



SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP OF THE COMMISSIONED
CORPS OF THE US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

SWPAG NEWSLETTER

VOLUME V, ISSUE III

SEPTEMBER 2013

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2013 SWPAG Meetings

25 Sept at 1400 EST

Call-in Number (888) 220-3090, Participant Code: 14140

4 Dec at 1400 EST

SWPAG Newsletter
created by
CDR Julie Niven, LCSW,
DCSW, MAC

CONGRATULATIONS!

2013 Promotion Results for USPHS Social Workers!

CONGRATULATIONS! to all!

Selected for Captain:

Brenda Gearhart
Matthew Kleiman
Cynthia Spells

Selected for Commander:

Sean Allain
Sherri Bisci
Tarsha Cavanaugh
Rachel Darnell-Miller
Nicole Gaskin-Laniyan
Malaysia Gresham
Brooke Wallace
Jonathan White

Selected for Lieutenant Commander:

Dustin Bergerson
Holly Berilla
Alexia Blyther
Kenneth Green
Kimberley Jones



LT Garcia Israel Wins the 2012 Juan Carlos Finlay Award

Submitted by LT Garcia Israel, LICSW



LT Garcia Israel, LICSW was selected by the Hispanic Officers Advisory Committee as the recipient of the 2012 Juan Carlos Finlay Award for Notable Achievement. The award honors activities that improve access to and/or health services for Hispanics and other minorities. His service with the Health Resources and Services Administration 's Bureau of Primary Health Care/Office of National Assistance and Special Populations provides access to primary health care the most vulnerable populations.

LT Garcia, LICSW is a Public Health Analyst in the Office of National Assistance and Special Populations, Health Resources and Services Administration 's Bureau of Primary Health Care. In this capacity he has responsibility of overseeing national programs that provide training and technical assistance to promote access to primary health care for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and their families through the Migrant and Community Health Centers, (M/CHCs). The M/CHCs have an overall impact to over 20 million patients nationwide of which 34.45% of those patients are Hispanics, and approximately 1,000,000 are Farmworkers. LT Garcia serves as a subject matter expert on migrant health.

His outstanding service to the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker and other vulnerable populations was most fittingly recognized by the 2012 Juan Carlos Finlay Award.

LT Garcia Israel graduated in 2005 with a Master of Science in Social Work with concentration in social policy from Columbia University School of Social Work in the City of New York. He also holds an independent license to practice clinical social work. He was born and raised in Mexico and currently lives in Gaithersburg, Maryland with his wife and two boys of ages 8 and 4 years old.

National Parks, Amusement Parks, and Physical Activity – A Ton of Sun and Fun!



Submitted by
LCDR Sonjia Howard and LCDR Monique Salter of the JOAG MWR Subcommittee

Now that fall is here, consider planning an excursion to a National Park. As a CAC Card (DoD Form 1173) holder, you and up to three (3) of your dependents (over the age of 16), are entitled to **FREE** annual passes to visit [America's Beautiful National Parks](#), which include [fish and wildlife services](#). (Please note there is no charge for dependents under 15.) If you are 62 or older you qualify for a lifetime [Senior Pass](#), and if you have a permanent disability you may qualify for a free lifetime [Access Pass](#). These non-transferrable passes can be obtained in person at one of the numerous [National Park Service](#) sites. For questions about any of these passes, contact 1-888-ASK-USGS and press 1 (888-275-8747, option 1), or mfedrecpass@usgs.gov. Autumn is a time to explore, relax, and learn. Take time to bond with family, friends, co-workers, and community by engaging in fun and fellowship. Here are sites of interest to inspire and discover:

Bureau of Land Management <http://www.blm.gov>

Bureau of Reclamation <http://www.usbr.gov>

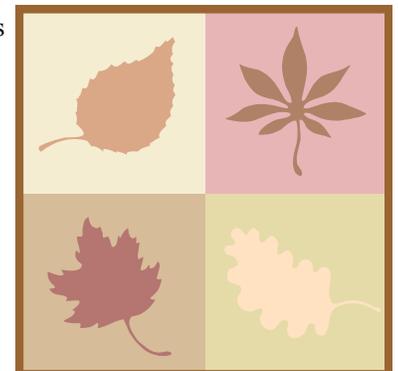
USDA Forest Service <http://www.fs.fed.us>

National Park Service <http://www.nps.gov>

Passion for Amusement Parks Is Not Just for Kids: The 411 about Information, Tour, and Travel Information, Tour, and Travel (ITT) offices, also known as *travel centers*, are located within the **Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) offices on most all military installations. ITT is committed to offering uniformed service members the best possible travel services by experienced and certified staff. These centers have state of the art reservation systems, and can assist you with most of your travel needs to include, but not limited to airlines, hotels worldwide, car rentals, cruises, tours, and Amtrak services. More importantly, ITT centers sell discounted tickets to local shows and attractions that include amusement and theme parks. Why not get the thrill of a roller coaster by visiting an ITT office near you to get discount tickets to your favorite amusement park? To find a military installation near you, click the following link: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>. Click *Installation Locator* and search by installation name or state, and then browse *View a Directory of Installations*. Once you have found an installation near you, the *Website* link will take to the Installations' **official** page. Once there, search for MWR/ITT/Travel and Information Center, etc. Be sure to utilize the Information Line if necessary. Now that you have the 411 on how to purchase discounted tickets – Get out and explore. GO roller coaster!**

Physical Activity for the Entire Family. If you want to kick off the fall with a new fitness plan or continue on a regimen you have already started, look no further than your local military installation. Most locations offer some form of exercise options for the entire family. If you visit your local installation, it would not be uncommon to find a full-service gym with amenities such as aerobics classes, swimming lessons, basketball, and tennis courts. If you are interested in intramural sports, there are even opportunities such as co-ed softball and racquetball. For additional information on fitness options located on a local military installation, reach out to your local military installation by telephone or visit in person. Are you a walker, mud runner, or marathon runner? There are races across the nation, hosted by civilian organizations and branches of the uniformed services, throughout the year. For instance, the well-known [Marine Corps Marathon](#) is held in October of each year. Other examples of races, walk/run events are:

[The Army Ten Miler](#); [Susan B. Komen Race for a Cure](#); [Rebel Race](#); [Military Challenge](#); [Tribute to the Military](#); [Act Today for Military Families](#); and [Second Annual Military Appreciation 5K Walk/Run](#). There are so many opportunities to get and maintain fitness. Be creative in your search and remember fitness is fun so “walk” and “run” together!



Mentorship through Sponsorship

By LCDR Malaysia Gresham and LCDR Kendall Bolton

Sponsor: LCDR Malaysia Gresham

Mentorship is one of the foundational aspects of leadership and career development. Sponsorship, on the other hand, is the formal pairing of officers to facilitate acclimation to new duty stations and to the Corps. Sponsorship is an opportunity to provide support and mentorship to officers, ensuring a smooth transition into their unfamiliar roles and/or careers.

While serving the United States Air Force, I was afforded sponsorship when PCSing to each new duty station through an official sponsorship program. This resource was invaluable to my transition and acclimation to each new duty station and community. A sponsor is a person who typically makes contact with the PCSing or new arriving officer prior to their move. They assist with many aspects of support including information on areas to live (real estate rentals or sales), school systems and child enrollment, transportation to and from work, medical care, uniforms, entertainment, hobbies, information about the base or new agency, provide a warm welcome when the officer arrives on station, and introduction to new leadership, amongst a host of other things. Due to the overwhelming support I received in the past, I adopted the principle of sponsorship in my USPHS career.

Sponsors may be different in the level of support they provide. The role of sponsors will vary based on the arriving officer's needs and family members to include pets if applicable. My first experience with sponsorship included an officer escorting me to the uniform shop to get fitted for new uniforms. The first day I arrived to my first-ever duty station, I was overwhelmed with joy when my flight commander's wife presented me with a basket of homemade cookies along with other goodies. Additionally, I found it uniquely helpful when sponsors informed me about the dangers of living in particular areas or areas that were designated as "off limits" to active duty personnel.

As a sponsor, I typically treat officers as if they were family members moving to the area. As such, I offer support according to their particular needs. At times, officers/colleagues may require unique support including watching their pet while they lived in temporary lodging, offering a place to stay for someone who is waiting on their new home to be ready, and bringing individuals to church who need additional support. Sponsorship demonstrates commitment and dedication to not only the agency officers serve, but the officers who are being welcomed. The more support provided to officers, the higher their level of commitment will be to the agency and the representation of the USPHS with pride. In addition, those officers will be more likely to support other officers in the same capacity.

New Arriving Officer: LCDR Kendall Bolton

"Where is my desk?" "Where can I put my lunch?" "When will I get a computer?" "Who are all these people?" These and many other questions can become very overwhelming when an officer arrives at a new duty station.

I began my first assignment with much excitement, ready to join an extended family of uniformed service

...Continued on page 7

A Glimpse of Social Work on the Reservation

Submitted by LCDR Janet Sanchez, LMSW

Being a Social worker on an Indian reservation is a challenge even when being a member of the tribe and community. Having ties to the community with close family and friends is usually not enough because the need of the community is so much greater than that. There are many social problems that need to be address and there are many factors that contribute to these problems and issues. It's like when coming directly out of graduate school, it is an amazing feeling and there are many ideas and plans you think about doing when you get in the real world. As time passes, some of us loose that feeling and become immune to the community and what it is going through. It becomes difficult.

As a tribal member and professional, I find it hard to impose change and new information to community members who have never seen a town farther than the city that is four hours away. This community is rural, isolated with limited resources. They live for now and not for the future. Their survival mode is to get through this day. As a result, the changes we impose and the prevention education we provide is somewhat neglected. People wish to live their own lives, the way they want and this impacts our ability to share significant prevention material and information.

It is amazing how change is so difficult for the community members, yet they retain their old ways. It is not uncommon to see the tribe being prideful of their beautiful culture and tradition. We continue to see it today through ceremonial dances done for young girls who become of age. Could it be the importance of culture and tradition that is keeping this community going? I believe so.

As a social worker, thinking outside the box is useful. Getting the younger generation to buy into the teachings of the preventions and letting them know they can help others is a challenge. But it is possible. We attempt to target the young adults in this community to teach them about the cycle of domestic violence, what is child abuse and neglect, what does alcohol do to you, and why it is important to be aware of these issues and concerns. Most are receptive and take information home with them, this is a plus for us. The younger generation is seeking change and they are becoming more educated, so we are hopeful that they will be the next generation where we will see positive change.

As for the elders, they will listen but they hardly will change in their ways. Some will gradually make change, with promptness and support. Otherwise, just visiting and talking with the elders allow for open discussion.

Overall, being culturally sensitive to the Native Americans way of life is important. Change will not happened when you get here, but change will happen when the community is ready and keep in mind that when that change happens, you had an impact. Keep in mind as to why you are a social worker and let us get that amazing feeling back to make an improvement and change for the lives of our future, our people.

Coming to the reservation may seem frightening but just remember, we are here to survive just like everyone else. Native American do have cell phones, live in houses and even have computers. We are in progress to change.

As a social worker from a small rez and as an enrolled tribal member, let us continue to work towards the common goal of making life better for our clients and giving them hope.

...Continued from page 5

members. And then I walked into the hospital where I was assigned. My “office” was any open space I could find in the small hospital library and I was given a large checklist of in-processing items I was to complete. I felt incredibly overwhelmed and uncertain of my role in my new agency and the Corps. I eventually found my way and became comfortable in this role, but the process was less than positive.

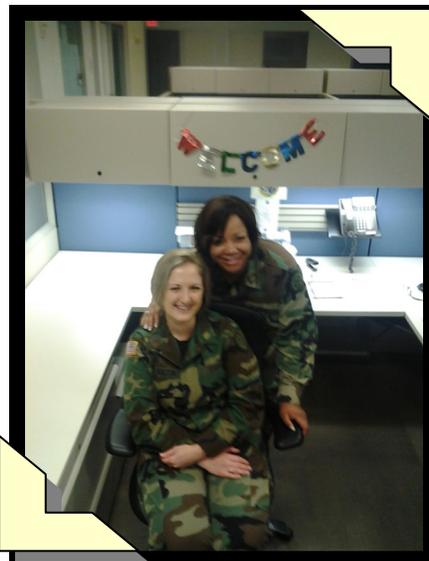
Fast forward to my current assignment...Prior to my arrival, I was emailed a map of the building and parking lot, exact directions to the agency, and a plan to meet someone in person upon my arrival. I was literally walked around the building to meet key individuals within my division/program and to ensure I had full access to the areas I needed. I was shown to my desk, which had a big “welcome” sign on it. I was handed off to a wonderful PHS officer (who was responsible for the sign) and she immediately provided the information I needed to access trainings and orientations. She assured me I wasn’t alone and has been readily available over the past month for any questions I have, from how to access the shared drive, to loaning me a cover when mine was lost in the move, to how to plan out a metro trip.

The difference in the two experiences is worlds apart. This assignment has started off positive and I immediately feel like part of the team. Feeling overwhelmed has been replaced by feeling confident that the answers are only a question away. It is obvious to me that sponsorship is critical for officers to successfully acclimate to their new assignments.

Having a formally assigned officer who is committed to assisting the new arriving officer is key for sponsorship. While everyone offers to help “with anything needed”, everyone has busy schedules and sometimes, the newbie ends up sitting at an empty desk, unsure who to meet with. The formally assigned officer is one who agreed to put in the time needed to assist their fellow officer and be readily available. This partnership is critical for the tone an officer begins an assignment and should not be taken lightly.

Take away:

We recommend that sponsorship be incorporated into each agency where PHS officers serve. In addition, we highly recommend that officers become proactive within their respective agencies to identify any incoming PHS officers. Welcome packets and orientation binders are incredibly handy, to include directions and building information (especially for duty stations that require special security access). Inprocessing checklists may also be provided or developed to meet agency specific needs and requirements. Become a sponsor today while enacting one of our most important core values of service by “demonstrating a commitment to public health stewardship of time, resources, and information about sponsorship, please Malaysia.gresham@tma.osd.mil or Kendall.bolton@tma.osd.mil.” If you need tips or contact LCDR Gresham at LCDR Bolton at



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The Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) signed Commissioned Corps Instruction (CCI) CC412.01 <http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/documents/CC412.01.pdf> on 21 June 2013. This CCI replaces the Uniforms and Appearance Instruction from 2010 and includes the ban on the use of all tobacco products while in uniform.

The POM for the 2013 is now available at:

http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/documents/POM13_005.pdf

The 2013 Benchmarks for HSOs is available at:

http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/HEALTH%20SERVICES%20Benchmarks%20Final%202013.pdf

The 2014 Benchmarks for HSOs is available at:

http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/HSO%20Benchmarks%202014.pdf



...Other News ...



The SWPAG Career Development (CD) Subcommittee actively seeks and disseminates information on career opportunities for professional development, vacancies, and special assignments. In an effort to accomplish its mission the CD Subcommittee has created a calendar that lists various trainings/webinars, conferences and continuing education credit opportunities that might be of interest to our members. More current months will contain the most information. You should check back frequently as we will update the calendar as we learn of CD offerings around the country. Please email questions/comments, suggestions for making the calendar better and information about trainings/webinars, conferences and continuing education opportunities to LCDR Maria Fields, Chair, SWPAG Career Development Subcommittee, at maria.v.fields.mil@mail.mil Requests for more specific information about any of the events on the calendar should be directed to the event host.

ANYTIME

Ethics

<http://www.aswb.org/education/courses/index.php>

Ethics: Boundary Crossings and the Ethics of Multiple Role Relationships

<http://www.continuingcourses.net/active/courses/course066.php>

Aging, Mental Health, and Long-term Care

<http://www.continuingcourses.net/active/courses/course041.php>

Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/TrainingCalendar.aspx>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<http://learn.nctsn.org/course/category.php?id=3>

Center for Deployment Psychology

<http://deploymentpsych.org/training/online-courses>



*The Mission of the U.S. Public Health Service
 Commissioned Corps is to
 protect, promote, and advance the health and safety
 of our Nation.*

For more information about our PAG, visit the SWPAG website at
<http://usphs-hso.org/?q=pags/swpag>

2013 SWPAG Meetings

25 Sept at 1400 EST

4 Dec at 1400 EST

Call-in Number (888) 220-3090,

Participant Code: 14140

(for the 25 Sept Meeting)

SWPAG Colleagues:

The Communications Committee encourages officers to submit any news/events information about fellow social workers, something you've accomplished, clinical issues, job/agency opportunities, recruiting ideas or strategies, career enhancement suggestions, educational opportunities (CEU's), publicity events, deployment/OFRD training experiences, CCA events etc. for publication in the SWPAG newsletter. Please have submissions cut and paste ready.

Thank you!

Please respond to CDR Niven at:

julie.a.niven.mil@mail.mil *with submissions*