



United States Public Health Service



Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC)

Annual Report September 2015 – August 2016

Prepared by:
CDR Matthew Murphy
PAC Chair



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A. SCIPAC EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTIVITY

The following Scientists served as members of the Executive Board from September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016:

CDR Matthew Murphy
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CDR Matthew Breiding
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CDR Qiao Bobo
Scientist PAC Executive Secretary
Branch Chief Division of Manufacturing and Product Quality Office of Compliance and
Biologics Quality Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research
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CAPT Danisha (Nisha) Robbins
Chair ex-Officio
Directorate of Mental Health
Naval Medical Center Portsmouth
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Mission:

The duties of the Executive Board (EB) shall be to provide leadership that ensures timely completion of responsibilities listed in the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC)



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Charter and to recommend to the SciPAC strategies/actions that address issues that affect the professional careers of Scientist officers. In cases where no established policies exist and immediate action is necessary, the EB is authorized to act but shall immediately notify the membership of its action.

Accomplishments & Impact:

The SciPAC EB members provided advice and consultation to leadership and to the members of the 10 subcommittees that function within the Scientist PAC. The EB met on a monthly basis, as necessary. The EB also provided comments to policies/documents from Commissioned Corps leadership as well as comments on documents from the subcommittees (e.g. mentoring, curriculum vitae, surveys).

In addition to the daily functions, the EB also met in August and September 2015 to begin discussion regarding the revision of the existing Scientist PAC Benchmarks for promotion and inclusion of new language to describe selection criteria for SciPAC officers during recruitment. The Executive Board also met to discuss the recruitment and retention policies that directly impact the future of the scientist category including involvement from other USPHS categories. The EB also met to discuss prioritization of activities for the PAC with a focus on the initiatives as set forth by the Surgeon General. A review of the Surgeon General's Call to Action was conducted and specific subcommittees were leveraged to assist in carrying out the plan of the Surgeon General's office.

Specific accomplishments:

- Conducted a comprehensive review of the Scientist Category description to better include officers with relevant public health education during recruitment and assignment to categories.
- Each subcommittee conducted a review of their individual Standard Operating Procedures.
- Requested Policy Subcommittee and SOP to provide support to the SciPAC Chair and Scientist CPO to review new and potential USPHS policies.
- Updated SciPAC website to better fulfill the needs of SciPAC officers.
- Leveraged Category expertise to collaborate with other Categories (CPO/Chairs, PAC Chairs Group and the CPO Board) to share knowledge/expertise/resources.
- RRR Subcommittee conducted an in-depth analysis of Scientist officers to understand impact of current USPHS recruitment and retention policies as well as prioritizing issues that most impact the future of the Scientist Category.
- Involved in assessing the increased inclusion of psychologists in the Scientist Category and revised SciPAC Benchmarks to address potential changes in SciPAC membership.
- SciPAC Category Day Subcommittee greatly expanded their subcommittee and focused efforts on a revised SciPAC category day agenda.
- The Science Subcommittee expanded the journal club meetings providing opportunity for increased scientific discussion within SciPAC.
- Worked to increase communication across the Scientist Category and provided timely speakers on topics of interest. The SciPAC monthly meeting attendance is as follows:



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Month (2015-2016)	Nonvoting Members	Voting Members	TOTAL
September	73	19	92
October	63	17	80
November	56	16	72
December	59	17	76
January	56	12	68
February	60	15	75
March	86	19	105
April	63	13	76
May	77	18	95
June	76	17	93
July	79	15	94
August	68	15	83

Summary

The 2015-2016 operational year was important for the Scientist Category as evidenced by increased involvement in PAC activities across all 10 subcommittees and strong monthly meeting attendance. While diverse, the Category has strengthened in unity and Esprit de Corps as a direct result of the dedicated Scientist officers serving on active duty. The recruitment and retention analysis of SciPAC officers needs and preferences will help guide the Executive Board to support SciPAC activities and policies with the long-term strength of the Scientist Category as a priority.



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B. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The subcommittees within the Scientist PAC have been extremely productive and willing to serve during this cycle. The subcommittees have engaged in high-level activities that support the category by improving officership through mentorship, career development, and by enhancing *Esprit de Corps*. The following section describes the mission, duties, activities and accomplishments and impacts of each of the subcommittees. The reports were developed and submitted by each subcommittee Chair(s).

AWARDS

Chair: CDR Jeremy Wally

Co-Chair: CAPT Tony Satterfield

Mission:

To coordinate the distribution of information, solicitation of nominations, selection of recipients and the awards presentations of all SciPAC awards including the Derek Dunn Memorial Senior Scientist of the Year, Junior Scientist of the Year, Scientist Responder of the Year, Mentor of the Year, and Retiring Distinguished Scientist Service Awards.

Major Duties:

1. Prepare and schedule annual nominations for the Scientist the Responder of the Year, Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards. Develop draft example award write-ups and evaluation criteria for Scientist award nominations. Distribute reminders regarding annual awards notices to SciPAC members.
2. Coordinate the award nomination process for the Scientist Responder of the Year Award so the recipient's name is submitted to the Director of the Readiness and Deployment Operations Group (RedDOG) by December 1st for consideration for the USPHS Responder of the Year Award. Assist the Chief Professional Officer (CPO) in his/her submission to the Director of RedDOG. Assistance may include, but is not limited to, drafting a nomination letter to the Director of RedDOG detailing the recipient's accomplishments and rationale for consideration for the USPHS Responder of the Year Award. Ensure that the recipient of the Scientist Responder of the Year Award is presented with a plaque during Category Day at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
3. Coordinate the award nomination process for both the Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards to ensure that recipients are presented with a plaque during Category Day at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
4. Draft an awards briefing summarizing the accomplishments of each awardee, (i.e., the Scientist Responder of the Year, Junior Scientist of the Year, Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year) for use by the SciPAC Chair and/or CPO during Category Day at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. In addition, provide names of the awards recipients to the Category Day Chair for use in the USPHS Scientific and Training Brochure.
5. Recommend scientist officers for the CPO's approval to serve on the judging committee; provide guidance and nominee ranking criteria to assist the confirmed members of the judging committee in their judging duties; evaluate nominee award packets, including



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basic readiness requirements, to ensure that they meet the criteria for the submitted awards before sending them to the judges for review and rankings; advise SciPAC on ways to pro-actively encourage supervisors to nominate Scientist Officers for awards.

6. Rate each nomination and average all ranked nominees; as permitted, discuss and comment on nominee rankings prior to selecting final nominations for each award.
7. Forward Judging Committee's nominations and justifications for each award to the CPO for approval and confirmation.
8. Solicit pictures and bios from each awardee for publication on SciPAC's website and Newsletter.
9. Update the Awards Subcommittee's Standard Operating Procedures.
10. Update the Awards Subcommittee's webpage on the SciPAC website.
11. Order awards plaques in time for Category Day at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.

Accomplishments:

1. Affected a persistent marketing campaign and encouragement of supervisors to nominate and recognize PHS Officers.
2. Revised the Nomination Cover Sheet for all four SciPAC awards.
3. Verified basic readiness of nominees for all four SciPAC awards. Requested a screenshot of nominee's basic readiness status for inclusion in the nomination packet.
4. Coordinated the selection of awardees for all four SciPAC awards.
5. Submitted awardee's pictures and bios to the SciPAC Website Subcommittee.
6. Ordered award plaques for all four SciPAC awards and coordinating having the plaques for presentation at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
7. Worked with the SciPAC Website Subcommittee to update the Awards Subcommittee webpage to reflect the current year's award winners.
8. Updated the Awards Subcommittee SOP detailing those functions required by the Subcommittee to clarify and reflect the current processes used by the Subcommittee.

Impact:

1. Awarded the Scientist the Responder of the Year, Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards recognizing SciPAC officers for their exceptional service.
2. Revised the Subcommittee SOP to clarify and reflect the current processes used by the Subcommittee.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to update the Awards Subcommittee SOP every year.
2. Ensure that the Awards Subcommittee SOP remains consistent with the SciPAC Charter and other governing documents.



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CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Chair: CDR Michael Smith

Co-Chair: CDR Mark Clayton

Co-Chair: LCDR Zewditu (Zewde) Demissie

Purpose: Responsible for advising SciPAC on issues affecting Commissioned Corps Scientists career progression, assignments, evaluations and promotions. Responsibilities include: CV Review of promotion eligible Scientists, Scientist Handbook review and upkeep, Position Classification (Billets), Promotion Advice, Performance Evaluation (COERS) advice, Pay and Allowances guidance, Training (Long and Short Term)

Accomplishments:

- Recruited 15 CAPTs and 17 CDRs as volunteers of the CV Review Team.
- At the request of CDR Murphy, developed a proposal for what activities would be considered non-Corps collateral duties in response to the additional of collateral duties as a separate benchmark in the 2016 Scientist Benchmarks. Guidance for the rest of the benchmarks is currently under development.
- At the request of CAPT Sanders and CDR Murphy, the leadership of the Career Development subcommittee helped finalize the CV summary sheet revisions that were proposed by CAPT Sanders.
- Coordinated a presentations and training as part of monthly SciPAC calls.
- Members of the SciPAC OBC Team attended Open Houses and OBC graduation ceremonies and presented letters and Scientist category coins to new Scientist officers.

Impact:

- A total of 51 CVs were reviewed for officers who were eligible for promotion in 2016.
- The Career Development subcommittee ensured representatives attended the OBC open house and graduation events for all scientists that attended OBC.

Recommendations:

- The CV Guidance should be revised in response to current feedback.

CATEGORY DAY

Chair: CDR Robin Toblin

Co-Chair: LCDR Seth Green

Mission: To organize, plan and implement Scientist Category Day for the USPHS annual Scientific and Training Symposium.

Major Duties:

- Prepare the agenda for the Scientist Category Day.
- Ensure Category Day activities/topics are of current scientific or professional interest.



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- Solicit abstracts from Scientist officers and systematically reviewing each to select the highest quality abstracts for presentation during Category Day.
- Recruit a keynote speaker to support the theme of the Symposium.
- Coordinate with symposium planners throughout the year to ensure logistical support Category Day and to inform officers about symposium-wide events.
- Provide detailed information regarding relevant USPHS Symposium events.
- Organize and advertise a Scientist officer social event.
- Provide networking opportunities that focus on meeting officers throughout the category as well as those at one's agency and/or discipline, specifically.
- Engage in mentorship through a session dedicated to key topics in mentoring.
- Present awards to Category award winners in a ceremony.
- Deliver a State of the Category address given by the CPO
- Conduct a post-Category Day evaluation to inform future Category Day planning.
- Review and update the SOP annually.

Accomplishments:

- Utilized evaluation feedback from the year prior to alter the focus of the agenda toward networking, mentoring, and category-specific advocacy issues
- Successfully developed, organized and implemented a diverse and scientifically relevant agenda for Scientist Category Day at the 2016 USPHS Symposium which was held in Oklahoma City (see attached agenda).
- Solicited abstracts for Category Day presentations in three tracks: Science/Epidemiology, Program/Policy, and Deployment/Leadership.
 - Received and reviewed 12 abstracts.
 - Selected 6 presentations for inclusion in the Category Day agenda.
 - Presentations reflected the diverse contributions of Scientist officers
 - Presentations included one focused on data collected by SciPAC regarding recruitment and retention trends
 - Length of presentations was shortened to 15 minutes including questions to enhance officers' ability to provide short briefings that are often requested by leadership within our agencies
- The agenda included a panel discussion focused on Scientist officers with laboratory backgrounds whose billets focused on safety. This panel included four officers from four different agencies (EPA, CDC, NIH, FDA).
- Developed a list of potential keynote speakers and selected and confirmed a high-profile speaker. After the first speaker was selected, the overall symposium invited him to be on one of their panels. Thus, the team had to quickly find another speaker. Dr. Vicki TallChief, a professor emeritus of public health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center spoke about community-building and collaboration to enact public health preparedness among Indian tribes in Oklahoma.
- Designed and executed three networking events to facilitate networking and professional development among Scientist officers: 1) "speed networking" focused on getting the basic professional profile of a few other randomly assigned officers; 2) agency



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networking to learn about billet opportunities within one's agency, and 3) an optional social event in the pre-lunch period focused on team building.

- Created the first State of the Category address delivered by our CPO with pre-designated questions developed from officer feedback
- Move the awards ceremony to the main agenda so it was not cut short at lunch time
- Incorporated mentoring into the main agenda with senior officers running roundtable events on key topics solicited from officer feedback
- Planned a Scientist Category Day Social following the completion of the Category Day program, which was included dinner and mini-golf at Brickopolis in Oklahoma City.
- Collected and analyzed 41 post-Category Day evaluations completed by Category Day attendees and non-attendees. Of the attendees, we had an 80% response rate, an increase of 47% from last year's rate of 33%.
- Reviewed and updated the Category Day Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures.
- Provided personalized letters of appreciation the day after the operational year ended.
- Doubled the number of teams based on feedback from previous years' evaluations and experience from 5 to 10 and added a secretary role, thereby increasing the number of leadership opportunities by 6. Team sizes were decreased in order to ensure a more meaningful experience for each Subcommittee member.
 - Teams were: Abstract, Panel, Keynote Speaker, Social, Mentoring (includes Mentoring SC liaison), Awards-State of the Category (includes Awards SC liaison), Speed Networking, Agency Networking, Symposium Liaison, and On-Site Logistics

Impact

- 40 Scientist officers actively participated in the 2015 Category Day Subcommittee, providing each with extensive opportunities to network within and contribute to the SciPAC and develop professionally
 - a. This represented a 56% decrease in subcommittee size from the previous year largely due to the location of the symposium. In 2015, it was held in Atlanta, where a large nexus of Scientist officers live. In 2016, it was held in Oklahoma City; there are zero Scientist officers living in Oklahoma. With next year's symposium just over 1.5 hours from Atlanta and a brief flight from DC, we anticipate higher turnout again.
- 10 officers demonstrated officership while also receiving professional development and experience by serving as speakers and/or panelists for Category Day
- 14 officers held leadership positions enhancing their officership and leadership skills
- Almost 30 Scientist officers attended the SciPAC Category Day social held that evening with 10 playing mini-golf, facilitating camaraderie among fellow Scientist officers and additional networking opportunities in a casual setting

Recommendations

- Retain new team structure.
- Team leads and a secretary should be established as soon as possible. This is critical since establishing the Category Day agenda is time-sensitive. This is especially true for the



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Abstract, Keynote, and Panel Discussion teams as presentation titles and names of presenters must be finalized along with the Category Day agenda by early December.

- Efforts should be made to identify presentations that represent the diversity of professional specialties that are represented within the Scientist category.
- As financial constraints continue to impact travel funds and the ability for officers to commit to attend the Symposium, back-ups for each critical role during the conference should be assigned whenever possible, including those overseeing day-of logistics, agenda moderators, and presenters/speakers/panelists.
- The State of the Category Address, scientific talks, keynote and panel discussion should be organized to ensure sufficient time for questions.
 - Timekeeper should work hard to ensure officers adhere to time limits while Subcommittee leaders must impress limits upon speakers prior to the event.
- The State of the Category address and the Awards presentation should be separated to ensure awards are given sufficient time
- The evaluation team should provide more time for revisions prior to the conference to all other teams and chairs. Recommendation: Complete survey at least one month prior to the event so team leads and chairs can focus on the event for the last month.
- Recommendation: SOPs should be more detailed for each team. These should be assigned at the beginning of the year so that teams can fill them out at their leisure so this is not done in a rushed fashion at the end of the year when people have lost motivation due to the event being completed.

MENTORING

Chair: LCDR Jessica Cole

Co-Chair: CDR Jennie Thomas

Mission:

The mission of the SciPAC Mentoring Program is to provide the opportunity to all officers of the Scientist Category to achieve their full professional potential by benefiting from being mentored by a senior officer.

Major Duties:

The program will achieve its mission by:

- Providing support and services to all mentors and mentees.
- Promoting the program.
- Keeping records of the matched pairs and providing recognition to those involved.
- Monitoring the success of the program and making any necessary changes.

Accomplishments:

- During operational year 2016, the SciPAC Mentorship subcommittee's mentor-matching team matched 20 new mentees to mentors, with 3 additional mentor requests that are currently pending. Additionally, the team actively networked to identify new mentor volunteers, with a total of 14 mentor volunteers added to the rosters during the year. A



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total of 54 active mentor-mentee agreements were on file during operational year 2016. The team continued to maintain an MS Access database of all mentors, mentees, and match information.

- The Category Day Workgroup organized and conducted two mentoring events at the 2016 USPHS Symposium: an informal mentoring session and a more formal mentoring session during Category Day.
- Based on a survey from the last operational year, a two page “5-year career plan” discussion tool was developed to provide a base for mentors to initiate a career planning discussion with their mentees. This document was distributed to all active mentors and sent to all Scientist Officers through the SciPAC listserv.
- To gain more understanding about the recent promotion process, we conducted interviews of officers promoted to temporary O5 in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The mentee survey from 2015 identified a perceived gap whereby some mentees believed that mentors promoted under different circumstances had an outdated perception of the promotion process. The results were compiled and a summary of the findings was submitted to SciPAC EB. These results will be shared with all active mentors, and SciPAC at large, in the upcoming operational year.
- The Mentoring Subcommittee’s SOP was revised and posted on the SciPAC Mentoring Subcommittee website.

Impact:

- Approximately 1/3 of all Scientists are actively involved in a formal mentoring relationship within the category. The promotion panels indicated that officers were more successful at promotion when they were involved in a formal mentoring relationship.
- All mentors with an active mentee match are acknowledged with a letter from the CPO.
- A surplus of mentors was experienced for the first time this year, which indicates the commitment senior officers have to the mentoring program.
- Two mentoring events were held at Category Day to make mentoring opportunities widely available and part of the SciPAC culture. Survey results on the success of these events are pending but the 2015 Category Day speed mentoring event was well received.

Recommendations:

Potential Activities for 2016-2017:

- Develop activities to increase the engagement of mentors and mentees in the program, and to work on development of mentorship activities beyond guidance related to promotion
- Disseminate the results from the promotion panel interviews to mentors and SciPAC at large.
- Host an in-person mentoring event at the 2017 PHS Symposium, building on the success of the 2015-2016 SciPAC mentoring events. Survey results are still pending and can be received from the Category Day chair.



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- Continue to increase the number of SciPAC Mentors with an active mentor application on file
- Continue to match mentees to appropriate mentors, and further refine the mentor-matching MS Access database
- Review and update SciPAC Mentor/Mentee Matching Procedures
- Develop guidelines for use of the matching database

POLICY REVIEW

Chair: CDR Dominic Frasca

Co-Chair: CDR Adreinne Goodrich-Doctor

Mission:

The purpose of the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Policy Subcommittee is to support the SciPAC and the Scientist Chief Professional Officer (CPO) in two ways. First, the Subcommittee is responsible for providing feedback and recommendations to the Chief Professional Officer on the proposed policies, procedures and guidelines which is accomplished through the review of selected policies, procedures, and guidelines that are of draft documents sent to the PAC for review. The Subcommittee may also provide feedback or recommendations on implementation of these policies when applicable. Subcommittee members review and offer their input on the creation and implementation of these materials. Second, the Subcommittee is responsible for educating the SciPAC membership on new or revised policies by creating summary reports or briefings of selected new or revised policies, procedures, and guidelines for distribution to the SciPAC general membership.

Major Duties:

1. Review proposed Commissioned Corps Issuance System Policy
The Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) and the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPRDCCPR) invites the PACs to review and comment on documents that set forth the policy and procedures of the Corps. Documents include proposed additions to the electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS) including Directives, Instructions, Personnel Policy Memorandum, Personnel Operation Memorandum, Plans, Pamphlets, and Handbooks.
2. Review other proposed Commissioned Corps/Agency Policy
Other policies deemed by the SciPAC Chair to be of interest or affect the members of the Scientist Category shall also be reviewed by the Subcommittee.
3. Summarization of New Commissioned Corps Issuance System Policy
The OSG and the DCCPR routinely releases new and revised policy documents to the electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS). When such documents are released on CCMIS, the Subcommittee will generate a summary document that can be disseminated to SciPAC members and provide a description of the new or revised policy during the monthly SciPAC calls.



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4. Support Special Projects and Requests for Information
Provide support to the SciPAC Chair and Scientist CPO on special projects and requests for information related to Commissioned Corps policies or other relevant activities.
5. To review and update the current versions of the Subcommittee's SOP and Comments Matrix
The Subcommittee needs to periodically update its SOP and comments matrix.

Accomplishments:

No formal policy review requests were received during the 2015-2016 term. The Policy Review Subcommittee members stood ready throughout the year in anticipation of requests to review policy documents.

Members of the Policy Review Subcommittee engaged in the following activity in support of the Scientist CPO and the SciPAC Chair:

1. Review of Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC) draft Social Media Policy
At the request of the SciPAC Chair, the Policy Review Subcommittee reviewed the EHOPAC draft Social Media policy. The EHOPAC created the draft document to provide guidance on the creation and use of "official" PAC social media postings. The SciPAC Policy Review Subcommittee reviewed the draft policy, and produced a set of comments and recommendations for SciPAC leadership to consider in the event the SciPAC were to draft a social media policy.
2. Invitation of COA's Col James Currie to present to SciPAC on policies and other COA legislative activities
The Policy Review Subcommittee extended an invitation to COA's Executive Director, Col James Currie, to present to the SciPAC on new, current, and revised policy initiatives that have possible impact on the Corps. The Subcommittee liaised with COA and with SciPAC leadership to coordinate the presentation. Col Currie presented during the July 2016 SciPAC meeting.

Impact:

The Policy Review Subcommittee members stood ready throughout the year in anticipation of requests to review policy documents. The Subcommittee also liaised with COA to have its Executive Director share and discuss important policy initiatives with SciPAC membership.

Recommendations:

- With the SciPAC Chair concurrence, work with DCCPR to determine how best to provide direct input/review of proposed new or revised policies.
- With the SciPAC Chair concurrence, engage with DCCPR to determine if the PAC can assist with policy-related activities (other than policy review).

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND READINESS



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Chair: CDR Anne Purfield

Co-Chair: CDR Anne Marie France

Mission

The Recruitment, Retention, and Readiness (RRR) subcommittee will strive to enhance efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified Scientist officers and optimize the preparedness of Scientists to serve during public health emergencies.

Major Duties

1. Coordinate and advise OPDIV (or PHS) recruiting contacts on scientist-specific information needed for effective recruitment
2. Maintain a database of scientists interested in applying to Corps and boarded applicants
3. Support applicants and provide career opportunities
4. Assist and promote the effective use of scientists in response to emergencies affecting public health
5. Inform Scientist officers about emergency response training opportunities and deployment processes.
6. Communicate Basic Readiness Status of the Category and encourage and assist in attaining a high level of readiness as a Category.
7. Assist Scientist officers in identifying and rectifying Basic Readiness issues.
8. Respond to Scientist-related inquiries on Facebook via a Facebook Response Plan.
9. Review and revise the Scientist “Best Kept Secrets” recruiting brochure on a quarterly basis.
10. Maintenance of Deployment Spreadsheet for use by the Scientist CPO to fulfill ad-hoc deployment requests for scientist officers.

Accomplishments

Recruitment

1. Best Kept Secrets

Review and revise the Scientist “Best Kept Secrets” recruiting brochure. The Scientist “Best Kept Secrets” Recruiting Brochure (http://www.usphs.gov/docs/pdfs/bks/PHS_Scientist_020312.pdf) is a viewable web page designed for recruitment of prospective new Scientist officers. Led by CAPT Michael Murray, the work group:

- Revised the document to update information and photos of officers in outdated uniforms
- Converted the web-based document to Microsoft Publisher to allow for easier editing

2. Applicant Database and Recruitment Support

Maintain database of Scientist candidate applicants and provide support before, during and after the application and boarding processes. SciPAC Recruitment work group, led



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by LT Danny Benbassat, is not an official recruiting body and has no authority to act as such; however they provided critical services, including:

- Provided personalized support for 53 Scientist candidate applicants, including information about the applicant process and providing information about the open enrollment period during September 2016
- Created a Google Form for interested Scientist candidate applicants to obtain information and maintain a database and assess interest in becoming a Scientist officer **FILL OUT FORM**
- Developed a DDCPR-approved handout that summarized the Commissioned Corps application process
- Developed boilerplate responses to requests by Scientist applicants (approved by DCCPR)
- Provided personalized support and guidance for seven boarded applicants through monthly updates and sharing appropriate job openings
- Identified the need for Science Officers at Agencies through direct contact with Agency liaisons, including CAPT Albert Perrine at FDA and CAPT Greg Lotz at CDC.
- Created a master list of electronic media resources that post job announcements for Scientist Officers
- Tracked source of accessioning for all new CAD officers to assess avenues for recruitment (EIS, Federal conversion, or open enrollment)
- Increased the visibility of SciPAC recruitment efforts by
 - Establishing working relationship with DCCPR Recruiter and Director
 - Communications with Agency liaisons to assess the need for Scientist officers and to connect boarded applicants with appropriate vacancies
 - Working with Engineer PAC (EPAC) Recruitment work group to learn how other small non-clinical PACs are able to recruit and manage applicants
 - Attending monthly OBCs to meet with new CAD Scientist officers
- Increasing awareness of existing pool of boarded applicants by creating a Google Group to inform Agency liaisons and SciPAC officers about boarded applicants to aid applicants in finding appropriate positions. The group includes all boarded applicants and their CVs, when available, by discipline, and a master list of job resources for Scientists: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/scipac-recruitment>

Retention

1. State of Scientists Survey

The SOS team, led by co-chair CDR Anne Marie France designed a report to be produced annually which describes the characteristics, training, background, and strengths of the Scientist category using a standardized survey to gather data for the report that was not already available.

- Designed and developed a template for an annual report to capture the characteristics, strengths, and trends in recruitment and retention in the scientist category



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- Designed and implemented a survey of all scientist officers; this survey captured key information on 84% of all active Scientist officers across 12 different agencies.
- Analyzed and presented preliminary results in CDR Purfield's RRR presentation at the 2016 PHS symposium

2. Modeling Trends for Retention

The modeling team, led by LCDR Alice Shumate, built a statistical model that described the current rank distribution of the Scientist category and projected that distribution into the future based on current and hypothetical rates for recruitment, retention, promotion, and retirement to understand how current and recent trends affect the strength of our category going forward.

- Built a time-structured model to project the distribution of Scientist category officers by rank into the future
- Parameterized the model using existing data on recruitment, retention, and promotion
- Designed the model to test the effects of different hypothetical policies that affect recruitment, retention, and promotion rates
- Presented model at USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium at Oklahoma City on Category Day

3. Data Collection for Separation

We investigated how to collect accurate and real-time data to assess trends in Scientists officers separating from active duty.

- Explored feasibility and tried to establish mechanism to obtain recent and historical separation data from DCCPR via LCDR Monique Bailey

4. Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer Retention Efforts

With recruitment limited to the EIS program, select Agency conversions or clinical needs, EIS has become our major avenue for growth, but recent data suggest that the two year retention of Scientist officers completing EIS program has dropped from 84% to 20%.

- Led an informational session at the EISOs training to answer questions and provide "new to the Corps" guidance
- Explicitly encouraged EISO Scientist officers to attend two Scientist socials
- Encouraged EISO Scientist officers to become involved in SciPAC
- Organized officers to respond to EISO applicant's queries about joining Commissioned Corps
- Led an informational session about "What to Expect at OBC"

Readiness

1. Scientist Excellence in Fitness Program



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LCDR Alison Laufer Halpin led a work group to establish a program that encourages Scientist officers to constantly improve their fitness level.

- Researched current fitness programs in USPHS
- Created a recognition program for Scientist officers that builds on other programs to recognize Scientist officers achieving fitness at beginner to expert levels for both endurance and sprint activities.

2. **Healthy Scientists Bulletin**

Led by LCDR Matthew Walters, the work group published monthly bulletins to encourage Scientist officers to live a healthier lifestyle through activities and education by identifying activities and resources for wellness.

- Published 12 bulletins, through the SciPAC list serve, consisting of nine sections: research review, tiny workout tips, healthy recipes, DC regional activities, Atlanta regional activities, other regional activities, APFT and BLS training opportunities, PHS Athletics activities, and Healthy Buddy Initiative.

3. **Healthy Buddy Initiative**

To encourage networking/mentoring relationships among Scientist officers, we created a program to match up Scientist officers with partners to establish a relationship based on fitness goals and wellness.

- Six officers participate in the program; three fitness buddy relationships were established

4. **Scientist Officer Deployment Vignettes**

The work group, led by LCDR Oliver Ou, identifies Scientist officers who deploy for response missions to share their experiences to document our category's contribution to response, as well as to motivate other Scientist officers.

- Two Scientist officer vignettes were published in the SciPAC newsletter
 - 2016 State of the Union—A RIST NCR Deployment Experience by LCDR Jessica Cole
 - TDY Deployment Vignette by LCDR Luis Iturriaga

5. **Reporting Readiness Statistics**

DCCPR provides a report to the RRR Chair about once a quarter to identify Scientist officers who are not basic ready. Descriptive statistics include readiness by rank or Agency and participation on deployment teams, as well as common reasons for not meeting basic readiness. Evaluation of the reports shows that ~40% of Scientist officers are on Tier 1 or 2 deployment teams, which is second only to the Environmental Health Officers category.

- Report readiness statistics to Scientists on the monthly SciPAC call.

6. **Maintenance of Deployment Spreadsheet.** From time to time the Chief Scientist Officer receives deployment requests for one or more scientist officers in support of the



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OFRD system. In order to facilitate these requests, a spreadsheet was created and sent out to all SciPAC officers to collect relevant information that will help the Chief Scientist Officer to select the officer or officers that best fit the needs of each particular mission. Those scientist officers who were interested in being deployed were asked to complete the spreadsheet, as well as to send a copy of their CV summary sheet. The information is then collected by an RRR subcommittee member in preparation for a request from the Chief Scientist Officer. This represents an additional, voluntary avenue for scientist officers to be deployed.

7. **Monthly Readiness Reports.** We provided SciPAC monthly readiness numbers based on calculations made from raw readiness data as supplied by OCCO. The subcommittee helped monitor and maintain readiness for SciPAC, and when needed provided instructions, encouragement, and answered questions regarding readiness/non-readiness status.

Impact:

The RRR subcommittee provided the larger SciPAC with information and assistance related to basic readiness status. In addition, we provided assistance to DCCPR through our efforts to assist with the backlog of assisting applicants. We also provided a significant number of hours in direct recruiting efforts that hopefully resulted in the successful recruitment of new PHS officers. Finally, our efforts to assist officers who requested help as a result of our notification that they were newly not-basic-ready resulted in many officers reporting that they were now basic ready. It is our hope that the efforts of the RRR subcommittee will manifest themselves in improved readiness numbers in future readiness estimates.

Recruitment

1. Updated Best Kept Secrets document was the informational document utilized by at least four potential applicants seeking information about being a Scientist officer in the Corps.
2. Conversion of the Best Kept Secrets document to Microsoft Publisher allowed for efficient editing and updating to keep the document relevant to current work for recruitment.
3. Recruitment team identified qualified jobs for two boarded applicants before their one-year period expired, which allowed the applicants to receive their Call to Active Duty as Scientist officers in a period when recruitment beyond Epidemic Intelligence Service or Agency conversions was extremely limited.
4. Increased visibility of SciPAC recruitment by reaching out to 75 candidates
5. Increase visibility of SciPAC by meeting with 15 OBC CAD Officers
6. Supported the needs of the Corps by meeting with FDA and CDC liaisons and helping the FDA fill an urgent position with a qualified boarded applicant
7. Increased the transparency and efficiency of tracking candidates by creating an online recruitment form
8. Improved situation awareness by creating a Google Group with real-time information about boarded applicants.



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9. Responded to candidate and boarded applicant needs in a professional and timely manner, thereby improving public relations for the Corps.

Retention

1. Scientist category statistical model was used to project the size and rank structure of the category 30 years into the future if current policies continue. Note an open period of recruitment was announced shortly after the model was presented at Category Day. The impact of the open recruitment can be estimated in the model.
2. Model estimations formed the basis for an active discussion among officers at Category Day and showed a state of attrition or static growth, at best
3. Model provided framework for follow-up questions in surveying Scientists for the 2016 State of the Scientist Survey to better understand decisions regarding separation
4. Current Scientist EISOs (n=17) are engaged in SciPAC, have mentors and participate in Corps activities and have expressed gratitude for outreach to EISOs.
5. State of Scientists survey represents the first comprehensive description of the Scientist category, and provides a foundation on which annual reports can be based on annual deployment of the template survey. The survey can be implemented annually from the template we designed. Because so little information was available about the scientist category prior to this survey, this information provides the first systematic data on the strength of the category as well as factors impacting recruitment and retention. This information will be valuable for advocacy as well as long term planning for the category.

Readiness

1. Scientist officers have motivation through recognition in the Excellence in Fitness program to improve fitness levels or try new fitness activities to strengthen fitness level for improved response activities and visibility as role models for healthy lifestyles
2. Feedback suggests Scientist officers take advantage of the resources in the Healthy Scientist Bulletin to improve wellness and participate in group activities
3. Officer Vignettes published showcase the contributions of Scientist officers during deployments in two different settings to educate other officers about how Scientists can support the mission of the Corps
4. Readiness statistics informed Scientist officers of how they compare with similar officers and motivated officers to achieve basic readiness
5. Readiness statistics guided discussions with SciPAC leadership about the strength of our category and our contribution to the mission of the Corps

Recommendations:

- 1) Best Kept Secrets: Update document with professional photos that reflect current uniform regulations
- 2) We know that agencies need specialized Scientists to achieve their mission. Currently, FDA is looking to recruit Scientist officer with particular skills for a new FDA initiative. In order to help HHS Agencies meet their mission, we need to work closely with



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Agencies to assess needs for Scientist officers and SciPAC leadership/DCCPR to discuss how and when to recruit Scientist officers.

- 3) The relationship with DCCPR Recruitment is ambiguous at best. Although initially enthusiastic, DCCPR is now more reluctant to work with the SciPAC representative. A formal understanding of the relationships between PAC recruitment liaisons and DCCPR will improve access to real-time information and ultimately aid candidate applicants.
- 4) A formal relationship should be established between PAC Recruitment officers and Agency liaisons. Some Agency liaisons refused to work with the SciPAC representative and the SciPAC representative was not encouraged to send email directly to Agency liaisons after his initial efforts. Direct outreach to liaisons was extremely successful and resulted in a career opportunity for one officer. Both FDA and CDC showed an interest in working with the SciPAC representative to fill urgent needs. A formal relationship with agency liaisons will greatly increase the need for Scientist Officers and visibility of qualified candidates.
- 5) There is a critical need to formalize the role of the Recruitment Subcommittee as a whole. Currently, the subcommittee has no authority to act as a recruiting body, per DCCPR. "Recruitment" is a benchmark for Scientist officers, but it is not clear how it may be achievable in the current situation.
- 6) SciPAC Recruitment needs to work closely with the CPO and SciPAC leadership to promote planning, priorities, and support.
- 7) Conduct a survey to assess utility of Healthy Scientist Bulletin
- 8) Promote and implement Excellence in Fitness Program
- 9) Directly identify officers who deploy
- 10) Reach out to individual officers who are not projected to be basic ready and provide resources, if needed, to aid in achieving readiness
- 11) Identify officers who miss consecutive readiness checks and identify barriers or challenges
- 12) Apply ongoing trends in recruitment, promotion and retention to model to assess changes in the Scientist category over time by
- 13) Continue to aggregate quality data on Scientist category from DCCPR and other program sources to assess trends in recruitment, promotion and retention over time
- 14) Identify officers who have intentions to separate prior to their separation at the time they file separation paperwork. Assess whether officers are retiring or separating without benefits and develop a survey to assess separation trends.
- 15) Obtain data for Scientist officers separating prior to 2014, including names of officers, date called to active duty, date of separation, and years of service.
- 16) Evaluate retention of 2015 Class of EISOs and survey Scientist EISOs to determine effectiveness of outreach, identify needs that were or were not met and determine what resources would be most useful to aid in their decision to retain Commission after EIS.
- 17) Create a resource document specific to new CADs in EIS
- 18) Continue to track and report officer readiness statistics.
- 19) Continue to offer assistance to officers who do not meet basic readiness standards
- 20) Continue to improve Scientist officer deployment visibility by means of "officer vignettes"



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- 21) Continue to maintain the officer applicant pool database; use it to contact potential applicants when the recruiting window for Scientists reopens.
- 22) Continue to respond to potential scientist candidates with the most accurate information on the recruiting process available.
- 23) Continue to refine the retention survey; present findings to SCIPAC chair and Scientist CPO.
- 24) The full analysis of the 2016 State of Scientists survey data still needs to be completed, and the report must be produced. We recommend that this be done early in operational year 2017, and that the survey be implemented again, after minor revision, in ~January of 2017. Additionally, the annual report should be generated again based on the 2017 data.

RULES AND MEMBERSHIP

Chair: CDR Jennifer Adjemian

Co-Chair: CDR Sara Vagi

Mission:

Shall be responsible for discussing issues relevant to operating procedures for the SciPAC, managing actions needed for smooth administrative operation, and evaluating/making recommendations on those issues that might arise that do not fall under the scope of other standing subcommittees.

Major Duties:

- SciPAC Charter and SOP review
- SciPAC Subcommittee SOP annual updates
- SciPAC New Voting Member Nomination Process

Accomplishments & Impact:

- The SciPAC SOP is critical for communicating the key objectives and functions of each Executive Board role, Subcommittee, and Liaison role to all Scientist Officers. A thorough review and revision of the SciPAC SOP was conducted to ensure the document accurately reflects SciPAC functions and activities. In October 2015, the current SciPAC SOP was obtained, converted to a Word document from the existing PDF, and closely reviewed, reformatted and updated to better reflect current activities, standards and needs. The Rules and Membership Chair and Co-Chair conducted a preliminary review, and then solicited for additional feedback from all subcommittee members. The Chair then compiled all of the comments and suggested edits into one document. The finalized SciPAC SOP has been presented to the Chair for dissemination to all voting membership.
- The Rules and Membership Subcommittee discussed the process for selection of SciPAC voting members. A revised proposal for the voting member selection process and criteria was prepared, and an objective scoring criteria was trialed during the selection process by the Rules and Membership Chair. A decision was made to not continue using this new method, due to the added value obtained from the existing method in comparison.



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- In May 2016, the Rules and Membership Chair reviewed the current membership and identified six slots available for prospective voting membership. The self-nomination form was edited and the formal call for voting member nominations was submitted via the USPHS list-serv.
- During May and June 2016, the Rules and Membership Chair received and compiled 29 applicants' self-nomination packet; requested supporting data from the SciPAC Executive Secretary (SciPAC call attendance) and SciPAC Recruitment, Readiness, and Retention Subcommittee (Basic Readiness); scheduled a June Rules and Membership subcommittee meeting, and distributed the self-nomination packets to the subcommittee members for rankings. Prior to the June teleconference, the Chair compiled the rankings and distributed to subcommittee members.
- On June 21, 2016, the Rules and Membership subcommittee met by teleconference to discuss each of the applicants, review the ratio of Junior to Senior officers and agency distribution, and unanimously select six officers to recommend for voting membership; a nomination package was subsequently prepared and submitted to CPO for consideration in June, 2016.
- In July, 2016 the OSG approved the six officers for SciPAC Voting Membership, and the Rules and Membership Chair notified each officer individually to inform them of their selection and welcome them to the PAC. Officers whom were not selected were also notified of the decision, and feedback from the Rules and Membership subcommittee was provided regarding areas where the Officer could increase their support of the PAC.

Recommendations:

- Consider having a representative from each SciPAC subcommittee contribute to the SOP revisions, to ensure that all ongoing activities and functions are included and accurately reflected.
- Maintain functional Word documents of the SciPAC SOP, Subcommittee SOPs, and the SciPAC Charter to facilitate a smoother process for providing annual updates; the SciPAC SOP had many items that were outdated and it is likely due to the lack of ease in having a readily available version for the editing and review process.

SCIENCE

Chair: CDR Jeffrey Goodie

Co-Chair: CDR Ryan Novak

Mission:

This mission of the Science Subcommittee (SC) is to highlight the importance of science in the U.S. Public Health Service Scientist Category.

Major Duties:

The major duties for this subcommittee include:

- 1) Documenting scientific accomplishments involving Scientist officers.
- 2) Collaborating with other subcommittees to ensure we educate the Commissioned Corps, OFRD, and DHHS about the skills and expertise within our category.



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- 3) Providing opportunities for Scientist officers to discuss cutting edge science, public health issues and their impact on the mission of the Corps.
- 4) Disseminating relevant scientific publications to the SciPAC that may have specific relevance to the Corps.
- 5) Informing the response of the SciPAC Executive Board and CPO when they are called upon to engage with the Surgeon General’s office on issues of science in public health.
- 6) Supporting other SciPAC subcommittees in efforts to increase visibility of Scientist officers.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

The accomplishments for the subcommittee include

- 1) Bibliography & Publications Team
 - a. Lead: CDR Andrea Sharma
 - b. Accomplishments
 - i. Processed, organized and updated over two thousand submissions for the SciPAC bibliography.
 - ii. Updated reports for 2010-13; developed new reports for 2014-15.
 - iii. Planned to post reports on SciPAC website.
 - c. Impact
 - i. Highlighted the 1388 publications. 69 books, 224 Reports and 1329 Presentations by Scientist officers during this time.
 - ii. Reports allow individuals, including USPHS leadership to view productivity of Scientist Officers.
- 2) Journal Club Team
 - a. Leads: LCDR Nadra Tyus & LCDR Jason Wilken
 - b. Accomplishments
 - i. Conducted 5 Journal Club calls
 - ii. Calls addressed the National Prevention Strategy and highlighted other emerging public health issues in our nation, including the Zika virus:

Date	Topic	Speaker
June 2016	Psychosocial facets of resilience: implications for preventing posttrauma psychopathology, treating trauma survivors, and enhancing community resilience.	LCDR Luz Rivera
April 2016	Association between Zika virus and microcephaly in French Polynesia, 2013-2015: a retrospective study	LCDR Matthew Lozier
February 2016	Cigarette Smoking, Tooth Loss, and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD): Findings From the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	LCDR Timothy Cunningham



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December 2015	Active Living Priority of the National Prevention Strategy	LT Lisa Jarvis-Durham
October 2015	Healthy and Safe Community Environments” Strategic Direction of the National Prevention Strategy	LT Jonathan Leshin

iii. All Journal Club presentations over the past year were conducted by SciPAC junior officers

c. Impacts

- i. SciPAC officers engaged in thought-provoking discussions.
- ii. Provided a venue to junior and senior officers for highlighting the research they are doing and how it is related to the NPS and real-world public health issues.
- iii. The knowledge gained from the articles and the discussions facilitate the growth of officers and scientists.

3) Science and Practice Series Team

- a. Leads: LCDR Tim Cunningham & LT Bowen
- b. Accomplishments
 - i. Organized five speakers on issues critical for officer professional practice including the topics:

Date	Topic	Speaker
July 2016	Comprehensive International Grants Management	CDR Tracy Powell
March 2016	Capacity Building in Resource-Limited Settings	LCDR Danielle Barradas
January 2016	The Prevalence Ratio as an Alternative to the Odds Ratio for Cross-sectional Studies	LCDR Kamil Barbour
November 2015	Scientists: Utility Players and Subject Matter Experts	LCDR Anne Purfield
September 2015	Conducting Field Epidemiology Investigations	CDR Tracie Gardner & LT Ginny Bowen

c. Impact

- i. Informed officers about issue critical to officer practice.

4) National Prevention Strategy Team

- a. Accomplishments
 - i. Had commentary related to the NPS accept to the *American Journal of Public Health*
- b. Impact
 - i. Will increase attention and visibility of USPHS Scientists to the broader public health community.

Recommendations:



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- The Bibliography team should continue to streamline process for soliciting and inputting new submissions.
- The Journal Club and Science & Practice Series Teams should continue to develop methods for increasing attendance at calls.
- The National Prevention Strategy (NPS) team should clarify its role given the publication of the NPS commentary.
- Due to limited workload throughout the year, the SOP team should follow a biennial review of SOP rather than annual reviews.

VISIBILITY

Chair: CDR Loren Rodgers

Co-Chair: LCDR Kamil Barbour and LCDR John Pesce

Mission: The purpose of the Visibility subcommittee is to inform the SciPAC and Scientist officers on scientific activities, accomplishments, and opportunities available throughout the PHS and to increase the visibility of the Scientist category.

Major Duties:

- Publish *The Scientist Officer* (SciPAC Newsletter)
- Increase Esprit de Corps through diverse initiatives, including local social events and meet-and-greet events.
- Create and present a poster at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Support the PACE (Prevention through Active Community Engagement) Workgroup. Note that PACE is led by Scientist officers and operates in close conjunction with the Visibility subcommittee; however, PACE includes officers from other professional categories and thus extends beyond SciPAC.
- Liaise with AMSUS Planning Committee to help plan AMSUS annual meeting.

Accomplishments:

- Published nine articles in the June, 2016 SciPAC Newsletter issue, highlighting issues including Category Day at the USPHS Symposium, professional opportunities for scientists, and MWR benefits.
- Poster was successfully created and presented at 2016 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Finalized Scientist Creed and posted to the SciPAC website.
- Coordinated presentation of five scientific posters in uniform at the ASMUS annual meeting. Planned or moderated four symposia.
- Led two DC-area social events at a restaurant.
- Led five Atlanta-Based Socials: four trivia events at restaurants, and one event welcoming EIS officers where we worked in conjunction with the RRR subcommittee. For the trivia events, the SciPAC team scored first and second place finishes, furthering Esprit-de-Corps and raising visibility among other participants.



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- Led a new initiative to highlight high impact publications from Scientist Officers. Six manuscripts published in 2015 were selected, summarized, and will appear in the next issue of *The Scientist Officer* newsletter.
- The Visibility subcommittee represented SciPAC during the FDA Commissioned Corps Awareness Day. These officers talked with fellow officers about the work that Scientists are doing within FDA as well as other outside activities. They also talked with several civilians who were interested in joining the Commissioned Corps.
- The following activities were led by visibility members and conducted through the “Prevention through Active Community Engagement” (PACE) program:
 - Conducted a hands on learning activity for 7th grade science students (290 students, 16 officers) at a middle school. Two officers presented a case study activity about Ebola.
 - A visibility subcommittee member led the “Adopt a Highway” program as an initiative under DC COA’s PACE group, in support of Surgeon General’s National Prevention Strategies for a Healthy environment. Work includes maintaining cleanliness of a high-profile one mile highway stretch, and a sign acknowledges the Corps work.
- Wrote and implemented a major revision to the SciPAC Visibility subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures. Clarified activities that qualify as a visibility contribution. Made standards more rigorously connected to Corps visibility.

Impact:

- The visibility events highlighted in this report document persons that were introduced to the USPHS Commissioned Corps, including, federal employees, and the general public. Furthermore, officers from other professional categories were educated about Scientist contributions through in-person presentations.
- Networking and Esprit-de-Corps was increased through visibility events, including professional symposia, and additional initiatives that fortified officer identity as Scientists.
- Scientist officers were informed about local events, achievements, career development issues through the SciPAC newsletter, thereby supporting individual career development and esprit de corps.

Recommendations:

- Continue to market the scientist officers and share their accomplishments.
- Stand up a workgroup to expand the Adopt-A-Highway initiative.
- Hold at least one SciPAC social event in DC and Atlanta.
- Publish at least two newsletter articles.
- Clarify activities that qualify as a visibility contribution. Consider making standards more rigorously connected to Corps visibility.
- Continue high participation in visibility events.
- Expand systematic documentation of Scientist officer publications and presentations.



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WEBSITE

Chair: CDR Jacqueline Sram

Co-Chair: LCDR Jason Wilken

Mission

To provide useful and up-to-date information to USPHS Scientist Officers and increase the visibility of the USPHS Scientist Category within the Commissioned Corps and to the general public via the Scientist Category website.

Major Duties

The major duty of the SciPAC Website Subcommittee is to maintain the USPHS Scientist Category website, ensuring that information of interest to USPHS Scientist Officers is readily available, useful, and up-to-date. In October 2015, the SciPAC Website Subcommittee was informed that all PHS Category websites must be moved to a government server. The migration deadline was 31 March 2016. Thus, during the majority of the 2015–2016 operational year, the Website subcommittee was focused on this website migration and meeting the established deadline. The specific goals of the Website subcommittee were to:

- Keep the existing fee-for-service Scientist Category website up-to-date
- Train Website subcommittee members on the new platform, called the Jarmanator, used on the PHS server
- Train Website subcommittee members on how to perform Section 508 compliance review of content and documents prior to posting on the PHS server
- Migrate all information from the existing fee-for-service Scientist Category website to the Jarmanator platform on the PHS server; complete migration by 31 March 2016.
- Revise the Website Subcommittee SOP to reflect process changes due to the new website location

Accomplishments

The accomplishments of the Website Subcommittee during the 2015–2016 operational year included the following:

- Provided training for seven Website subcommittee members on how to use the Jarmanator platform. (Training was given by Jarmanator Senior Content Manager LCDR Julian Jolly)
- Coordinated four troubleshooting sessions with Jarmanator Sr. Content Manager during website migration to resolve technical difficulties/complications with using Jarmanator.
- Developed four new webpages which were not available on the fee-for-service website – OBC Graduates, Mentor of the Year Award, 2016 Scientist Category Award Recipients, 2016 Category Day.
- Developed new formatting guidelines for preparing content in Jarmanator.
- Completed website migration of 53 pages on 10 March 2016 (go-live date); subsequently, subcommittee members performed a quality review of all pages and links on the new



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website. Migration and verification was completed prior to established deadline of 31 March 2016. (<https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/scientist/default.aspx>)

- Fulfilled approximately 35 requests, including those originating from within the Website Subcommittee, to update content on the website.
- Provided training to five website subcommittee members of how to perform Section 508 compliance review of Adobe documents and prepare for posting onto the website.
- Revised Website Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedure to reflect the new processes.
- CDR Jacqueline Sram represented SciPAC as a voting member on the newly initiated IT Chartered Advisory Committee (ICAC). CDR Sram led the development of the ICAC Bylaws and provided status updates on the Scientist Category's website migration to the PHS server. LCDR Wilken acted as the Alternate voting member for CDR Sram.

Impact

The Scientist Category website is a valuable resource for USPHS Scientist Officers and provides information and guidance for persons interested in the Commissioned Corps and health science careers. The website is used by the SciPAC to promote its activities and the work of Scientist Officers. During September 2015–August 2016, the Subcommittee focused on migrating our website content to the PHS server within the established deadline. In doing so, we are now in compliance with the HHS policy that requires websites of PHS/OSG-approved advisory groups to reside on a government server. The new Scientist Category website has the same format as the previous website and should be a smooth transition for recurring users. The new content management system, the Jarmanator, is not difficult to use and should be equally simple for the SciPAC Website Subcommittee to maintain and update in a timely manner. As we return to normal operations, we hope our SciPAC and Subcommittee Leadership will resume active posting of materials and content on our new website.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the experience of the Website Subcommittee during the 2015–2016 operational year:

- Develop usage analysis capability for the new website using Google Analytics.
- Work with webpage owners for review and update of webpage content.
- Encourage Subcommittee Chairs to resume active use of our new Scientist website for posting materials and new content.
- Ask the SciPAC Executive Board to implement the following recommendation for disseminating information that is appropriate to have on the website to Scientist Officers:
 - o Allow the Website Subcommittee to post new material to the website prior to disseminating information and documents (e.g., newsletters, Handbook chapters, etc.) via the Scientist Category listserv.



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- Once content is posted and approved, include appropriate hyperlinks to the information or document in the message distributed via the listserv.
- This procedure will reduce the number of large files sent and received via email and will help increase use of and familiarity of the Scientist Category website by our officers.

C. LIAISON REPORTS

COF Report: CDR Matthew Breiding

- As of September 12, 2016, the SciPAC account balance was \$1685.07 and there was an inventory of 147 coins and 29 of the newer royal blue t-shirts (sizes: 10 XL, 10 L, 3 M, 5 S) and 8 of the older white cotton t-shirts (sizes: 1 L, 14 M, and 2 S).
- During the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the total income was \$750.70 and the total expenses was \$415.29. The only major expense was the purchase of award plaques for the COF symposium at a cost of \$352.40.
- A total of 33 coins and 14 new royal blue performance t-shirts were sold.

COA Liaison Report: CAPT Diana Elson

Mission: To keep the Scientists informed of major and emerging issues that the Commissioned Officers Association (COA) manages on behalf of its members, and to elicit input from the Scientists to ensure the Scientists' needs are met at the national level of COA.

Major Duties:

- Serve as a member of the Board of Directors of National COA and attend all meetings
- Provide updates to the Scientists at SciPAC meetings or as needed to ensure our category is informed of critical issues that impact the Corps and COA activities in serving its members
- Foster communications between SciPAC members and the COA Board of Directors
- Encourage Scientists to participate as a committee member on one of the National COA committees.

Accomplishments:

- Provided our category with monthly updates on critical issues facing the Corps that the COA has been addressing at the national level to ensure our category is well informed
- Facilitated and invitation for the Executive Director of COA to give an update to the Scientists on the COA legislative agenda
- Offered information and opportunities for Scientists to become more actively involved in the COA at the national level



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Impact:

- Keeps our Scientists category well informed of critical issues on which COA is engaged and that impact their careers.
- Ensures our Scientists have a voice with the COA Board of Directors

Recommendations:

- We have had excellent support from the SciPAC CPO and SciPAC Chair for this liaison role and I would recommend that this support continues to provide our Scientists the opportunity to have a voice in their future as a uniformed service

JOAG Liaison: LCDR Alice Shumate

The JOAG Liaison is a junior Scientist Officer and voting member of JOAG who is selected by JOAG to serve as a liaison to the Scientist PAC.

Major Duties:

The duties of the JOAG Liaison include representing the interests of Scientist Officers to JOAG, regularly attending both JOAG and SciPAC meetings, and reporting back to each respective group.

Accomplishments:

- Provided our category with monthly updates on relevant JOAG activities to ensure our category is well informed;
- Offered information and opportunities for our Scientists to become more actively involved in JOAG;
- Shared the excellent JOAG-compiled resources for Symposium, which help officers keep Symposium costs down and maximize their time at Symposium.
- Helped open up lines of communication between SciPAC and JOAG concerning recruitment and retention of junior officers, a current area of interest for both groups.

Impact:

- Kept our junior scientist officers well informed of upcoming JOAG events such as general meetings, Journeyman Speaker Series, awards, membership and JOAG activities related to the COF conference.
- Increased junior scientist officers' involvement in JOAG activities.

Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG) Liaison: CDR Ingrid Pauli

Mission:

The PsyPAG mission is to consider discipline-specific professional issues and advise the Surgeon General through the HS PAC and SciPAC and Chief Professional Officers of the Health Services and Scientist Categories regarding such issues.



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Major Duties

The PsyPAG liaison serves to communicate information between SciPAC and PsyPAG. The liaison attends meetings, reports major events/activities, and assists with the coordination of projects related to both groups.

Accomplishments and Impact:

In FY2015, PsyPAG's accomplishments and impact have included:

- PsyPAG held bi-monthly teleconferences for one hour. Meetings include a featured speaker describing their work in PHS, as well as reports from the Executive Committee and committee chairs regarding the work of their groups and on opportunities for participation. **Impact:** Regular meetings allowed PsyPAG members to communicate information, plan and conduct business, and support professional development.
- The PsyPAG Psychologist Speaker Series featured a number of interesting presentations
- PsyPAG maintains an active listserv and recently updated the PsyPAG website: <http://usphs-hso.org/?q=pags/psypag>. **Impact:** These efforts have broadened awareness of the breadth of roles that psychologists serve.
- The HSPAC and SciPAC liaisons represented PsyPAG through monthly teleconferences and other meetings, as necessary, throughout the year to ensure that areas of interest and concern to psychologists were identified and discussed.
- PsyPAG administered its annual awards program, selecting psychologists for the Senior Career and Early Career Achievement Awards. **Impact:** Maintaining a robust awards program fosters professional development and morale within Corps psychologists.
- PsyPAG continued to sponsor a Special Interest Group (SIG) for officers interested in prescription privileges for psychologists. The SIG conducted monthly meetings and maintained a Google Drive account as a common resource point for PEP (Psychopharmacology Examination for Psychologists) study materials, as well as for other resources needed for supervised practice and licensure application. The SIG has also maintains and updates information regarding the differences between states for licensure, as well as credentialing information across agencies. **Impact:** This SIG has served to increase awareness of issues related to prescribing psychologists and prepare individuals for the PEP. **Recommendations**

We encourage the continued support of the PsyPAG-SciPAC liaison position. The position continues to serve as an important mechanism for psychologists and other Scientists to collaborate and communicate.

D. CONCLUSION

The Scientist PAC continues to serve the Category through mentorship and career development, but also by educating officers through activities, the SciPAC monthly calls, and through networking. This year the Category evidenced a high level of participation across all PAC initiatives. Through these completed and on-going activities, each officer gained a better understanding of the Category's work, role, and impact within the context of the USPHS



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Commissioned Corp. As a whole, the activities will demonstrate the integral force and scientific impacts the Scientist Category brings to the USPHS Commissioned Corp.

Respectfully submitted January 2016

CDR Matthew Murphy
Scientist PAC Chair 2015-2016
U.S. Public Health Service

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