewold MR, Burrer SL, Ahmed F, Uzicanin A, Luckhaupt SE.

Health-related Workplace Absenteeism Among Full-time Workers—United States, 2017 – 2018 Influenza Season. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*. 2019. 68(26):577-582.

LCDR Groenewold found absenteeism increased in November and peaked in January, at a level significantly higher than the average during the previous five influenza seasons. Males aged 45–64 years, working in certain census regions and occupations were more affected than other subgroups. Results illustrate the utility of workplace absenteeism as a supplementary measure of influenza’s impact on working populations.



Lozier MJ, Wallace B, Anderson K, Ellington S, Jones CM, Rose D, Baldwin G, King BA, Briss P, Mikosz CA; Lung Injury Response Epidemiology/Surveillance Task Force

Update: Demographic, Product, and Substance-Use Characteristics of Hospitalized Patients in a Nationwide Outbreak of E-cigarette, or Vaping, Product Use-Associated Lung Injuries - United States, December 2019

LCDR Lozier and colleagues investigated patients hospitalized with e-cigarette, or vaping product use-associated lung injury (EVALI) nationwide. The investigation explored demographics, self-reported product-use, and substance-use characteristics of EVALI patients reported to CDC and found that 80% of hospitalized EVALI patients reported using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-containing e-cigarette, or vaping, products. The report stated, “CDC recommends that persons not use e-cigarette, or vaping, products that contain THC, especially those acquired from informal sources.”



Mosites E, Zulz T, Bruden D, Nolen L, Frick A, Castrodale L, McLaughlin J, Van Beneden C, Hennessy TW, Bruce MG.

Risk for Invasive Streptococcal Infections among Adults Experiencing Homelessness, Anchorage, Alaska, USA, 2002-2015. *Emerging infectious diseases*, 2019. 25(10)

Lead author LCDR Mosites and colleagues quantified the risk for invasive streptococcal infection among persons experiencing homelessness (PEH) in Anchorage, Alaska during 2002–2015. Compared with the general population, PEH were 53.3 times as likely to have invasive group A Streptococcus infection, 6.9 times as likely to have invasive group B Streptococcus infection, and 36.3 times as likely to have invasive pneumococcal infection. The authors stated, “infection control in shelters, pneumococcal vaccination, and infection monitoring could help protect the health of this vulnerable group.”

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14, CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

Select High-Impact Publications by Scientist Officers in 2019

By LT Francis Annor, LT Tia Rogers, LCDR Matt Stuckey, LCDR Angela Thompson-Paul, & LT Marissa Zwald



Thompson-Paul AM, Palella FJ Jr, Rayeed N, Ritchey MD, Lichtenstein KA, Patel D, Yang Q, Gillespie C, Loustalot F, Patel P, Buchacz K. Excess Heart age in Adult Outpatients in Routine HIV Care

Using data from the HIV Outpatient Study, LCDR Thompson-Paul and colleagues estimated the heart age for persons living with HIV (PLWH). The study found that excess heart age was common among PLWH, begins in early adulthood, and impacts both women and men. They noted that “routine use of the heart age calculator may help optimize CVD risk stratification and facilitate interventions for aging PLWH.”



Gahl, RF

Microinjection of Live Mammalian Cells: A Delivery Method that Provides Added Versatility to the Study of Cellular Function. *Methods in Molecular Biology*, 2019. 1874: 525-536

Microinjection is a technique that allows for the delivery of a diverse array of compounds and biomolecules into live mammalian cells. LT Gahl described a detailed protocol, guidelines, and considerations for preparing samples to successfully microinject live mammalian cells and maintain their viability. LT Gahl noted that this study would enhance “understanding of how to apply microinjection to a cellular system compatible with a wide array of live-cell imaging techniques.”

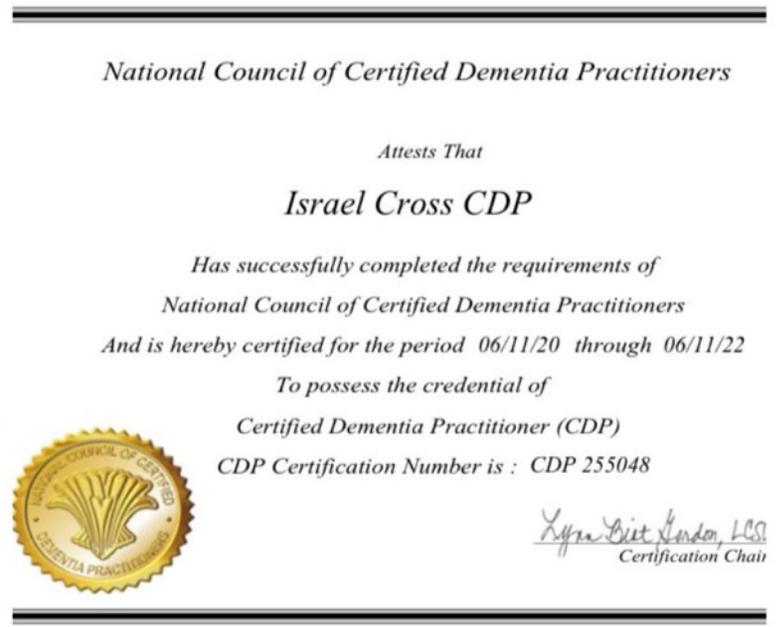


Razzaghi H, Martin DM, Quesnel-Crooks S, Hong Y, Gregg E, Andall-Brereton G, Gawryszweski V, Saraiya M. 10-year trends in noncommunicable disease mortality in the Caribbean region. *Rev Panam Salud Publica*, 2019. 43.

LCDR Razzaghi et al. found 39% to 67% of all deaths were due to cancer, heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes in 22 Caribbean countries and territories from 1999 to 2014. LCDR Razzaghi noted that “risk factors such as tobacco smoking, harmful use of alcohol, poor diet, and physical inactivity substantially affect non-communicable disease mortality,” but “the reasons for the high mortality due to non-communicable diseases in those countries/territories remains a critical public health issue that warrants further investigation.”

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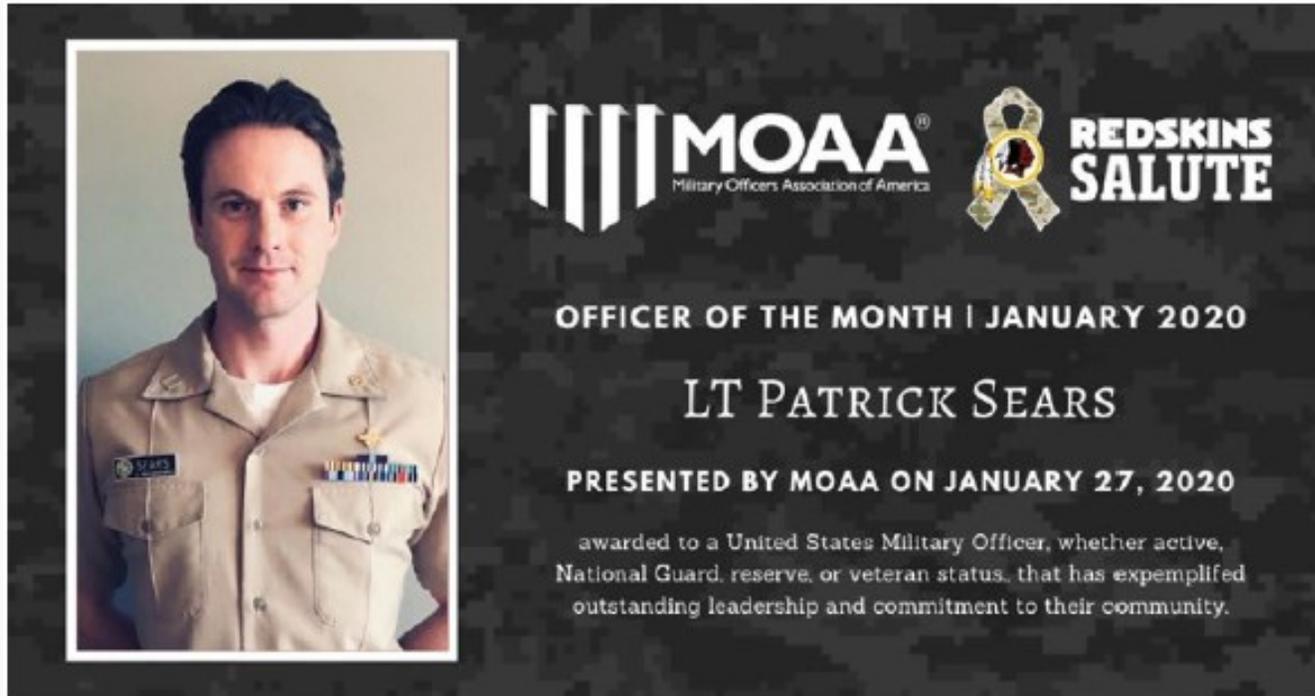
SciPAC Fist Bump — LCDR Israel Cross



LCDR Israel Cross, a Scientist Officer at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, is receiving a celebratory fist bump for becoming a Certified Dementia Practitioner.

CONGRATULATIONS!

SciPAC Fist Bump — LT Patrick Sears



LT Patrick Sears, a Scientist Officer at the Bureau of Prisons, is receiving a celebratory fist bump for receiving the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)'s Officer of the Month (January 2020).

CONGRATULATIONS!

SciPAC Fist Bump — LCDR Leslie A. Rivera Rosado



LCDR Leslie A. Rivera Rosado, a Scientist Officer at the Food and Drug Administration, is receiving a celebratory fist bump for being the Convocation Speaker at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

CONGRATULATIONS!

LCDR Leslie A. Rivera Rosado recording her Welcome Remarks for the 2020 Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Virtual Convocation that took place in Baltimore, MD.

SciPAC Fist Bump — CDR Zewditu Demissie

CDR Zewditu Demissie, a Scientist Officer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is receiving a celebratory fist bump for the birth of her son, Ethan. Baby Ethan was born on April 20, 2020.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Ethan Oliver Mobley, son of CDR Zewditu Demissie



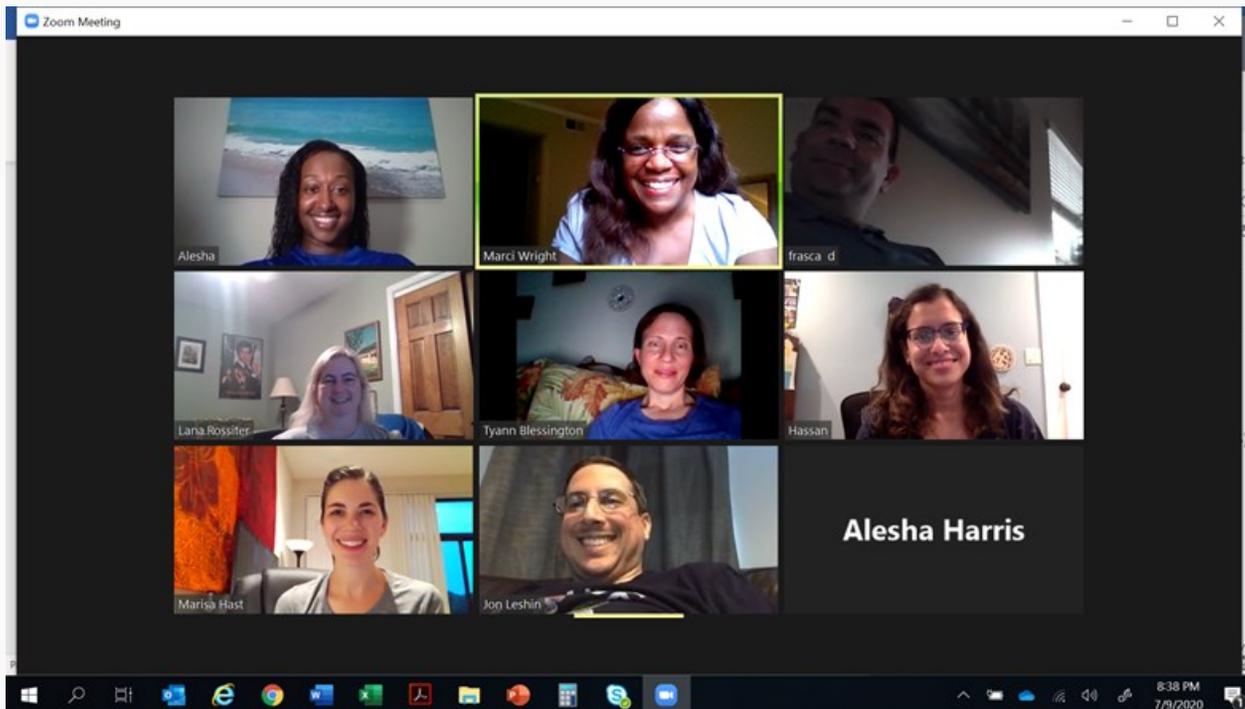
CDR Demissie with Ethan on his first day home

Lifestyle Questions in the Age of Staying at Home: A Zoom Social

By LCDR Alesha Harris

Let's just call it... 2020 is a curveball. It's seemingly that way for everyone around the world, and it's definitely true for my goals for the SciPAC DC Area Social Team. In my second year as the team lead, I had grand plans for creating opportunities to meet and network and grow as a group of Officers. I personally feel "it's not what you know, but who you know," or rather "who knows you", and so I value the ability to connect with other Officers in my category. With the curveball of COVID-19, the challenge was presented to either bat or ride the bench. In effort to swing anyway, the SciPAC DC Area Social Team hosted the first ever SciPAC Online Socials. As expected from an inaugural event, our first online social held on May 15, 2020 showed great promise and room for growth. We followed up on that potential with a second online, broad-interest stay-at-home lifestyle questions, social (July 9, 2020) and doubled our participation!

In the words of our SciPAC Visibility Chair, LCDR Iram Hassan, "One positive outcome from social distancing was an opportunity for Officers across the country to connect and chat via a video conferencing platform." That said, we are going to plan our next Zoom social and hope that more Officers local and beyond will be able to join. Feel free to email me, LCDR Alesha Harris at Alesha.Harris@hhs.gov, should you have any recommendations about timing, discussion topics, or games for the next Zoom Social.



“If life throws you a curveball... knock it out the park!”

- unknown

Officers from top right to bottom left: LCDR Alesha Harris, LCDR Marci Wright, CAPT Dominic Frasca, CDR Lara Rossiter, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LCDR Iram Hassan, LT Marissa Hast, LCDR Jon Leshin.

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