Dear Fellow APAOC members,

What an honor and privilege to have served in 2014 as the APAOC Chair!

Together, we have achieved so much and have reached new milestones. I am very excited to report some of the highlights.

1. New APAOC Traditions Established!

At the start of this year, thanks to the officership of APAOC volunteer coordinators, the first ever All-Hands Meeting was held at the USPHS Headquarters in Rockville, Maryland. It was well attended by many APAOC members to kick off the 2014 operational year. Acting Surgeon General RADM Boris D. Lushniak and Acting Deputy Surgeon General RADM Scott F. Giberson met with the APAOC members present and spoke about the importance of APAOC as one of four advisory groups of the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) to the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG).

CAPT Paul Jung, a former voting member of APAOC (two terms) and former Acting Director of the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR), spoke as our Keynote Speaker. CAPT Jung laid down the challenge for APAOC in grooming officer(s) so that these officers can lead the Corps in future endeavors. The 2014 APAOC leadership has heed CAPT Jung’s call and has taken up this challenge. The Senior Advisor Position (SAP) is in the process of being finalized and a call for nominations will be going out in 2015.

Seeing the success from our first ever All-Hands Meeting, we plan to have the All-Hands Meeting and the Change-of-Command Ceremony be formally established in the APAOC By-Laws. Starting in 2015, the All-Hands Meeting and the Ceremony will be led by the Leadership & Strategic Planning Chair. If you would like to volunteer and assist in putting together this amazing event, please contact the 2015 Leadership & Strategic Planning Chair!
2. New Workgroups Established!

When I was the APAOC Chair-Elect/Vice-Chair in 2013, I noticed that our APAOC online social media presence was minimal. The APAOC page on Facebook was not indicated as an organization’s page but as an individual’s page. So, the Social Media Workgroup was formally established in 2013, and re-launched the APAOC Facebook page as an organization’s page. In 2014, it has truly lifted off. There are now Corps content, pictures from APAOC activities, and health-related information being posted on a regularly basis with 8 volunteer managers, and 2 Co-Chairs. The officers have done a tremendous job in actively posting, sharing, reviewing, and monitoring the activities of the APAOC Facebook page. If you wish to contribute in building up the APAOC Facebook page, please contact the 2015 Social Media Workgroup Co-Chairs!

As an APAOC member, I often looked upon other PACs with envy whenever they published a well-designed quarterly newsletter. I am very proud to announce that I am envious no more since APAOC now has its very own quarterly newsletter starting this year thanks to LCDR Simleen Kaur’s leadership and expertise. We have a lot of APAOC members who have performed superbly in their respective OpDivs, and contributed to APAOC day in and day out. This is something that ALL APAOC members can be proud of. Please consider in writing up a ½ page article for the new APAOC quarterly newsletter by contacting the 2015 Publication Workgroup Co-Chairs!

3. APAOC is All About Building up Esprit-de-Corps & Setting New Milestones!

2014 has been an incredible year with many historic firsts, and all of the success would not have happened without the support and assistance from our APAOC Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect LCDR Karen Chaves, and the rest of the executive APAOC members. I am confident and grateful that LCDR Karen Chaves will be leading APAOC to new heights as the new APAOC Chair come January 1st, 2015.

2014 APAOC Chair,
CDR Jerry Zee
(jerry.zee@cms.hhs.gov)
USPHS Deployments for the Unaccompanied Children Response at the U.S./Mexican Border

CDR Yi Zhang

The situation continued to escalate as up to 300 unaccompanied children (UC) were crossing the southern border and being detained daily by Customs and Border Protection (CBP). On May 14, 2014, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (DHHS) authorized deployment of the USPHS Commissioned Corps to support facility engineering, case management and medical screening, and sheltering activities in support of the. Designated as the primary DHHS response entity by the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Responses (ASPR), the USPHS Commissioned Corps coordinated closely with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), CBP, and Department of Defense (DoD) within the command group at the National Response Coordination Center. ACF served as the lead agency and the Corps provided direct support to ACF and CBP until they established processes and systems to manage the high influx of unaccompanied children.

The Commissioned Corps response demonstrated our value as a mobile cadre of health professionals who can protect and promote the health of any population. Officers with Spanish language skills and clinical backgrounds were in high demand for this mission.

Captain Dan Beck, Director of Readiness and Deployment Operations, coordinated the USPHS deployments and said the bulk of operations were in June and July. Over 350 officers from throughout the government responded to the call for action. They came from day jobs in the Food and Drug Administration, Indian Health Service, Bureau of Prisons, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, Health Resources and Services Administration, and more.

My role was to augment the Readiness and Deployment Operations Group (RDOG) staff in both the Commissioned Corps Headquarters and the Secretary’s Operation Center (SOC) in the Hubert H. Humphrey Building in Washington, DC. I helped to strategically plan the deployment rotations to meet mission needs, by rapidly identifying qualified officers and assembling the teams we sent to Nogales, Arizona, and McAllen, Texas. To accomplish this mission, I led two groups of officers from FDA, DoD and NIH. In the SOC, I assisted the Deputy Director of APR, Mr. Ken Hopper, to oversee the operation status and information integration, to enhance procedures in the Situational Awareness Unit, and to develop the user guide for quick reference by future staffers.

From my experience with the UC mission, I learned a great deal about national emergency operations. I also realized the following skills are universally important for officers to be successful: speaking multiple languages, good interpersonal and communication skills, responding rapidly, being flexible and patient while taking strong initiative and showing respect, having an open mindset, being a good team player.
with a positive attitude, having management operation experience, and working smart.

It was an honor for me to serve our nation in response to the influx of unaccompanied children at the U.S./Mexican border. I appreciate very much all the support from my colleagues in the FDA Office of Generic Drugs and from my family and friends. I am very proud of being an officer in the U.S. Public Health Service and that I can serve my country.
EBOLA, What Is It? How is the USPHS Responding to It?

LCDR Joy Hsu

Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. The natural reservoir of the Ebola virus has not yet been identified. However, once a human becomes infected with the virus, other humans can become infected if they come into direct contact with the infected person’s blood or bodily fluids. There is no evidence that the Ebola virus can be spread by coughing or sneezing.

The 2014 West Africa Ebola epidemic is the largest in history. The most heavily affected countries are Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. As of November 28, 2014, there were 16,933 total cases (including 6,002 deaths) in these three countries. Relatively fewer cases have been reported in Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Spain, and the United States. Infection of healthcare workers has been a concern in this epidemic.

Members of the USPHS are engaged in the public health response to the Ebola epidemic in many ways. In Liberia, USPHS officers are working with DoD to staff a 25-bed field hospital (the Monrovia Medical Unit, or MMU) dedicated to treating healthcare workers infected with Ebola. Additionally, USPHS officers are serving at airport quarantine stations and assisting CDC’s response in the United States and West Africa.

Regardless of station, deployment status, or agency, all USPHS officers can stay informed and educated about Ebola to serve as leaders in public health to their families, friends, and communities.

Further information on Ebola can be found here:

Message From Acting U.S. Surgeon General RADM Lushniak to Fellow Officers:
http://www.coausphs.org/docs/news/
   Reflections_on_a_Challenging_and_Exciting_Time_RADM_Lushniak_31Oct14.pdf
Commissioned Officers Association website
CDC website on Ebola Virus Disease: http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html
What to Pack for a Deployment

LCDR Simleen Kaur

As you prepare your personal gear for your upcoming deployment, think **MOUSE**: Mobile, Organized, Utility, Safety and Self and Environment.

**Mobile:** must carry your own gear
- Bags should be as light as possible and made of heavy duty material;
- Use a 2-bag system and fit everything in these two bags:
  - Bag #1: Ready bag (small) or go bag – gear you need for 24-hrs; and
  - Bag #2: Gear Bag (large) – majority of your gear;
- Take the Ready Bag with you wherever you go such as carry on luggage;
- Gear Bag gets checked-in so pack it to be handled roughly and exposed to inclement weather;
- Conform to airline regulations for weight and dimensions for both carry-on and check-in luggage.

**Organized:**
- Follow NDMS/DMAT/Customized list from your team;
- Keep you gear packed and stored together to avoid last minute rush to pack;
- Practice packing your gear and finding items inside;
- Use bags within bags such as ziploc bags for wet/dry, clean/dirty;
- **Label everything!**

**Utility:** tools you need to do your job
- Base set-up: work gloves, flashlight, head lamp;
- Medical care: stethoscope, eye protection, trauma shears, note pad/pen.

**Safety and Self:**
- What if you get separated from your gear? Carry work gloves, eye/ear protection, first aid kit, medications, hygiene kit, and waterless hand cleanser in your Ready Bag;
What if you get separated from your team? Keep a flashlight, matches, water, space blanket, large trash bag, and toilet paper in your Ready Bag; Wear comfortable clothes and shoes while traveling, bring plenty of underwear and socks, and carry snacks, a reading book, eye shades and ear plugs.

Environment: environmental injuries are avoidable!

- Wear and pack appropriate clothing according to weather;
- Carry sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent, skin lotion and foot powder;
- Follow the 3W’s: Wick, Warm and Weather when packing clothing and sleeping gear. Avoid cotton since it retains moisture and doesn’t dry easily.

APAOC Members Successfully Complete APR Planning Section Chief Training

LCDR Vicky Chan, LCDR Eric Zhou, LCDR Qiao Bobo

Three APAOC members participated in a four-day Planning Section Chief training sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on August 4-7, 2014. A total of 25 emergency responders from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) of APR, Incident Response Coordination Teams (IRCT), and seven PHS officers participated in the training at the Mission Support Center (MSC) in Frederick, MD. The training was led by Mr. Bryan Scyphers (Planning Section Chief, IRCT-Central, OEM, APR) and Mr. Norm Wrona (Team Commander, Florida-3 Disaster Medical Assistance Team).

This course provides emergency responders with a robust understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Planning Section Chief during an All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT) response. These responsibilities fall into two categories: 1) managing the planning cycle, and 2) tracking resources and incident status. Exercises, simulations, discussions, and a final exam enable participants to learn, process and apply their new knowledge.

During the training, we toured the ~300,000sq/ft MSC warehouse that houses trucks, medical equipment and supplies, tents, generators, and other support equipment (cache) necessary to establish a Base of Operations and perform specific tasks during an emergency deployment. Unique to this training in August, hurricanes Iselle and Julio were predicted to make landfall in Hawaii, allowing us to listen to live daily Planning Meetings and Public Health Medical Coordination Meetings in preparation for the hurricanes. This allowed us to experience the real situations and see the application of the planning process.
Trainings such as this are one of the key requirements for PHS officers on the Regional Incident Support Team in the National Capital Region (RIST-NCR) because these officers are often deployed alongside ASPR resources. LCDRs Qiao Bobo, Vicky Chan, and Eric Zhou from the RIST-NCR, along with four other PHS officers from various deployment teams, took advantage of this valuable opportunity and successfully completed the training. They were all eager to bring this experience back to their respective deployment teams and apply the knowledge during future deployments.

The APAOC Publications Workgroup is constantly looking for articles to showcase the extraordinary work performed by APAOC members. Please send your articles, announcements and pictures to LCDR Theresa Liu at Theresa.Liu@fda.hhs.gov and LT Jeannie Hong at Jeannie.Hong@ihs.gov
APAOC Members At NYC Veterans Day Parade

LT Jay Wong

On November 11, 2014, the 95th Annual NYC Veterans Day Parade paid tribute to honor those who have served and those who currently serve in the uniformed services. Organized by the United War Veterans Council, the parade is the largest of its kind in America, and is called “America’s Parade.” This year’s theme was “Land of the Free, Home of the Brave,” and also honored the bicentennial of the United States National Anthem by Francis Scott Key.

With origins dating back to World War I, November 11th marks the anniversary of the end of that war at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. Originally called Armistice Day, the US Congress voted in 1954 to change the name to “Veterans Day” -- to recognize all men and women for their service to our Nation. In many countries, November 11th is still known as Armistice Day.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Greater New York Commissioned Officers Association (GNYCOA) was the event host for the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps officers traveling to New York City. Thirty-five USPHS officers from all around the country, representing multiple Federal agencies, marched in the parade. Nine out of the thirty-five USPHS officers are members of APAOC, including LCDR Mark Chen, LT Long Pham, LT Ei Thu Lwin, CDR Andrew Chen, LCDR Hanah Pham, LT Ali Patino, CAPT Chae Chong, LT Jay Wong, and CDR Jerry Zee marched in this year’s parade.

Our guest of honor was RADM Helena Mishoe, who serves as the NIH representative on the Surgeon General’s Policy Advisory Council and Director of the Office of Research Training and Minority Health from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health.
One of the inspirational highlights of the event was RADM Mishoe, who saluted our PHS officers from the reviewing stand, and then joined our cadre of PHS officers to finish the march up 5th Avenue. Under the leadership of the GNYCOA President, LT Yvonne Santiago, invitations were sent nationwide to not only Chief Professional Officers, Flag Officers, COA Presidents, and Commissioned Corps Liaisons, but also Hispanic/Latino American, African American, American Indian/Alaska Native American, and Asian American officers. The result was a spectacular success with diverse representation across all ranks and agencies. With blue skies, brilliant sunshine, and pleasant temperatures in the 60s, special thanks to all the many volunteers and participants who made the 95th Annual New York City Veterans Day Parade a day to remember and cherish.

Chinese Culture and Community Service Center Health Fair

CDR Lisa Lindenberg

Dedicated APAOC members took time from their weekend to help with the Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC) Health Fair in Gaithersburg, MD on Sep 21, 2014. Serving the greater Washington DC area for almost 30 years, the center offers a wide range of programs and services for Chinese Americans and the community-at-large, including health, educational and cultural activities. APAOC has supported the health fair for several years and this year, 6 volunteers came in uniform to help. In addition to assisting in set-up, members manned a table with APAOC merchandise and information on APAOC and the Commissioned Corps. Many attendees learned about the USPHS and APAOC for the first time through this event. This was another community outreach where APAOC proudly led the way!


**Continue Your Education...Online!**

LCDR Simleen Kaur

Interested in learning or expanding your knowledge in fields such as public health, leadership, project management, administrative skills, etc., but have no time for classroom sessions? There are plenty of online training resources that can help you become more effective in your organization by keeping your skills sharp and your knowledge relevant. See below for examples of online training opportunities *(the information provided below is for informational purposes only; neither the USPHS nor the APAOC endorse any of these institutions/organizations)*.

1. **University of Florida, College of Public Health and Health Professions** has established a new online education model that focuses on the integration of public health problem-solving and individual patient care: [www.ufl.edu](http://www.ufl.edu)

2. **University of Phoenix** offers certificate programs that can help you seek greater opportunities and recognition, or simply enable you to keep up with changes in your field: [www.phoenix.edu](http://www.phoenix.edu)

3. **University of North Carolina, Center for Public Health Preparedness Training Website** offers free short Internet-based trainings on public health preparedness topics such as disease surveillance, basic epidemiology, bioterrorism and new/emerging disease agents: [http://cphp.sph.unc.edu/training/index.php](http://cphp.sph.unc.edu/training/index.php). Browse through UNC’s office of Continuing Education to sign up for your next class: [http://www2.sph.unc.edu/oces](http://www2.sph.unc.edu/oces)

4. **Training Finder Real-time Affiliate Integrated Network (TRAIN)** is a premier learning resource for professionals who protect the public's health. [www.train.org](http://www.train.org)

5. **California Distance Learning Health Network (CDLHN)** offers educational opportunities to healthcare workers in far-reaching areas of the state, across the nation, and around the world. [http://www.cdlhn.com/about.php](http://www.cdlhn.com/about.php)

6. **Coursera** is an education company that partners with the top universities and organizations in the world to offer courses online for anyone to take, for free. [https://www.coursera.org/](https://www.coursera.org/)

7. **National Seminars Training** is a division of Rockhurst University Continuing Education Center, Inc., and has trained millions of today's most successful professionals. [http://www.nationalseminarstraining.com/aboutUs.cfm](http://www.nationalseminarstraining.com/aboutUs.cfm)

8. **Skill Path Training** offers Continuing Education Credits based on program length and completion in accordance with the National Task Force for Continuing Education guidelines for attendance at their seminars. [http://www.skillpath.com/index.cfm/main/about](http://www.skillpath.com/index.cfm/main/about)

9. **Fred Pryor Seminars and Career Track** divisions of PARK University Enterprises, Inc., are one of the most respected international providers of professional seminars, webinars and online training. [http://www.pryor.com/site/default.aspx](http://www.pryor.com/site/default.aspx)
## 2015 APAOC LEADERSHIP

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<td>LCDR Karen Chaves</td>
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<td>Chair-Elect/Vice-Chair</td>
<td>CDR Shu Yi Cai</td>
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<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>LT Xinzhi Zhang</td>
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<td>Corresponding Secretary</td>
<td>LT Thomas Gamarrano</td>
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<td>MOLC Representatives</td>
<td>LT Trang Tran</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>LCDR Eric Zhou</td>
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<td>Awards &amp; Recognition Co-Chairs</td>
<td>CDR Fei Xu</td>
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<td>Career Development/Advancement Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LCDR Khang Ngo</td>
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<td>Charter &amp; Bylaws Chair</td>
<td>LT Oliver Ou</td>
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<td>Communications Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LCDR Diane Nhu</td>
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<td>Education &amp; Training Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LCDR Ruining Pamboukian</td>
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<td>Leadership &amp; Strategic Planning Chair</td>
<td>CDR Aileen Renolayan</td>
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<td>Nominations &amp; Membership Co-Chairs</td>
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<td>Public Relations/Merchandise Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LCDR Jade Pham</td>
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<td>Recruitment &amp; Retention Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LCDR Kun Shen</td>
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<td>Social Media Workgroup Co-Chairs</td>
<td>CDR Hawyee Yan</td>
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<td>Publications Workgroup Co-Chairs</td>
<td>LT Jeannie Hong</td>
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