



## **Commissioned Officers Association (COA)**

### **Mission & Overview**

The Commissioned Officers Association (COA) is a nationally recognized member-based organization that was formed to improve and protect the public health of the United States by advocating for the U.S. Public Health Service and its Commissioned Corps officers.

The COA is the only organization working exclusively on behalf of active, inactive and retired PHS Commissioned Corps officers. With more than 90 local branches, COA plays a vital role in addressing the needs of its members both within the U.S. and globally. COA serves as a legislative advocate, a media consultant, and a career development specialist to its members by providing:

- Representation and advocacy
- Education and training for health professionals
- Studies and research
- Collaboration with related organizations
- Dissemination of public and professional information

Recent achievements in legislative advocacy include the transferability of the Post 9/11 GI Bill and the inclusion of PHS officers for the first time in federal whistleblower protections. Other accomplishments COA has made through advocacy include the Senate passage of amendments that fixed the Survivor Benefit Plan and provide for concurrent receipt of military retiree pay and VA disability compensation. The COA's sister non profit agency, also provides educational opportunities such as the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, held annually.

*Please visit their website ([www.coausphs.org](http://www.coausphs.org)) and consider membership in both National COA and your local branch!*

### **Membership**

COA membership consists of active regular, active reserve, retired, and former Commissioned Officers of the USPHS.

Feel free to contact the current Scientist Representative on the COA Board of Directors to get involved or learn more: <http://www.coausphs.org/wweboard.cfm>.

## **Why Join COA?**

COA offers its members a number of benefits:

### *Capitol Hill Representation*

COA legislation on Capitol Hill continually supports all Commissioned Corps officers - active duty, reserve, and retired.

### *Local Representation*

COA branches generate new venues for meeting fellow officers within your local area while providing a forum for the discussion of concerns within the Commissioned Corps.

### *Annual Meeting*

With a mixture of business and pleasure, COA's sister non-profit agency, the Commissioned Officers Foundation for the Advancement of Public Health (COF)'s annual meeting invites colleagues from around the country to gather to discuss new scientific presentations while stimulating open forums about health related issues.

<http://symposium.phscof.org/>

### *Members' Web Site*

COA members have access to a "members only" section of the web site that offers up-to-date member news and resources.

### *Leadership Opportunities*

Officers who are members of COA have an opportunity to represent their categories on either local COA branches or the national board of COA as a director, or member of various committees to assist in advancing the mission of the United States Public Health Service and ensuring the viability of the PHS Commissioned Corps.

### *Communications*

*FRONTLINE* - Winner of the APEX Award for Publication Excellence - is COA's newsletter which provides reports on monthly activities and items of interest to COA members about the United States Public Health Service and the Association.

### *Scholarship Programs*

PHS COF and the PHS Women's Club offer thousands of dollars in college scholarships for children and spouses of COA members.

COF also offers a Junior Officer/Civil Servant Scholarship. The scholarship will cover the full registration cost of the Symposium. The Junior Officer Scholarship is available for officers at a rank of O-3 (LT) or below.

### *Insurance Programs*

COA enables members to participate in several low-cost insurance programs, including Group Term Life, Long-Term Disability (LTD), In-Hospital Cash Plan, and

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Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D). With the exception of the LTD plan, participation in these programs may continue after leaving the PHS as long as membership in COA remains current. COA Group Insurance Programs information can be found on: [www.coainsurance.com](http://www.coainsurance.com)

### **Partners**

PHS COF is an affiliate of the Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service. It was established to support the efforts of the U.S. Public Health Service by providing an array of programs and services including education and research efforts and sponsorship of the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. For more information please visit [www.phscof.org](http://www.phscof.org)