



# PHPAG NEWSLETTER



December 2014

PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP TO THE USPHS

Volume I, Issue 3

## Reflections From The 2014 PHPAG Chair



**CDR Christye Brown  
PHPAG Chair (2014)**

"This year has been an amazing year and I have thoroughly enjoyed my term as PHPAG Chair!

We have embraced 2014 with a united, collaborative spirit that has allowed us to streamline activities and initiatives, resulting in impressive interactions throughout the PAG and the HSPAC.

My 2014 vision for the PHPAG was to become the premiere resource for officers to fulfill their niche in public health. Our outreach efforts have included ongoing participation at the Officer Basic Course Open House, HSO Category Day Roundtable Presentations (4), Inaugural CDC/ATSDR Commissioned Corps Awareness Day, PHPAG Social during the PHS Symposium, individually speaking with officers about PHPAG opportunities at

our respective duty stations, keeping our PHPAG website current and up-to-date, and launching the new and improved PHPAG Weekly Newsletter.

We continued to grow existing programs that have proven to be successful PHPAG initiatives - Coaching on Demand and Peer-to-Peer Networking highlight our extensive mentoring involvement. The PHPAG also incorporated new resources for officers as they aspire for career advancement - the CEU Resource Guide was finalized and disseminated throughout the PAG and HSPAC.

The PHPAG's educational and career development offerings transcended to a level commensurate with the needs of fellow officers, addressing platforms that included: gerontology, effective health communication in different populations, deployment experiences in natural and humanitarian disasters and Ebola response, securing detail assignments, lessons learned from project officers, messaging strategies in the Tobacco Cessation Report, disaster epidemiology, vulnerable populations and emergency preparedness, and positioning for global health work. Collectively, these forums were shared with over 500+ officers.

As we move into 2015, I look forward to joining the ranks of past Chairs who have each contributed their time, expertise and leadership to grow the PHPAG. Moreover, I am especially excited as we move forward under the leadership of CDR Ross as I am certain her direction will further heighten the PHPAG's excellence.

I thank each PHPAG voting member, subcommittee and public health track chair and co-chair for the opportunity to serve the PHPAG. The work ethic and initiative throughout our functional areas have been noteworthy and I am humbled and forever grateful for being surrounded by such hard working, impressive officers! I look forward to witnessing the continued advancement of the PHPAG's overall impact on officers within the PAG, HSPAC and the Commissioned Corps for years to come!"

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# PHPAG OFFICERS IN ACTION



Above: LCDRs Garza and Wright's presentation on Understanding Ebola and the Flu at Paul Public Charter School in Washington, D.C.



Above: CDR Sherene Cora and CAPT Pelletier celebrating Earth Day during April. "What was neat about this event was that it was an Africa COA event and other officers on the continent did it as well." ~ CDR Cora



Right: CDR Letia Boseman standing by the CDC Los Angeles Quarantine Station government vehicle on her way to get her employee badge for her 90-day temporary assignment/deployment. CDR Boseman is serving at the station as Surge Capacity for the CDC 2014 Ebola Response.



Above: Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) Team 4 holds Team Meeting and Training, October 18, 2014 in Oklahoma City, OK

(l-r front row) CAPT Richard Turner, CDR Dana Hayworth, CDR Tracy Farrill, LCDR Jessica Damon  
(l-r 2nd row) LCDR Julie Erb-Alvarez, CDR Sheila Villines, LCDR Song Lavalais, CDR Jamie Shaddon, LCDR Jennifer Bebo, LCDR Manon Tillman, CDR Claire Banks, CDR Deborah Cookson

(l-r 3rd row) LCDR Randy Steers, CDR Arnie Gish, CDR Kelly Battese, CAPT Brandon Taylor (Team Leader), CDR Vickie Caldwell



Above and below: Acting Surgeon General, RADM Boris D. Lushniak, MD, MPH, rallies USPHS Officers and HHS staff during National Walking Day to promote the SG's Every Body Walk! Initiative in Washington, D.C.



Above: LT Stephanie Briguglio and LT Tara Dondzila chair and co-chair of Global Health Track, at the COA symposium this year.



# SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES



## Awards Subcommittee

### *Mission*

To recognize officers for their accomplishments with Public Health Service and Category Awards in their respective public health disciplines.

### *Accomplishments*

CDR Matthew Weinburke, CDR Van Tran, LCDR Katrina Mosley, LCDR Azimi-Bolourian, CDR Jeff Tarrant, LCDR Elizabeth Russell, LT Annette Bush, CDR Teresa Baptise, and LCDR Antoine Smith played a vital role in this year's PHPAG Awards subcommittee's mission, goals and objectives with the continuation of the nomination and selecting of the PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award, the continuation of the streamlining of the PHPAG Awards subcommittee's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and the endorsement by the PHPAG voting members of the Junior Officer of the Year Award.



CDR Matthew Weinburke  
Subcommittee Chair



CDR Leslie Hausman receiving the PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award at the 2014 COF Symposium in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award was created to recognize a Health Services Officer (HSO) who has demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in the field of public health and for exceptional work toward the mission of the PHPAG, and this year the awardee was CDR Leslie Hausman. She received her award plaque at the 2014 COF Symposium in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Following the delivery of the 3rd PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award at the 2014 COF Conference in Raleigh, NC, the PHPAG Awards subcommittee revised the SOP again guiding the subcommittee in its operations and to ensure the subcommittee's seamless transition to conducting the processing of nominating and awarding the 2015 PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award. The SOP is not only used as a working document for processing the PHPAG Excellence in Leadership Award, but it is used for processing PHPAG Awards subcommittee activities and procedures. PHPAG Awards subcommittee team also submitted a position paper to propose new PHPAG Award targeting junior officers. After many hours of discussion and revisions, the position paper was submitted to the PHPAG Chair, CDR Brown and voting members for final review and endorsement. Finally, on October 23, 2014, the Junior Officer of the Year Award was endorsed by the PHPAG voting members. The subcommittee is now planning to develop a nomination package for the new award targeting junior officers and hoping that two awards will be issued at the 2015 COF Symposium.



LCDR Azimi-Bolourian  
Subcommittee Co-Chair

# Career Development Subcommittee

## Mission

The Career Development Subcommittee mission is to serve as a resource for officers in enhancing their career potential and job satisfaction.

## Accomplishments

During this year, the Career Development Subcommittee presented three webinars which attracted participation by over 70 officers:

- “Details: A Career Development Opportunity” was a collaborative effort with the Policy Subcommittee. CDR Bailey briefed on Individual Detail Program and CDR Boseman, LCDR Ghiya, LCDR(s) Trinidad shared their experiences on HHS details.
- “Promotions Preparations.” CAPT Brad Austin and CDR Mary McCormick presented helpful tips for Officers preparing their promotion packages. Insights for ensuring a successful career as a Health Service Officer were also offered.
- “Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is: How to Discuss Commissioned Officers’ Duties and Expectations with your Supervisor.” CDR Ahmadi presented straightforward ways to talk with supervisors about Deployments, COERs, Promotions and Awards.

The subcommittee held the third annual “Coaching on Demand” activity in collaboration with the HSPAC

Career Development Subcommittee and attracted participation by 30 junior officers and 18 senior officers. The Subcommittee also developed the first Continuing Education Units (CEU) Resource Guide as a tool to provide officers with links to learning and a variety of websites with information about where to obtain CEUs. The success of the subcommittee this year would not have been possible without the help and support of the co-chair, CDR Donna Phillips, and the many dedicated, hardworking, and enthusiastic subcommittee members: CDR Charlene Majersky, CDR Adam Lofton, CDR Michael Ahmadi, LCDR Karen Chaves, LT Valerie Albrecht, LT Ayana Anderson and LT Charlotte Kabore.



LCDR Lajeana Howie  
Subcommittee Chair



CDR Donna Phillips  
Subcommittee Co-Chair

# Communications Subcommittee

## Mission

The PHPAG Communications Subcommittee mission is to provide effective, accurate, and up-to-date communications to the PAG.

## Accomplishments

What have we done in 2014?

- Debuted the PHPAG coin at the 2014 COF Scientific and Training Symposium
- Marketed the coin through development and distribution of flyers
- Began drafting an HSO webpage for the coin
- Worked with the HSPAC Financial Liaison to develop our first PHPAG Financial Liaison SOP
- Provided Weekly Listserv Announcements in a timely and consistent manner
- Fulfilled 25 Website Update requests in 2014
- Fulfilled 17 HSO Weekly Announcements in 2014
- Acquired 4 new members in 2014
- Worked collaboratively with HPHE Track to develop talking points and informational sheets about the PHPAG for the monthly Officer’s Basic Course to recruit new officers and to sell coins
- Worked with the PHPAG Executive Leadership to develop a new announcements format in July 2014 and disseminated to subscribers.

Thank you to LCDR Monique Salter, LCDR Johnni Daniel, CDR Sherene Cora, LCDR Andrea Peay, LCDR Jamar Barnes, LCDR Joyce Oberly, LCDR Samantha Fontenelle, LCDR Chad Dowell, LCDR Matthew Sullivan, LCDR Cindy Eugene, LT Felicia Warren, LT Melinda Frank, LT Kelli Bonyeau, and LT Ijeoma Perry for their support in 2014!



LCDR Nisha Antoine  
Subcommittee Chair



LCDR Johnni Daniel  
Subcommittee Co-Chair



LCDR Monique Salter  
Subcommittee Co-Chair

# Membership Subcommittee

## *Mission*

The mission of the Membership Subcommittee is to recruit, involve and retain PHPAG members and to annually solicit, screen, nominate and process applicants for the PHPAG voting membership slots.

## *Accomplishments*

This year the PHPAG membership subcommittee was able to accomplish several tasks. At the end of February the committee finalized the 2013 PHPAG Survey results. Providing a report on the general memberships thoughts about the PHPAG. We were able to assist in the coordination of the Commissioned Corps Awareness Day on March 26<sup>th</sup>, later sending information out on how to join the PHPAG listserv to officers who became interested in the PHPAG after attending the event. During this time, the committee also reviewed and revised the voting membership scoring criteria in particular offering clearer instructions to applicants on what to include in the narratives. In April, the membership committee sat in on a call with the HSPAC Recruitment and Retention committee concerning the Health Services Assignment Assistance Program (HSAAP). The program will be utilizing available resources from the PAGs to help connect officers to suitable positions (ex. Peer-to Peer Networking). Also during this time frame, the membership subcommittee assisted in putting together the meet and greet for the COA symposium. In July, the subcommittee finalized the membership SOP. The draft was submitted to the executive committee for review. In August the membership subcommittee opened the nomination period for voting members and the Secretary and Chair- Elect positions. In October with assistance from LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian, the membership subcommittee chose 9 new voting members. The subcommittee also led a successful effort for voting members to select a new Secretary and Chair-Elect.



LCDR Andrea Peay  
Subcommittee Chair



LCDR Christian Bullock  
Subcommittee Co-Chair

# Mentoring Subcommittee

## *Mission*

The mission of the Mentoring Subcommittee of the PHPAG is to groom officers for professional success through peer to peer networking. The goals of the subcommittee include the following: 1) Provide officers with timely, factual and relevant information to encourage and support their professional growth as Health Services Officers in the PHS; 2) Instill in officers the importance of the PHS mission, officer responsibilities, and traditions of the Commissioned Corps and 3) Provide sound advice and guidance to officers.

## *Accomplishments*

The Mentoring Committee met monthly throughout 2014 to accomplish the following: created a flyer for distribution about the Peer-to-Peer Networking program which was distributed at COA and approved by the HSPAC and PHPAG leadership; collaborated with the PHPAG Membership Committee to create and disseminate a Welcome letter for new officers at the Officer Basic Course to inform them of the Peer-to-Peer Networking Program. The Committee decided to offer, as an option to officers, the possibility of matching officers in groups of three to decrease the waitlist for the Peer-to-Peer Networking Program.



LCDR Keisha Johnson  
Subcommittee Chair



LCDR Tanya Grandison  
Subcommittee Co-Chair

# ***PUBLIC HEALTH TRACK UPDATES***



## **Epidemiology Collaboration (EpiC) Track**

### ***Mission***

To provide resources and guidance to support HSO who either work as an epidemiologist or interested in epidemiology to develop and enhance their career within the Commissioned Corps.

### ***Accomplishments***

In 2014, the Epidemiology Collaboration Track had the following accomplishments: hosted a brown bag titled Disaster Epidemiology within the United States Public Health Service with over 60 people calling in; reviewed scientific abstracts for the Epidemiology Session at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium resulting in 8 presentations being selected; established EpiC co-liaison positions for epidemiology relevant USPHS PAGs and PACs outside of PHPAG, redesigned EpiC's Google based website that is used to archive EpiC's documents; collaborated with Generalist Group to identify at-risk populations in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area to apply a targeted outreach effort specifically aimed addressing the Surgeon General's initiatives (i.e. obesity, smoking); represented EpiC at April 18, 2014 OBC Graduation and discussed EpiC's goals and mission with new officers; joined the Review Editorial Board for the Epidemiology Section of Frontiers in Public Health, an open access journal that is affiliated with Nature magazine. EpiC increased membership by 3 new members and developed a list of upcoming epidemiology and public health related conferences/events that was sent monthly to EpiC members.



**LCDR Dina Passman**  
Track Lead



**LCDR Niketta Womack**  
Track Co-Lead



**LCDR Jonathan Kwan**  
Track Co-Lead

# Generalist Track

## *Mission*

The mission of the Generalist Track is to foster and promote career development through the planning of educational/training opportunities for a multi-disciplinary audience. Recently, we surveyed members within the generalist track and concluded that officers identify themselves as generalist by professional designation or their current assignment.

## *Accomplishments*

What have we done in 2014?

- Partnered with the HAPAG on an educational panel: “Success Stories: Project Officer Lessons Learned”
- Collaborated with the PHPAG EpiC Track for public health data to target a community engagement activity to promote specific HHS public health campaigns
- Published an article on Deployment Opportunities for Public Health Generalists
- Led two roundtable discussions during Category Day at the 2014 USPHS Symposium
- Participated in National Walking Day to promote the Surgeon General’s Every Body Walk! Initiative
- Presented on infectious diseases (highlighting ebola and flu) at a local middle school



LCDR Elizabeth Garza  
Track Lead



LCDR Jaclyn Ruiz  
Track Co-Lead

# Policy Track

## *Mission*

The mission of the PHPAG Policy Track is to provide guidance, resources and a forum to help cultivate the professional growth of Commissioned Corps Officers who serve, or have interest in serving, in a public health policy role.

## *Accomplishments*

The Policy Track Subcommittee had a successful 2014. The following activities were accomplished:

- Conducted a HSO Category Day roundtable that reached over 20 officers
- Hosted three webinars that reached over 50 officers: “Details: A Career Development Opportunity” (in collaboration with the PHPAG Career Development committee), “Aging and Public Health,” and “Vulnerable Populations, Chronic Disease Care, and Helpful Policies during Natural Disasters, Emergencies, and Hazards”
- Completed “Policy Writing Guidance” tip sheet



CDR Letia Boseman  
Track Lead



LCDR Elizabeth Russell  
Track Co-Lead

# Health Promotion/Health Education (HPHE) Track

## *Mission*

The Health Promotion/Health Education (HPHE) Track’s mission is to identify and promote educational and professional licensure opportunities so officers can advance their careers. This workgroup provides information on effective health promotion techniques and provides opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles. Due to the broad nature of the health promotion, we held presentations a diverse range of speakers.

## *Accomplishments*

The year began with presentations on working with different age groups. We finished our year with presentations on the landmark Surgeon General’s Smoking Cessation Report. The presenter explained the use of marketing methods, such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as campaigns and graphics to increase awareness and educate the public directly about how smoking negatively affects health and impinges on daily activities. Other topics included how to encourage activity in youths and adults through the National Prevention Strategy, as well as general tips on deployment in different geographic settings. We had a busy year exploring different methods of health promotion training.



**LCDR Margaret Whittaker-Caulk**  
Track Lead



**LT Jennifer Pieters**  
Track Co-Lead

# Global Health Track

## *Mission*

To support Health Service Officers who either work in a global health capacity or are interested in global health to develop and enhance their career within the Commissioned Corps.

## *Accomplishments*

- Presented at 2014 USPHS Symposium – HSO Category Day Roundtable, entitled, “New Global Health Track for the Public Health Professional Advisory Group”
- Delivered web-based panel presentation which consisted of four officers with experience in global health—“How to position yourself for global health work – Hear how these HSOs have been successful!”
- Presented Brownbag on CDC Ebola Support Mission Deployment delivered by LT Laura Vonnahme
- Updated the list of HHS Offices with Global Health Assignments
- Created Global Health Track informational slide for the PHPAG’s “OBC brag binder”
- Created a website for the track to serve as a central location for meeting minutes, agendas, and documents created by the track



**LT Stephanie Briguglio**  
Track Co-lead



**LT Tara Dondzila**  
Track Co-lead



## *FAVORITE QUOTES FROM OUR PAG'S LEADERSHIP*

We have had an extremely productive 2014 and it has prompted us to pause and reflect on inspirational quotes that motivate us to extend our personal best through services and leadership to the PHPAG. Here are a few of our favorites:

CDR Christye Brown, 2014 Chair

"Leadership is the art of giving people a platform for spreading ideas that work." - Seth Godin

CDR Melanie Ross, 2014 Chair Elect

"I've never met an effective leader who wasn't aware of his talents and working to sharpen them."

- Former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Wesley Clark

CDR LeJeana Hawkins, 2015 Chair Elect

"A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his share of the blame and a little less than his share of the credit."

-John Maxwell

LCDR Nisha Antoine, Communications Committee Chair

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

- Jack Welch

LCDR Elizabeth Garza, Chair, Generalist of Public Health Track

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams

LCDR Monique Salter, Financial Liaison

"A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position." - John Maxwell

CDR Matthew Weinburke, Awards Committee Chair

"Get mad, then get over it." - Colin Powell

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW PHPAG  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & VOTING MEMBERS**

Effective Jan 2015

**2015 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

CDR Melanie Ross, Chair

LCDR Lajeana Hawkins, Chair-Elect

LCDR Margaret Whittaker-Caulk, Executive Secretary

**NEW VOTING MEMBERS, Term Ending 2016**

CDR Adam Tahiru

LCDR Heidi Hudson

LCDR Jonathan Kwan

LCDR Jaclyn Ruiz

LCDR Niketta Womack

LCDR Frankeena Wright

LT Jessica Andrade

LT Stephanie Briguglio

LT Jennifer Pieters

**EXISTING MEMBERS, Term Ending 2015**

CDR Letia Boseman

CDR Donna Phillips

CDR Matthew Weinburke

LCDR Sara Azimi-Bolourian

LCDR Christian Bullock

LCDR Elizabeth Garza

LCDR Keisha Johnson

LCDR Dina Passman

LCDR Monique Salter

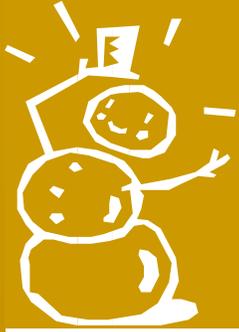
# Message From Our 2015 PHPAG Chair



**CDR Melanie Ross**  
**PHPAG Chair (2015)**

“It is with great honor to serve as the 2015 Chair of the Public Health Professional Advisory Group (PHPAG). As we approach the fifth year since the inception of the PHPAG, we can reflect on our purpose to serve in a resource and advisory role in the coordination, development, training and evaluation of activities related to the public health professional disciplines among Health Services Officers in the USPHS. 2015 holds many opportunities to build upon the vision of the charter members and maintain past successes. I envision working together to: establish succession planning through mentorship and leadership development among our voting and non-voting members to ensure a diverse pool of nominees for voting membership; conduct a comprehensive assessment to gain insight on the PHPAG membership profile; identify any gaps in the professional development needs of our officers; and increase promotional efforts of our brown bags, and other events. We will celebrate the recipient of the inaugural PHPAG Junior Officer of the Year Award, and showcase the work of the PHPAG and our officers at the 2015 COF Symposium through presentations, roundtables, posters and our annual PHPAG Social. Recruitment and retention efforts will continue through the OBC Open House events and will remain essential objectives for the new year. Through the dedication of the subcommittees and public health tracks, voting and non-voting members, we can make the 5-year anniversary of the PHPAG memorable. Thank you to CDR Christye Brown for her leadership in 2014 and all the past chairs, they have left a legacy which will be a welcomed challenge to sustain.”

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” – Henry Ford



# Announcements

## The Public Health Professional Advisory Group Coin

The PHPAG coins are made of solid brass and 1.75" in diameter. This newly designed coin features the USPHS seal on the front and our PHPAG symbol which displays various public health disciplines and concentrations representing the skill sets of our diverse cadre of Health Services Officers. The PHPAG coin is available now and we thank you for your support!

front



back



Note: Staff on front of coin is gold in color, not red.

Ordering Instructions: Contact LCDR Monique Salter for an online form.

Email: [Monique.salter@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Monique.salter@fda.hhs.gov) Phone: 202-402-2987

Payment: Make checks or money orders payable to "USPHS Commissioned Officers Foundation." Write PHPAG Coin on the memo line.

Shipping and Handling: USPS Priority Mail Flat Rate, \$5.50, and add \$0.75 for tracking.

**Special thanks to the PHPAG Communications Subcommittee for their efforts in creating this  
3rd Annual PHPAG Newsletter**

## Meet Your Editors



Chief Editor  
LCDR Johnni Daniel, MPH  
Epidemiologist  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Assistant Editor  
LT Felicia Warren, MPH  
Public Health Analyst  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

\*\*Not pictured: Assistant Editor, LCDR Jamar Barnes, MPH, Project Officer, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention