



United States Public Health Service



Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC)

Annual Report September 2016 – August 2017

Prepared by:
CDR Jennifer Adjemian
Scientist PAC Chair



United States Public Health Service



A. SciPAC EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTIVITY

The following Scientists served as members of SciPAC's Executive Board from September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017:

CDR Jennifer Adjemian

Scientist PAC Chair

Deputy Chief, Epidemiology Unit, Division of Intramural Research

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

NIH Qrts 15 B-1, 8 West Drive, MSC 2665

Bethesda, MD 20892-2665

Jennifer.Adjemian@nih.gov

CDR Robin Toblin

Scientist PAC Vice-Chair

Branch Chief, Research Transition Office

Walter Reed Army Institute of Research Chair

503 Robert Grant Ave, Bldg 509

Silver Spring, MD 20910

robin.l.toblin.mil@mail.mil

CDR Jessica Chiaruttini

Scientist PAC COF Liaison

Food Drug Administration

19701 Fairchild

Irvine, CA 92612

Jessica.Chiaruttini@fda.hhs.gov

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

Food and Drug Administration

Silver Spring, MD 20993

Qiao.Bobo@fda.hhs.gov

CDR Matthew Murphy

Chair ex-Officio

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

4770 Buford Highway, MS F-78

Atlanta, GA 30341

mmurphy@cdc.gov



United States Public Health Service



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) 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 went above and beyond to accomplish many other goals, achievements and initiatives that substantially benefited the Scientist PAC. One of the first initiatives that we successfully achieved was to improve the format of the monthly SciPAC calls to eliminate unwanted background noise and disturbances, which greatly improved the efficiency and quality of the PAC meetings. This operational year also represented the first fully open recruitment window for SciPAC in over four years. The EB established new procedures for reviewing and ranking these applicants. Ultimately, we had nearly 160 individuals apply and using this review process, moved half of them forward toward joining the USPHS. Additionally, this year the EB Chair established a new program focused on promotion-specific mentoring, which was utilized by 30 officers in need of assistance with promotion. This effort received tons of positive feedback from junior and senior Scientist officers, and will now be standard service and program available to all officers in need of promotion-specific mentoring.

Additionally, our subcommittees achieved many great accomplishments this year, which include the following:

- The Awards Subcommittee helped push the timeline of the awards process up so that the recipients could have enough planning time to be able to attend the symposium to receive the award. This subcommittee was also integral in renaming the Junior Officer of the Year award to honor the life and memory of LCDR Shalon Irving, an exceptional junior officer that our PAC sadly lost this year.
- The Career Development Subcommittee included an additional review service this year that enabled those up for promotion to get feedback on their Officer Statement.
- The Mentoring Subcommittee launched a new service aimed at agency-specific mentoring, which is a strong resource for officers interested in transferring across agencies, or even in need of greater SciPAC-specific mentoring at their own agency.



United States Public Health Service



- The Policy Subcommittee substantially increased its scope, roles, and activities by revising the standard operating procedures (SOP). In addition to creating many new leadership opportunities for SciPAC, this subcommittee now newly provides guidance on all issues that Corps officers, from uniform wear to medical needs to social media use and even fundraising options.
- The Recruitment, Retention and Readiness Subcommittee expanded its activities to the extent that the EB and voting membership voted this operational year to separate this subcommittee into two subcommittees starting in the next operational year, with Recruitment and Retention as one and Readiness as a standalone subcommittee.
- The Rules and Membership Subcommittee fully reviewed and updated the SciPAC SOP. All voting members voted on the changes that were made, which received majority approval.
- The Science Subcommittee compiled the SciPAC bibliography, which now features over 3000 publications and presentations from our officers from 2010-2015.
- The Visibility Subcommittee established a new and highly utilized SciPAC Facebook group, which currently has one-third of all Scientists as members. They also increased the timeliness of the SciPAC newsletters and highlighted high-impact publications and newsworthy initiatives from our officers.
- The Website Subcommittee helped build an archive of key SciPAC documents on max.gov which were previously nonexistent, at least in an editable format, prior to this effort.

Month (2016-2017)	Nonvoting Members	Voting Members	TOTAL
September	77	17	94
October	94	16	110
November	104	18	122
December	94	19	113
January	98	16	114
February	98	20	118
March	84	21	105
April	87	19	106
May	75	12	87
June	--	--	--
July	78	11	89
August	83	20	103



United States Public Health Service



Summary

The 2016-2017 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.



United States Public Health Service



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: CAPT Ingrid Pauli

Co-Chair: CAPT William 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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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



United States Public Health Service



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.

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

Accomplishments:

- Ensured timely development and dissemination of calls for nominations for each of the four SciPAC Awards.
- Officially renamed the Junior Scientist Officer of the Year award "The Shalon Irving Memorial Junior Scientist Officer of the Year Award."
- Revised the Nomination Cover Sheet for all four SciPAC awards.
- 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.
- Selected subcommittee members to comprise the selection board for the four SciPAC awards.
- Coordinated the review and selection process for all four SciPAC awards.
- Submitted awardee's pictures and brief biographies to the SciPAC Website Subcommittee for posting to the SciPAC website.
- Ordered award plaques for all four SciPAC awards and coordinate presentation of the plaques at the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Developed Category Day award presentation script and accompanying PowerPoint presentation.
- Updated the Awards Subcommittee SOP detailing those functions required by the Subcommittee to clarify and reflect the current processes used by the Subcommittee.

Impact:

- Ensured recognition of Scientist Officers for the exceptional service through the Scientist the Responder of the Year, Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards.
- Ensured enduring recognition of the contributions of LCDR Shalon Irving to SciPAC through the establishment of a memorial award.
- Ensured SOP accurately reflected the current processes used by the Subcommittee.

Recommendations:

- Continue to update the Awards Subcommittee SOP every year.



United States Public Health Service



- Ensure that the Awards Subcommittee SOP remains consistent with the SciPAC Charter and other governing documents.
- Expand the duties of the Awards Subcommittee to include providing guidance on the process for submitting awards through the PAC and develop a process for tracking and reporting on award packages submitted through the PAC.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Chair: CAPT Michael Smith

Co-Chair: LCDR Zewditu (Zewde) Demissie

Co-Chair: LCDR Lana Rossiter

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 8 CAPTs, 25 CDRs and 4 LCDRs to be members of the CV Review Team.
- Harmonized the 2012 CV guidance and the 2016 CV summary sheet guidance documents into one document. Additionally, the guidance was updated to provide additional clarity and the sample CV summary sheet, sample CV, and sample continuing education guidance were updated with additional concrete examples.
- Consulted with the Executive Board about how to define collateral duties which supported the removal of collateral duties as a standalone item on the 2018 Scientist category benchmarks.
- Provided a draft benchmark guidance slide set to the SciPAC Executive Board.
- Coordinated a training session after the April 2017 SciPAC call from RADM Palmer Orlandi, entitled “The Successes and Recommendations from a Scientist Flag Officer.”
- Members of the SciPAC OBC Team attended 5 OBC open houses and graduation ceremonies, and presented letters and Scientist category coins to 12 new Scientist officers.
- Revised and approved the following sections of the SciPAC Handbook: Mentoring, Promotion, Uniforms, COER, and Awards Overview.

Impact:

- A total of 34 CVs and 22 OSs were reviewed for officers who were eligible for promotion in 2017.
- The harmonized CV guidance document provides up-to-date guidance to all scientist officers eligible for promotion in 2018.
- Scientist officers can update their CV and can remove reference to their collateral duties. This removal reduces some confusion in the CV development process.



United States Public Health Service



- The benchmark guidance slide set providing the first-ever explicit written guidance on the benchmarks and activities that officers can take on to meet the benchmarks.
- The five revised handbook sections provide updated guidance for scientists.
- Officers were able to hear from a Flag Officer about career successes and recommendations.
- Ensured representatives attended the OBC open house and graduation events for all Scientists who attended OBC.

Recommendations:

- A training session should be considered after the September or October 2017 SciPAC conference call on the newly harmonized and updated CV guidance document.
- Consider developing draft CVs for different Scientist disciplines, e.g., epidemiologist, clinical psychologist, lab scientist, etc.

CATEGORY DAY

Chair: CDR Seth Green

Co-Chair: LCDR John Pesce

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.
- Solicit abstracts from Scientists 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 that coincides with category day.
- 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.
- Provide recognition to winners of yearly Category awards through the presentation of plaques and holding a ceremony.
- Provide the CPO with an opportunity to address the category to discuss current topics that are of significance to officers and to accept questions from the category.
- Conduct a post-Category Day evaluation to inform future Category Day planning.
- Review and update the SOP annually.



United States Public Health Service



Accomplishments:

- Utilized evaluation feedback from the year prior to alter the focus of the agenda toward networking, mentoring, and modified presentation styles.
- Successfully developed, organized and implemented a diverse and scientifically relevant agenda for Scientist Category Day (June 7th) at the 2017 USPHS Symposium which was held in Chattanooga (see agenda).
- Solicited abstracts for Category Day presentations in three tracks: Science/Epidemiology, Program/Policy, and Deployment/Leadership. Also offered 2 Presentation Styles: Traditional (15 minute briefing style) and SciTALK (5 minute format akin to TedTalk & Ignite).
- Received and reviewed 16 abstracts.
 - Selected 6 presentations for inclusion in the Category Day agenda as SciTALKs.
 - Selected 4 presentations for inclusion in the Category Day agenda as Traditional presentations.
 - Presentations reflected the diverse contributions of Scientist officers from multiple disciplines.
 - Presentations included one focused on data collected by SciPAC regarding recruitment and retention trends.
- Modified presentation style afforded more opportunity to showcase a wider array of work being done by officers as well as increased funding for officers to travel to Category Day.
- The agenda included a panel discussion focused on Scientist officers with deployment roles and experiences. Officers on the panel included officers from multiple agencies and included: CAPT Ross Spears, CAPT Margaret Riggs, LCDR Neil Bonzagni, CDR Jennie Thomas, LCDR Eddie O'Neill, LCDR Michelle Rodriguez, LCDR Tyann Blessington, LCDR John Pesce, LCDR Oliver Ou.
- 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 her to be a keynote for COA. Thus, the team found another speaker. Dr. John Balbus, MD, MPH, to speak on environmental impacts throughout the public health spectrum.
- 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 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.
- CAPT Sanders provided the State of the Category address as our CPO with questions solicited from officers.
- Reworked the awards ceremony to accommodate for memorial service.
- 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 bowling at a popular local establishment.
- Collected and analyzed 26 post-Category Day evaluations completed by Category Day attendees and non-attendees. Of the attendees, we had a 50% response rate, a decrease of 30% from last year's rate of 80%.



United States Public Health Service



- Reviewed and updated the Category Day Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures.
- Provided personalized letters of appreciation the day after the operational year ended.
- Maintained the number of teams based on feedback from previous years evaluation and experience at 10 but added Team Lead and Deputy Leads to each team, also kept the secretary role, increasing the number of leadership opportunities 13. Team sizes were kept small to ensure opportunities to learn and move up if desired next year.
 - Teams were: Abstract, Panel, Keynote Speaker, Social, Mentoring, Awards-State of the Category (includes Awards SC liaison), Speed Networking, Agency Networking, Symposium Liaison, and On-Site Logistics.

Impact:

- >50 Scientist officers actively participated in the 2017 Category Day, providing each with extensive opportunities to network within and contribute to the SciPAC and develop professionally.
- This represented a 25% increase in 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 Chattanooga being 1.5 hours from Atlanta and a brief flight from DC, we anticipated higher turnout and were correct. The actual number attended is somewhat above 50 however a number of attendees registered as Scientists yet we were unable to find any connection to SciPAC itself and attributed this to individuals with PhDs who identify with word Scientist.
- 23 officers demonstrated officership while also receiving professional development and experience by serving as speakers and/or panelists for Category Day.
- 13 officers held leadership positions enhancing their officership and leadership skills.
- Almost 35 Scientist officers attended the SciPAC Category Day social held that evening with ~20 bowling, facilitating camaraderie among fellow Scientist officers and additional networking opportunities in a casual setting.

Recommendations:

- Maintain Team Lead (TL)/Deputy Team Lead (DL) structure to provide pathways for officers to progress in Category Day Subcommittee. Start early as establishing the Category Day agenda is a time- presentation titles and names of presenters must be finalized along with the Category Day agenda by early sensitive issue. This is especially true for the Abstract, Keynote, and Panel Discussion teams as December.
- Maintain team structure with two caveats: 1. Scrap SotC as a team based on TL feedback from a former Chair and 2. Limit number on teams based on need and delegate to TL/DL to find members based on Chair/Co-Chair concurrence.
- Chair/Co-Chair need to pay close attention to the topics to be presented to ensure a diverse and inclusive representation of ideas and disciplines that reflects our own categorical makeup.



United States Public Health Service



- If travel funds are available for a Keynote speaker again through COA begin this process earlier on to avoid the last minute nature of this eventuality. With this in mind, identify and secure a keynote speaker earlier on than has been the case both this and last year to ensure a smooth continuity for planning and logistics. We've had our Keynote poached two years in a row leading to last minute efforts to secure a speaker.
- Continue with the rigorous attention to the agenda and time allotments for State of the Category, presentations, keynote/panels to ensure sufficient time for Q&A.
 - Timekeeper has worked well in this regard, continue on site on Category Day.
- Limit the number of officers on a panel to no more than four (Deployment Panel a good example of too many).
- The evaluation team should provide more time for post conference to obtain a higher response rate. This year was a significant decrease from last year. Recommendation: Complete survey within 1 week post event so adequate time can be allotted to increase response rate as needed.
 - Consider online evaluation available day after Category Day.
 - Assign Eval Team to send regular reminders.
- Recommendation: Hand out completed SOPs to TL/DL as early as possible.

MENTORING

Chair: CDR Jennifer Bodart

Co-Chair: CDR Matthew Breiding

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:

- The Mentor Matching team:
 - On-boarded one new mentor matching coordinator for CDC matches (LCDR Deborah Dee).
 - Facilitated 31 mentor-mentee matches during 9/1/2017-7/24/2017, with mentees including 19 CDC, 5 FDA mentees, 2 NIH, 2 BOP, 1 OASH, 1 CCHQ, and 1 USDA (with 4 pending from CDC officers that will be completed by the end of the OY)



United States Public Health Service



- Queried all officers (nearly 60 officers) with inactive agreements to remind them to renew agreements if desired.
- Solicited and input records on 68 currently active mentor-mentee agreements.
- Solicited and received applications from 19 new mentor volunteers.
- Maintained database on 190 mentees, 135 mentors, and 219 current or historic mentor match relationships.
- The Mentor-led Discussion Team identified five topics to mentors talking points for to initiate conversations with their mentees. These topics are: Volunteer events; military benefits; deployment teams; SciPAC committees; JOAG. Draft talking points for each topic will be completed by the end of the 16/17 Operational Year.
- The Mentoring Survey Team drafted a new survey to gauge the mentoring needs of the Scientist Category.
- The Promotion Panel Team conveyed the results of the O-5 Promotion Panels by through a written report to the Executive Board, presentation of findings after a SciPAC call in November 2016 and publication of an article in the winter SciPAC newsletter.
- The Promotion Panel Team held Promotion Panels for O-6 officers promoted in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Preliminary findings were shared during Category Day 2017 and a full report is being drafted for EB review.
- The Category Day Team provided multiple mentoring related opportunities and events:
 - Panel discussion with officers recently promoted to O-5 and O-6 to share their thoughts and suggestions for promotion.
 - Provided on-site one on one mentor matching between 6 junior officers and 5 senior officers.
 - Facilitated an event about leadership that was attended not only by SciPAC members but also officers from other Categories.
- Mentoring Subcommittee member LCDR Lana Rossiter represented SciPAC on a 11-category panel about current mentoring activities at the pre-conference leadership workshop focused on mentoring.
- Revised the subcommittee's standard operating procedures (SOP) to align it with the subcommittee's current structure and functions. The revised SOP is currently awaiting Executive Board approval.
- Developed a template team procedures document and requested the subcommittee teams develop procedures to detail their operations.
- The mission of the Agency Specific Mentor team is to keep an inventory of officers at the different OPDIVs they operate, where they can serve as mentors to scientist officers who are interested or in the process of changing OPDIVs to where the mentor is stationed at. In order to accomplish this mission, an email was drafted within the team and sent to the officer scientists. An inventory was then developed with a list of officers who were



United States Public Health Service



willing to serve as the agency specific mentors of their respective OPDIVs. For the moment, this inventory is to be kept with the officers within the team and the team lead.

- The Agency Specific Mentoring team provided input for the team's SOP that delineates the function and strategy for future members and leaders of the team.

Impact:

- Provided information and guidance to all mentors on the challenges of promotion as communicated by recently promoted officers, and opened a dialogue about promotion in all of SciPAC.
- Additional information about promotion and advice from recently promoted officers has been gathered to share with mentors in their efforts to assist mentees achieve promotion success. Continued the dialog about the difficulties and challenges with promotion in the current environment.
- Raised the profile of mentoring and promoted the opportunities SciPAC offers on the topic of mentoring during Category Day 2017.
- By participating in cross-category initiatives SciPAC provided other PACs with ideas to improve mentoring among their members.
- Approximately 50% of all Scientists are actively involved in a formal mentoring relationship within the category.
- The team procedures will help facilitate knowledge transfer and provide smooth yearly transitions.
- The ability to have agency specific mentors with the duty to help other scientist officers provides for a smooth transition from another OPDIV. This opportunity makes a bigger impact for those who are just starting their PHS officership as the mentor will provide, not only mentorship and reliance but also a warm welcome to officers just beginning their careers.

Recommendations:

- Potential Activities for 2017–2018:
 - Finalize Mentoring survey and place into Survey Monkey to obtain officer feedback (hoping for at least 100 officers to obtain reasonable data, if not more; 2011 survey had 116 officers respond).
 - Analyze data from survey and develop recommendations for SciPAC Mentoring Subcommittee based on data.
 - Develop a process for peer mentoring with a primary focus on adapting to the assigned agency.
 - Promotion Mentoring- Coordinate with Career Development to see which subcommittee would be best to lead this initiative.
 - Complete quality review of mentors – possible avenues could be thru annual agreement emails. In addition, recommend determining whether current paperwork is



United States Public Health Service



- helpful, could modified or even eliminated. Feedback from the mentees may assist with this process.
- Finalize drafts for mentor-led topics and send out to mentors and mentees.
 - Complete an evaluation to see if the mentor-led topics are helpful to mentors and mentees.
 - Complete guidance document for Letters of Appreciation from the Mentoring Subcommittee.
 - Determine the best path forward for maintaining the mentor/mentee database currently in Microsoft Access.
 - Review database needs and make plan for iterative improvements to make more user-friendly.
 - Consider routine process to solicit mentor volunteers from among newly promoted officers.
 - Develop routine process for posting current database to Max.gov (ensuring restricted access).
 - Work with the recently established a Max.gov point person to move all of the subcommittee documentation to the Max.gov page.

POLICY

Chair: CDR Jennie Thomas

Co-Chairs: CAPT Dominic Frasca

LCDR Tajah Blackburn

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 the review and implementation of U. S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS CC) and agency policies impacted USPHS CC Scientist Category officers. The Subcommittee is responsible for providing feedback and recommendations to the CPO 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. Further, 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. The Subcommittee will draft SciPAC policies as needed, upon request of SciPAC leadership. The Subcommittee will monitor various information sources to identify new policies of interest to SciPAC Officers.

Major Duties:

- **Review of Proposed or Enacted Commissioned Corps Policies, Procedures or Guidelines**



United States Public Health Service



- Policies, procedures, or guidelines of interest to or affect the Scientist Category officers shall be reviewed by the Subcommittee's Policy Review Team (PRT). The PRT will provide the SciPAC Policy Subcommittee Executive Board an analysis of the team's review. These policies, procedures, or guidelines will generally NOT include those issued within the electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS), which is the official medium for the issuance of policies, procedures, standards, instructions, and information governing personnel management of the Corps.
- **Summarization of Enacted Commissioned Corps or Agency Policies Procedures and Guidelines**
 - Enacted policies, procedures, or guidelines deemed by the SciPAC Chair, the SciPAC Policy Subcommittee Chair, and/or by the Subcommittee Policy Watch Team (PWT) to be of interest to or affect the Scientist Category officers shall be presented in summary form to SciPAC members by the Policy Interpretation Team (PIT). These enacted policies, procedures, or guidelines will include those issued within the electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS), which is the official medium for the issuance of policies, procedures, standards, instructions, and information governing personnel management of the Corps. 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. Questions on the policy will be solicited, collated, and presented to SciPAC leadership for review and response.
- **Review and Revision of the Policy Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**
 - The Subcommittee periodically updates its SOP and comment matrix each operational year to reflect current operational year procedures.
- **Support Special Projects and Requests for Information**
 - The Subcommittee provides support to the SciPAC Chair and Scientist CPO on special projects and requests for information related to Commissioned Corps policies or other relevant activities. This may result in the drafting of SciPAC policies.
- **Monitor Defined Sources for New Policies**
 - The Subcommittee monitored several sources and reported monthly to Subcommittee and SciPAC leadership on new policies identified that would impact PHS Scientist Officers.

Accomplishments:



United States Public Health Service



- Subcommittee name change with restructuring responsibilities and duties through Team designations.
- Policy Review Subcommittee name was modified to Policy Subcommittee, with a division of responsibilities through a newly instituted team structure consisting of five (5) teams:
 - Policy Interpretation
 - Social Media Policy
 - Policy Review
 - Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
 - Policy Watch
- Creation of a USPHS Scientist Category policy for the sale of SciPAC merchandise. A proposed policy for the sale of the Scientist Category's merchandise was drafted. The instruction was based on communications the Subcommittee's leadership had with numerous individuals within the Division of Commissioned Corp Personnel, SciPAC leadership, and other PACs. The policy includes guidance on appropriate venues for merchandise sale, guidelines for merchandise sale, and requirements for development of a tracking system. The draft policy was submitted to the SciPAC Executive Board for review.
- Development of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) On Verifying USPHS Authorized Awards. FAQs were developed to provide supplemental information to help Scientist Officers locate and verify their USPHS authorized awards and resolve discrepancies in authorized awards between USPHS electronic systems. This FAQ was reviewed and approved by SciPAC's Executive Board and sent to scientist officers via the listserv in May 2017.
- Initiation of a Monthly Outreach Initiative to Identify Policies that the may be Applicable to SciPAC to Review and Provide Feedback. A new initiative was implemented this year to be proactive in reaching out to other USPHS PACs and groups to identify policies that could be applicable to SciPAC. During the operational year, the team conducted outreach to the following groups: SciPAC Executive Board, JOAG, COF, PSYPAG, MOLC, SciPAC's CPO, DCCPR, and the Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board. Points of contact for each group are listed in the Subcommittee's revised SOP.
- Presented on the Blended Retirement System. Organized a presentation on the Blended Retirement System given by CDR Mark McKinnon of DCCPR after the SciPAC call on February 7, 2017.
- Communicated policy updates, highlights, and frequently asked questions (FAQs). Communicated policy updates, highlights, and frequently asked questions to SciPAC membership in a series of emails covering:
 - Commissioned Corps Sick Leave policy regarding maternity leave that went into effect on December 5th, 2016;



United States Public Health Service



- Affordable Care Act (ACA), its PHS implications, and its effect on permanent grade promotion for a small percentage of officers; and
- Federal Civilian Hiring Freeze that was initiated on Jan 23, 2017.
- Collaborated with PHS groups and committees. The Subcommittee sent a joint e-mail to scientist officers that (1) provide information on submitting award nominations for PHS groups, and (2) helps officers locate a complete list of their awards and understand/resolve discrepancies in the awards listed in various PHS systems.
- Reached out to new scientists for feedback regarding policies. Subcommittee sent multiple emails to new call to active duty (CAD) scientist officers seeking feedback to identify policies for which they may have questions or concerns.
- Revision of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Subcommittee completed a review of the SciPAC Policy Subcommittee SOP and updated the current SOP for the 2017 Operational Year.
- Monitored and Reported on Sources of New Policies. Subcommittee monitored a defined set of sources, which are outlined in the SOP, for new policies that would be of interest to Scientist Officers. These were reported monthly to the Subcommittee on its regular teleconferences and communicated to SciPAC Executive Board.

Impact:

The Policy Subcommittee members stood ready throughout the year in anticipation of requests to review policy documents. The Subcommittee also liaised with Commissioned Officers Association (COA) to have its Executive Director share and discuss important policy initiatives with SciPAC membership. The Policy Subcommittee was actively engaged with new policies and their introduction and implementation for the SciPAC, including drafting two new SciPAC policies.

Recommendations:

Policy topics to consider communicating to the SciPAC membership during the 2017–2018 operational year include:

- Provide highlights regarding the newly announced PHS height and weight standards, once PHS leadership reveals their plan for implementation. Collaboration with the new Readiness Subcommittee on this effort will be essential.
- Communicate a summary of required primary assignments for incoming officers. Collaboration with Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee and Career Development Subcommittee will be essential for this effort.
- Inquire about possible opportunities for scientists to contribute within the framework of the new memorandum of agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the PHS.



United States Public Health Service



RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND READINESS

Chair: CDR Anne Purfield

Co-Chairs: LCDRs Elizabeth Irvin-Barnwell and Alice Shumate

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.

Workgroups dedicated to specific objectives for recruitment, retention or readiness comprise the subcommittee.

Major Duties

- Coordinate and advise OPDIV (or PHS) recruiting contacts on scientist-specific information needed for effective recruitment.
- Review and revise resources for recruitment and retention, such as the Scientist “Best Kept Secrets” recruiting brochure.
- Maintain a database of scientists interested in applying to Corps and boarded applicants.
- Provide guidance for recruitment of Scientist officer applicants through available mechanisms, including the Epidemic Intelligence Service.
- Design a standard State of the Scientists survey and collect responses on Scientist officer activities and accomplishments to assess the strength of the Category.
- Develop and facilitate support activities for new call to active duty officers.
- Assist and promote the effective use of scientists in response to emergencies affecting public health.
- Develop a statistical model to estimate trends in Scientist officer recruitment and retention.
- Report Scientist officer readiness status/statistics to SciPAC leadership and membership.
- Provide guidance and support for Scientist officers not meeting basic readiness requirements by linking them to resources.
- Collect narratives from Scientist officers regarding their response/deployment activities to be published on the SciPAC website.
- Provide information, resources, and opportunities for Scientist officers to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Develop and administer a Fitness Achievement Program to recognize and incentivize Scientist officers to achieve high levels of fitness.

Accomplishments

Recruitment

Best Kept Secrets Work Group

- Finish updating Best Kept Secrets document for Scientist Officers.
- Post Best Kept Secrets document on website as a recruiting tool.



United States Public Health Service



- Scientist Best Kept Secrets document was updated to reflect current information (contact information for Scientist Officers at several agencies, only photos in current uniforms, etc.) and was posted on Scientist website as a tool for prospective Scientist Officers to learn more about the Scientist category within USPHS. As a result, prospective Officers will have more up-to-date information as well as contact details for current Scientist Officers who have indicated that they are willing to answer questions about the USPHS and our category.
 - Best Kept Secrets document was updated including revised text, new pictures, updating contact information, and converting to Microsoft Publisher Format.
 - Best Kept Secrets document was posted on website in collaboration with Website committee and is now publicly available.

Applicant Database and Recruitment Support Work Group

SciPAC Recruitment work group, led by LT Danny Benbassat, is not an official recruiting body and has no authority to act as such; however, they provided critical services.

- Objectives: To successfully recruit high-quality applicants to successfully enter Corps as Scientist officers.
- Accomplishments:
 - Tracked the method of recruitment/onboarding for all recently new CADs (Table 1). Thirty-one Scientist officers have received a CAD during the 11 prior OBCs. Of those, 21 (68%) entered through the EIS program, 3 (10%) through open enrollment, and 7 (23%) through conversion from civil servant.

Table 1: The number of Scientist officers attending Officer Basic Course (OBC) per OBC class number. Officers entered Corps through Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), open enrollment, or conversion from civil servant.

	OBC 86	OBC 87	OBC 88	OBC 89	OBC 90	OBC 91	OBC 92	OBC 93	OBC 94	OBC 95	OBC 96	Total
EIS	2	5	1	4	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	21
Open Enrollment	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Federal Conversion	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	7
Total	3	7	1	4	5	5	2	2	0	1	1	31



United States Public Health Service



- Maintain database of Scientist candidate applicants and provide support before, during and after the application and boarding processes.
- 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.
- 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>.
- Recommended objectives for next year: identify boarded applicants upon boarding and establish system to track and support conversion efforts.

EIS Recruitment Work Group

- Objective
 - Provide mentorship to a) EISO applicants who are interested in learning more about the Commissioned Corps and b) incoming EISO Commissioned Corps officers.
 - Identify at least one activity during the annual Fall EISO interviews to provide support to applicants who are interested in learning more about the Commissioned Corps.



United States Public Health Service



- Identify 3 - 4 activities to provide mentorship and resource-sharing opportunities for incoming EISO Scientist Commissioned Corps officers to support their transition.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with the EIS Office and CCA and develop a clear communication channel to facilitate coordination.
- Accomplishments.
 - The WG identified several areas of need among the incoming EIS Commissioned Corps officers and provided timely forums for information exchange and mentorship. As a result of these activities, the EISOs were able to make more informed decisions and had greater awareness of their roles and responsibilities as incoming Commissioned Corps officers.
 - Identified appropriate POCs at the EIS Office and CCA to coordinate activities; established a more formal relationship with the CCA EIS liaison.
 - Participated in a CCA session during EIS conference and introduced our WG to incoming EISOs (April 25).
 - Hosted a breakfast at EIS conference to welcome incoming EISO Commissioned Corps officers (April 27).
 - Hosted a Q&A teleconference for incoming EISO Scientist Commissioned Corps officers (June 22).
 - Co-hosted a pop-up uniform event (July 5) with ACOA for incoming EISO Commissioned Corps officers.
 - Hosted a Q&A session during EIS summer course (July 19) for incoming EISO Commissioned Corps officers.
 - Pulled together several existing fact sheets and disseminated to EISOs. Began dialogue with CCA to update existing fact sheets in preparation for next year.
- Recommended objectives for next year.
 - Develop an SOP for completing an application to the Corps (e.g., help identify supporting documentation when submitting medical information).
 - Continue collaboration with EIS office and CCA (suggested activities below)
 - set up a table during the Fall EIS interview period to help answer questions about Commissioned Corps
 - collaborate with CCA to participate in the Fall informational call(s) to interested EISO applicants
 - collaborate with CCA to update fact sheets
 - A separate proposal for the RRR: identify opportunities to reach out to CDC's Laboratory Leadership Service (eligibility is a doctoral-level degree in a lab-related discipline).

Retention

1. State of Scientists Survey Work Group

Objectives

- To analyze the 2015 State of the Scientist (SoS) Survey results.
- To revise the 2015 SoS Survey for use in 2016.
- To deploy the 2016 SoS Survey until a minimum 80% response rate achieved.



United States Public Health Service



- To compile and finalize a report on the 2015 SoS Survey results.

Accomplishments

- Completed an analysis of the 2015 SoS results, which was the first comprehensive survey of demographic, education, recruitment, retention, response and deployment information of the Scientist Category.
- Revised the 2015 SoS Survey based on comments and suggestions from within and without the working group for use in 2016, which will allow year over year analysis of information on the Scientist Category.
- Deployed the 2016 SoS Survey and achieved an 80+ % response rate from Scientist officers in a period of approximately one month.
- Developed an SOP for the SoS Survey Working Group so that there is a clear path going forward for this novel initiative.
- *Pending*
- Compiled and distributed the 2015 SoS Survey to both PAC leadership and general membership, allowing the Scientist Category to better understand its strengths and weakness as the Category moves forward.
- Began the process of cleaning the 2016 data set for use by the 2017 SoS Survey Working Group.

2. Modeling Trends for Retention Work Group

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. Unfortunately, we were unable to continue our efforts because our primary source of data on new CADs and current rank of officers (Blue Book) was disabled. We were unable to find a reliable and continuous source of data for Scientist officers.

Recommendations for next year

- Identify a source of monthly data from DCCPR that includes, at a minimum, all Scientist officers
 - Name
 - Rank
 - Agency
 - Date of CAD

3. Data Collection for Separation Work Group

Objectives

- Identify Scientist officers who plan on separating or retiring.
- Develop an exit survey to collect information about officers separating or retiring.
- Administer exit interview to collect information to provide insight into the value, worth, and contribution of scientist officers that are leaving the Corps.

Accomplishments



United States Public Health Service



- The Separation Survey Workgroup successfully developed a pilot survey to collect information about officers separating or retiring. The pilot survey will be given shortly to three EIS officers who have recently separated and will be tweaked as needed in the future.

What should future leads know?

- Now that the pilot survey will shortly launch, focus should shift to making tweaks to the survey as needed, developing exit interview questions for respondents who agree to have it administered, and reliably identifying Scientist officers who separate (ideally coinciding with Scientist officers who file separation paperwork with DCCPR). The later will likely be the most difficult task, but leadership changes at CCHQ may provide some opportunities to make headway.

Recommended objectives for next year.

- Identify Scientist officers who plan on separating or retiring based on those who file paperwork with CCHQ.
- As needed, modify the exit survey which collects information about Scientist officers separating or retiring.
- Administer an extended, voluntary exit interview to collect additional information to provide insight into the value, worth, and contribution of Scientist officers that are leaving the Corps.

4. New CAD Seminars Work Group

Objectives

- This workgroup is to help transition new call to active duty, or CAD, officers to the Commissioned Corps by providing an overview of various topics related to PHS.

Accomplishments

- >75 PHS officers spanning multiple professional categories, including scientist, physician, veterinarian, and nursing, attended 7 monthly CAD seminars during November 2016-May 2017.
- Implemented the first seminar series designed to help junior officers transition into PHS, navigate challenging topics, and engage/network with PHS officers in and out of their professional categories.
- >50 PHS officers spanning multiple professional categories, including scientist, physician, veterinarian, and nursing, attended 7 monthly CAD seminars during November 2016-May 2017.
- Junior officers paired with senior officers to present information on numerous topics related to PHS, including how to write a COER, how to develop a CV in the PHS format, promotions, and awards.
- >80% of officers who attended >1 session found the CAD seminars very or extremely helpful.
- Each of the 7 seminars rated as very good or excellent by a majority of PHS officers who attended.
- Supplemental materials providing examples and additional information about each of the topics discussed provided to attendees electronically.

What should future leads know?



United States Public Health Service



- Seminars should be evaluated at the end of the year to allow feedback and improvements for the following year.
- Workgroup size of ~3 junior officers, with help from a senior officer, is ideal because it allows flexibility if scheduling conflicts arise.
- Reservations for rooms (to date, post-TMS) should be made as soon as possible when the system opens or rooms in Bldg. 19 will not be available.
- Documents and past slides can be found at <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BwPUMzOwoE1DZ19LYWhDNGVDNkU>.

Recommended objectives for next year.

- Engage incoming EIS Class and recruit 1-2 junior officers for workgroup.
- Establish a listserv for new CADs to streamline invitations for seminars.

Readiness

1. **Scientist Excellence in Fitness Program Work Group**

Objectives

- To motivate and recognize Scientist Officers who improve or demonstrate continued achievement in fitness.

Accomplishments

- Reviewed results and awarded nine achievement certificates, including two for improvements in APFT.
- We collaborated with other RRR workgroups to enhance the visibility of officer opportunities and achievements.
- Collaborated with the SciPAC web team to Post program guidance to the SciPAC webpage.
- Provided Healthy Scientists Bulletin with Officer Spotlights on two officers who achieved one or more Excellence in Fitness program certificates.

Recommended objectives for next year.

- To motivate and recognize Scientist Officers who improve or demonstrate achievement in fitness.
- Increase visibility/participation in the program – what other “markets” should we be targeting.
- Long term objective for consideration.
- Is there a possibility for recognition at the Corps-level for excellence in fitness?

2. **Healthy Scientists Bulletin Work Group**

Objectives

- To provide information and opportunities to fellow Scientist officers about activities, healthy lifestyle tips, and new research related to healthy living.

Accomplishments

- Distributed 10 editions (November 2016-September 2017) of the Healthy Scientist Bulletin via the SciPAC Listserv reaching PHS officers on the listserv.
- Developed and distributed a brief 5-question survey with the Resources team to gauge the use of the Healthy Scientist Bulletin by Scientist officers (54 responses received).



United States Public Health Service



- We collaborated with other RRR workgroups to include information from newly developed, pertinent initiatives in order to enhance the visibility of officer opportunities and achievements.
- We added 2 new components to the HSB:
- USPHS SciPAC Excellence in Fitness Program and officer spotlight to highlight the accomplishments of officers who have earned a certificate of achievement.
- Tier 1 & 2 Deployment Team Vacancies.
- We removed two components to the HSB that were underutilized (PHS Athletics Group Liaison and Fitness Buddy Mentoring Program).
- We are currently developing one new initiative (the SciPAC Fitness Improvement Program) with the tentative objectives:
 - Provide goal-oriented, short-term, targeted fitness plans to scientist officers who want to improve their overall fitness level, move up a level in the Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT), or target and improve one specific component of the APFT.
 - Give scientist officers in various locations and agencies an opportunity to network through shared fitness goals and accountability.

What should future leads know?

- It is useful to have 1-2 persons for each section to trade off monthly writing duties or cover for one another if on TDY.
- The research review section contributors select a topic each month based on “national health month” subjects. It might be nice to synchronize the Research Review and the Tiny Health Tips to hit on the same topic each month. You could consider meeting with the contributors of these sections and laying out the calendar of topics for the OY ahead of time.

Recommended objectives for next year.

- To provide timely and relevant information and opportunities to fellow Scientist officers about activities, healthy lifestyle tips, and new research related to healthy living.

3. Response Narratives Work Group

Objectives

- Obtain at least one narrative every quarter, with a total of five narratives by end of FY 2017.
- In coordination with the Website Subcommittee, publish these narratives on the SciPAC website.
- Every 6 months, rotate out narratives and place the “retired” narratives in the “living” document.
- Start to design a “living” document/webpage that will serve as a collection for all narratives obtained – publish “living” document to the SciPAC website or maintain “living” webpage.

Accomplishments

- In order to standardize and streamline deployment narrative submissions, the Response Narratives WG developed a fillable Q&A form for officers to fill out, describing their deployment experience.



United States Public Health Service



- To make soliciting deployment narratives easy, the Response Narratives WG created two email templates to use: one for single officer requests and the other for large groups of officers/listservs (see below).
 - During fiscal year 2017, two formal requests were sent out through the SciPAC listserv. In addition, calls for narratives were also communicated during SciPAC monthly meetings in December, January, and February.
 - In addition, the Response Narratives WG also set up a generic email account using gmail to provide the officers with a consistent email address to submit their narratives. This gmail account was set up in January 2017, with all 9 narratives submissions in FY2017 being submitted via this method.
 - By establishing a dedicated and streamlined communication channel, the Narratives Workgroup has increased its level of outreach to fellow Scientist Officers in encouraging them to reflect upon and share their deployment experiences. Furthermore, by partnering with the Website Committee, the Narratives WG has facilitated the dissemination and accessibility of deployment-related content (see below).
 - As of June 30, the Response Narratives WG has received 9 narratives in FY2017 (2 in February, 5 in April, and 2 in May). Narratives that were collected during FY2016 were posted to the SciPAC website; security updates to the CCMIS website has temporarily postponed the publication of FY2017 narratives.
 - Response Narratives WG worked with Website Subcommittee to create a “living” webpage that will be continually updated as narratives are submitted by officers following their deployments. Website is currently live, with the 4 deployment narratives that were submitted during FY2016. Security updates to the CCMIS system have prevented the Website Subcommittee from being able to update the webpage with the narratives that were submitted in 2017.
4. **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.
5. **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 support and guidance for the applicants interested in joining the Corps, applicants who were boarded, new CAD officers and junior officers acclimating to the



United States Public Health Service



culture of Corps, and all Scientist officers aiming to live healthy lifestyles and achieve basic readiness status to support the mission of the Corps for response activities. Collectively, these efforts fostered an environment to strengthen the Scientist category by recruiting high-quality applicants, retaining junior Scientist officers, and optimizing the response capacity of the category.

RULES AND MEMBERSHIP

Chair: CDR Robin Toblin

Co-Chair: CDR Matthew Murphy

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

Accomplishments & Impact:

- SciPAC Charter
 - A team of members led by CDR Brian Harcourt with experience from the LT to CAPT levels reviewed the charter for content and format. Substantial edits were made to ensure current practice was reflected and that formatting was consistent with the SOP.
 - One particular change voted on by the membership was codifying a practice which allows a person elected for the Vice-Chairperson in their third year of their first voting member term the option to apply for a second voting membership term or to receive a fourth year as a voting member in order to be the chairperson without needing to apply for a second voting membership term.
 - The Rules and Membership Subcommittee submitted the charter for review to the Executive Board.
 - The SciPAC Charter was sent to the voting membership and approved on August 31.
 - Final approval of the charter and its enactment will occur in the next operational year.
- SciPAC SOP Review
 - 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. This was a massive



United States Public Health Service



revision that took place over two operational years. The last version was available in PDF only and was not dated, but appeared to last be edited about 6 years prior.

- In March 2017, the current SciPAC SOP was 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.
- Major changes included that the Civil Service Liaison position will become an Ex Officio position rather than a voting member; the Readiness Subcommittee will become its own subcommittee rather than be a part of the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee, and the Historian position will be dissolved and its three functions assigned to the Website, Rules and Membership, and Visibility Subcommittees.
- The voting membership voted to approve the specific major changes as well as the SOP as a whole. The finalized SciPAC SOP has been disseminated to the voting membership.
- SciPAC New Voting Member Nomination Process
 - The Rules and Membership Chair reviewed the current membership and identified seven 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 listserv. The process was started one month earlier than in previous years to ensure a longer transition period between executive board and subcommittee chairs.
 - The Rules and Membership Chair received and compiled 31 potential 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 Voting Membership Selection Team subcommittee meeting, and distributed the self-nomination packets to the subcommittee members for rankings. One nomination was not reviewed due to not being basic ready at the time of submission. Prior to the teleconference, the Chair compiled the rankings and distributed to subcommittee members.
 - The Rules and Membership subcommittee met by teleconference to discuss each of the applicants, review the diversity, distribution, and qualifications, and unanimously select seven officers to recommend for voting membership; a nomination package was subsequently prepared and submitted to CPO for consideration.
 - The OSG approved the seven officers for SciPAC Voting Membership, and the Rules and Membership Chair notified each officer individually by phone to inform them of their selection and welcome them to the PAC. Officers who were not selected were also notified of the decision by the Chair by email. Feedback from the subcommittee was provided regarding areas where the officer could increase their support of the PAC.
- SciPAC Subcommittee SOP annual updates



United States Public Health Service



- The Rules and Membership Subcommittee ensured Executive Board review and approval of the Awards, Category Day, and Mentoring SOPs.
- Other notable changes this year included
 - the update of the SC roster early in the year to ensure that only those members wishing to remain on the SC did.
 - the creation of a max.gov page used to maintain document edits and version control and provide privacy to voting member applicants.
 - the addition of a secretary, LCDR Eric Jamoom. LCDR Jamoom maintained a roster, provided limited access to the various sections of the max.gov page to SC members, ensured consistent formatting between documents (SOPs and charter), and helped produce the letters of appreciation.
 - the creation of teams and addition of junior members and people who were not former voting members to help with non-voting member selection functions.

Recommendations:

- Create a team to monitor, receive, edit, and facilitate Executive Board review of Subcommittee SOPs. With 11 SOPs, the recommendation is that the EB reviews 3-4 every three years with a pace of one a quarter. The team would set up a schedule of when each SC had to turn their SOP in for review and then the Executive Board would have a timeline for review. This was based on the surprising amount of work that reviewing even three SOPs was this year and the challenge of having them all at once.
- Ensure the SciPAC SOP and charter are sent to all voting members at the start of the operational year. Make revisions to the SOP in the first month of the operational year (per the SOP) and send for vote to the voting membership.
- Create a team to review rules/membership history/changes that have occurred over the years by reviewing annual reports (and possibly minutes). This is a bridge from the now-defunct Historian position.
- Sustain the change from this operational year that started the voting membership process one month earlier (with applications due in April rather than in May). This allowed for a greater time for executive board elections and transitions between operational years.
- Sustain the incorporation of an SC secretary and the max.gov site.

SCIENCE Subcommittee

Chair: CAPT Jeffrey Goodie

Co-Chairs: CAPT Mark Clayton, LCDR Erika Odom

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.



United States Public Health Service



- 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. Have processed, organized and updated over three thousand submissions for the SciPAC bibliography.
 - ii. Updated reports for 2014 & 2015; developing new reports for 2016.
 - iii. Planning to post new reports on SciPAC website.
 - c. Impact
 - Highlights productivity of Scientists:

Year	Publications	Books	Reports	Presentations	Total
2015	150	7	6	96	259
2014	205	9	49	121	384
2013	319	15	66	277	677
2012	296	16	44	264	620
2011	256	8	24	309	597
2010	207	14	35	262	518
Total	1433	69	224	1329	3055

- i. Reports allow individuals, including USPHS leadership to view productivity of Scientist Officers.

- 2) Journal Club Team
 - a. Leads: LCDR Cesar Perez & LCDR Cara Halldin
 - b. Accomplishments
 - i. Conducted 5 Journal Club calls

Date	Topic	Speaker
August 2017	Reducing Potentially Excess Deaths from the Five Leading Causes of Death in the Rural United States	LT Mary Puckett



United States Public Health Service



July 2017	Using an extraction free assay for quantifying residual protein and microbial biofilms on medical surfaces	CDR Kenneth Phillips
February 2017	Consumers' Interest in Provider Rating Grows, and Improved Report Cards and Other Steps Could Accelerate Their Use	LCDR Israel Cross
December 2016	Effectiveness of an Activity Tracker- and Internet- Based Adaptive Walking Program for Adults: A Randomized Controlled Trial	LT Neali Lucas
October 2016	Bacterial Biofilm Infection Detected in Breast Implant-Associated Anaplastic Large-Cell Lymphoma	CDR Kenneth Phillips

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 Ginny Bowen; CDR Timothy Cunningham
- b. Accomplishments
 - i. Organized five speakers on issues critical for officer professional practice including the topics:

Date	Topic	Speaker
May 2017	Peer Reviews for Scientific Journals	CDR Robin Toblin
March 2017	Burnout Prevention for Everyday Work & Deployment.	CDR Arlin Hatch
January 2017	International opportunities for Scientist Officers—both permanent and temporary	CDR Matt Murphy
November 2016	Introduction to Molecular Epidemiology	CDR Anne Marie France
September 2016	Leadership Skills, Part 2: 5 Categories of Behaviors in the Workplace: How to be a Leader in Challenging Times and Environments	CDR Matthew Newland

c. Impact

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

4) National Prevention Strategy Team (CDR David Huang)

- a. Accomplishments
 - i. Had commentary related to the NPS published in the *American Journal of Public Health*



United States Public Health Service



1. Huang, C. D. T., Dee, C. D. L., Ko, L. J., Cole, L. J. G., Houston, L. K., Sircar, C. K. D., & Gaines, L. J. (2017). Seven prevention priorities of USPHS Scientist Officers. *American Journal of Public Health*, 107, 39.
 2. Tweet from the Editor in Chief (Alfredo Morabia) about the article <https://www.google.com/url?hl=en&q=https://twitter.com/AlfredoMorabia/status/779073449893527553&source=gmail&ust=1475683796944000&usg=AFQjCNG4Ndaad8krATUYF6MU6Co1WYbWFA>
 - a. [#SoonInAJPH](#): Seven [#Prevention](#) Priorities of [@USPHS](#) Scientist Officers. [@Surgeon General](#) Get notified <http://bit.ly/28PBAoC>
 - ii. Article republished in the Scientist Newsletter.
- b. Impact
- i. Will increase attention and visibility of USPHS Scientists to the broader public health community.

Recommendations:

- 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.
- Recommend updating the website.

VISIBILITY

Chair: CDR Kamil Barbour

Co-Chair: CDR Loren Rodgers and CDR Timothy Cunningham

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.
- Highlight high-level scientific publications led by Scientist Officers.
- Increase scientific conferences networking and information sharing among Scientist Officers.
- Increase membership of the SciPAC Facebook group to help promote awareness of and comradery within SciPAC by promoting accomplishments of individual Scientist Officers and frequent updates during the PHS Symposium.



United States Public Health Service



- 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.
- Capture the diverse activities that Scientist Officers are involved in.
- Liaise with AMSUS Planning Committee to help plan AMSUS annual meeting.

Accomplishments:

- Published three editions of Scientist newsletter via the Scientist listserv and the Scientist website, and currently preparing for another, fall edition.
- Recorded and published the Scientist Category Day proceedings to the Scientist APAN website.
- Poster was successfully created and presented at 2017 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Informed Scientists of key opportunities and activities of the AMSUS annual meeting. Scientist Officer served on the 2017 AMSUS abstract review process to identify abstracts for the annual conference.
- Increased membership of the SciPAC Facebook group from 46 officers (October 2016) to 125 officers (38% of the category).
- Increased awareness of and comradery within SciPAC by promoting accomplishments of individual Scientist Officers and frequent updates during the PHS Symposium.
- Led two DC-area social events with one at Dave and Buster's. In total, 13 scientist officers attended.
- Led seven Atlanta-Based Socials: three trivia events at restaurants, three walk/hike events at local parks, 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 (twice) finishes, furthering *Esprit de Corps* and raising visibility among other participants.
- The new Conferences Team launched to help facilitate interactions and scientific sharing between Scientist Officers attending the same conference. To that end, the team created and completed an informal survey of SciPAC to gather information on attendance at conferences and interest in this initiative. The team matched and linked a total of four officers attending the 2017 annual meetings of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) and Society of Epidemiologic Research (SER).
- For the first time, we developed and implemented an electronic tracking tool to capture the diverse activities that Scientist Officers are involved in. The tool focuses on three types of activities: 1) Science-related, 2) Non-Science related, and 3) Other. Selected accomplishments will be shared in an upcoming issue of The Scientist Newsletter or disseminated via SciPAC social media outlets.
- Highlighted nine high impact scientific publications from Scientist Officers in 2017 via the list serve and Facebook. One major New England Journal of Medicine publication on Zika appeared in the Summer Issue of The Scientist Officer newsletter.



United States Public Health Service



- Suggested author affiliations for scientific manuscripts to increase Corps Visibility.
- The following activities were led by visibility members and conducted through the “Prevention through Active Community Engagement” (PACE) program.
 - 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.
 - Several officers lead a lesson opioid abuse at a middle school for over 250 students. This was a new lesson plan and plans are to expand the educational program on opioid abuse to pilot programs in Baltimore in the next operational year.
 - Over 50 students were given a presentation on careers in science. These presentations gave a general overview of the Commissioned Corps and what degrees and career paths were necessary in order to become an officer. Each officer then followed with a specific presentation on how they got to their point in their career and what specific things are needed to pursue a career in that officer’s field.
 - Over 70 students were given a presentation on mucus and how to keep healthy during flu season. Kids first learned about how the body gets sick via the lungs and what the causative agents are. They then had the opportunity to make their own mucus using borax and glue and experience how mucus absorbs viruses and bacteria (using glitter) on laminated lungs.
 - Ran a booth at the University of Maryland, Maryland Day event. Activities included a bike powering a stereo as an example of converting food into physical energy into electrical energy, showcasing easy exercise activities such as jumping rope and quick tennis, a quiz on the effects of smoking, physical challenge activities, food matching game for young kids and a coloring section for kids using the new MyPlate system developed by USDA. Officers were also available to discuss the Commissioned Corps, disaster relief; the Surgeon General’s walking initiative and all aspects of the National Prevention Strategy. Over 500 individuals came by the booth.
 - In a new initiative, an NPS-PACE booth was set up at the OBC open house. This booth has recruited over 50 new officers to join the NPS-PACE listserv.
- Increased visibility and value of our Category by publishing an informative article on “The Road to Publishing in the American Journal of Public Health”, which appeared in the Combined Category Newsletter.
- 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.



United States Public Health Service



Furthermore, officers from other professional categories were educated about Scientist contributions through in-person presentations.

- Networking and *Esprit de Corps* were increased through increased visibility events, conference networking (including professional symposia), increased activity on the Scientist Facebook page, 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.
- Continue to expand NPS-PACE activities led by Scientist Officers.
- Increase SciPAC social events in DC.
- Publish 4 newsletter articles yearly.
- Continue high participation in visibility events.
- Expand systematic documentation of Scientist officer publications and presentations.
- Continue to grow social media presence of Scientist Officers in Category Facebook Page.
- Capture and track the diverse activities that Scientist Officers are involved in.
- Introduce a team to document high-level media activity attributed to Scientist Officers.
- Introduce a team to document high profile deployments of Scientist Officers.
- Discontinue AMSUS Liaison Position.

WEBSITE

Chair: LCDR Jason Wilken

Co-Chair: LCDR Oliver Ou

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. On 31 March 2016, all PAC websites (including SciPAC) were moved to a government server; the 2016–2017 operational year represented the first year in which the SciPAC website was housed in the dcp.psc.gov/osg/ domain. The Website subcommittee focused on maintaining the Website on this new domain. The specific goals of the Website subcommittee were to:

- Recruit new subcommittee members as needed.



United States Public Health Service



- Ensure that all subcommittee members were trained on the new platform (Jarmanator) used on the PHS server.
- Train subcommittee members on ensuring that all new documents comply with Section 508 accessibility rules before posting.
- Work with other subcommittees to ensure that the Scientist website is the source for the most up-to-date information for USPHS Scientist Officers, reducing reliance on the Scientist listserv to provide updates to PAC members.

Accomplishments

During the 2016–2017 operational year, the Website Subcommittee had to contend with two major loss-of-function events impacting the dcp.pcs.gov/osg/ domain.

- On 23 September 2016, a security update to the OSG server blocked all access to Jarmanator; Jarmanator administrators had to painstakingly work to individually restore Jarmanator access to users, and only by 23 December did the majority of the Website Subcommittee again have access to Jarmanator.
- On 3 April 2017, another security update to the OSG server prevented all sync requests; i.e., Jarmanator users could edit the Website but those edits are not viewable on the public-facing website until the OSG server is synced again. As of 11 July 2017, Jarmanator users are still unable to sync updates.

Notwithstanding these major obstacles, the accomplishments of the Website Subcommittee during the 2016–2017 operational year included the following:

- Recruited two new Website subcommittee members and trained all members how to review documents for section 508 compliance (a training session was provided by former Website Chair CDR Jacqueline Sram, and troubleshooting on a case-by-case basis was provided by LCDRs Wilken and Ou).
- In collaboration with the Recruitment, Readiness, and Retention Subcommittee, developed a new Deployment Narrative page and nine subpages each featuring a unique deployment narrative.
- Fulfilled 52 Website edit requests to update content on the website.
- Created a new 2017 OBC photo page and standardizing the presentation and format of each year's OBC page.

In the absence of Jarmanator access Sep–Dec 2016, the Website Subcommittee focused on a collateral duty of ensuring that all SciPAC subcommittees had access to a secure, access-restricted platform for posting, sharing, editing, and archiving files. We created a Scientist home page on the MAX.gov, a SharePoint-like site accessible to all federal agencies.



United States Public Health Service



- We reached out to each Subcommittee and each Voting Member to encourage use of MAX.gov for Subcommittee business. At the time of this writing, all but three of these persons have created a MAX.gov account.
- Each Subcommittee now has a unique, access-restricted MAX.gov page.
- Committees have, to varying degrees accepted MAX.gov as a collaborative workspace, with some committees posting the most basic of documents and others using MAX.gov almost exclusively for committee collaborative projects.

Finally, subcommittee review of teleconference options identified a “mute all” option that allows the call organizer to mute all participants; participants can enter a code to be heard. This function has now been incorporated in to all monthly calls, eliminating background noise that had previously disrupted calls.

Impact

The Scientist Category website continues to be a valuable resource for USPHS Scientist Officers, promoting the PACs work and the activities of Scientist officers. All new materials posted to the website are in compliance with section 508 accessibility standards. The website is in compliance with HHS policy requiring that PHS/OSG-approved advisory groups reside on a government server, and the Jarmanator content management system is understood by Subcommittee members. However, the disruption of access to the Scientist website for 3 months and the disruption of ability to move newly-posted material to the public-facing website for an additional 4 months hindered the usefulness of the website during the 2016–2017 operational year. The committee was able to complete the collateral responsibility of ensuring that all SciPAC subcommittees have access to a secure collaboration site through the creation of SciPAC webpages on MAX.gov, which has enhanced the operational efficiency of all SciPAC subcommittees.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the experience of the Website Subcommittee during the 2016–2017 operational year.

- Given that updates could not be posted to the public-facing website for the majority of the 2016–2017 operational year due to technical limitations of the OSG server, the Executive Board should carefully consider whether to rely on the website for the timely distribution of information to Scientists. Until such time when materials can consistently be publicly posted, SciPAC leadership should consider continuing to the SciPAC listserv and monthly SciPAC calls for conveying key points.
- Assign a two-person Website Subcommittee team to serve as the point person for MAX.gov questions for SciPAC subcommittees. Work with the Category Day, Science,



United States Public Health Service



and Visibility Committees to ensure that alternate text is provided for all images in presentations and publications at the time of their request to post materials to the website. 508 compliance requires alternate text be provided for all images, and it is time-consuming to work with authors after their presentation has been submitted for posting.

- Carefully check images of Scientist officers for proper uniform wear before posting to the website. We noted several instances of photos submitted for posting featuring Scientist officers with uniform mistakes, and some postings were delayed as a result while officers produced a replacement photo.
- Encourage that all photos for posting be high-resolution, and we recommend that OBC photos in particular be taken with high-resolution with forethought that these photos will be posted for posterity.

C. LIAISON REPORTS

COF Report: CDR Jessica Chiaruttini

- At the end of the 2061-2017 Operational Year the SciPAC account balance was \$1515.67. The inventory included 135 coins, 25 royal blue shirts (5 S, 1 M, 9 L, 9 XL), and 13 white shirts (2 S, 11 M). During the operational year there were a total of 12 coins, 4 blue shirts, and 3 white shirts sold (plus 1 damaged white shirt). Per the executive board recommendation, two white shirts and 3 coins were donated to FDA Awareness Day and SciPAC Category Day as door prizes.
- During the 2016-2017 operational year, the total deposits were \$206.75 and the total withdrawals were \$376.15, with the only cost being \$352.40 for the COF awards.
- A SciPAC merchandise policy was drafted in conjunction with the Policy subcommittee to address solicitation and fundraising concerns.
- Electronic sales for merchandise were piloted with no interest from the SciPAC. Pre-ordered merchandise (travel mugs) was met with too little interest to offset the costs associated with maintaining another stock of SciPAC merchandise but the online group ordering process was used successfully.

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:



United States Public Health Service



- 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.
- Offered information and opportunities for Scientists to become more actively involved in the COA at the national level.

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.
- Encourage Scientist Officers to run for Scientist Liaison to the COA Board of Directors for the next 3-year term that will begin July 1, 2018; elections will likely be held in the Spring of 2018.

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;



United States Public Health Service



- Shared JOAG-compiled resources for Symposium, which help officers keep Symposium costs down and maximize their time at Symposium.
- Helped communicate junior officer concerns between SciPAC and JOAG, particularly on recruitment, promotion, and retention of junior officers.
- Actively recruited junior Scientist officers to participate in JOAG and consider applying for Voting Membership.

Impact:

- Kept 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, including the selection of two new Scientist Voting Members in 2017.

Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) Liaison: CDR Nadra Tyus

Mission: The MOLC is made up of four (4) Chartered Minority Advisory Groups (CMAGs). Its purpose is to provide advice and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General on issues relating to the professional practice and the personnel activities relating to minorities in the U.S. Public Health Service.

Major Duties: The MOLC Liaison is a Scientist Officer and Voting Member of MOLC who serves to communicate information between MOLC and SciPAC. The liaison attends meetings, reports major events or activities and coordinates related projects between both groups.

Accomplishments:

- Provided SciPAC with monthly updates on relevant MOLC activities to make them more aware of the CMAGs in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, their leadership, and the impactful work they do to serve the U.S. Public Health Service.
- Connected the SciPAC Policy Subcommittee to the MOLC leadership to determine whether the PAC could be of service in helping to review any new or revised USPHS policies.

Impact:

- Increased SciPAC officers' knowledge of MOLC and their activities and events such as the MOLC monthly meetings, the annual MOLC breakfast at the USPHS Symposium.
- One member of SciPAC's Policy Subcommittee is now participating on MOLC's Strategic Planning Task Force (MSP-TF) to be actively engaged in MOLC's process to develop recommendations to the Office of the Surgeon General on a MOLC Strategic Plan by the end of 2017.



United States Public Health Service



Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG) Liaison: CDR Michelle Tsai

Mission:

- The PsyPAG mission is to consider discipline-specific professional issues and advise the Surgeon General through the Chief Professional Officers (CPOs) of the Health Services (HS) and Scientist (Sci) Categories and their respective Professional Advisory Committees (PAC) regarding such issues.

Major Duties:

- The Vice Chair of PAC Affairs handles all PAC requests requiring PsyPAG involvement and assists the Chair and/or Chair-Elect in carrying out the duties associated with their respective offices.

Accomplishments and Impact in 2017 Operational Year:

- PsyPAG currently has 119 members, both clinical and research-based psychologists.
- One-hour bimonthly PsyPAG teleconferences – meetings included reports and updates from Executive leadership and Committee Chairs and a featured guest speaker describing their work in PHS. Regular meetings provide PsyPAG members an opportunity to share information, discuss business-related issues, plan and coordinate future events, and support PsyPAG members.
- Restructure of PsyPAG organizational chart (see attachment) to align with HS PAC's organizational chart by adding two new Committees (Awards and Readiness). Additionally, the new Vice Chair of PAC Affairs position was created to replace the Liaison (HSPAC and SciPAC) positions, and the PsyPAG Special Interest Group (SIG) for prescribing psychologists (RxP) was abolished.
- Enhanced communication – distribution of quarterly newsletters, featuring committees' activities and sharing information with PsyPAG members.
- Officer support – Readiness Committee was created to enhance readiness among the PsyPAG members. The Committee also reviewed resources for training in disaster mental health and deployment psychology and compiled more than 20 training resources into a user-friendly format that provide more than 100 hours of free mental health training related to PHS deployed activities and free CEUs. Additionally, the Committee attempted to develop new program focused on potential venues for certification (e.g., conducting psychological autopsies, PTSD certification, etc.). This helps to provide real time career development opportunities. PsyPAG also developed webpage that will be rolled out in 2018, which serves as a one-stop-shop for psychologists to receiving information on USPHS benefits, mentoring guidelines, recruitment, category specific documents related to promotion and benchmarks, readiness information, CE opportunities, proper uniform wear, and other topics as appropriate.
- PsyPAG Psychologist Speaker Series – highlighting officers' experiences for purpose of expanding knowledge about possible career paths/roles that psychologists play in support of the nation and within the Corps (e.g., SAMHSA, BOP, DoD, ASPR, FDA, etc.).



United States Public Health Service



- As a new committee, the Awards Committee completed the Awards SOPs, pending approval. Two psychologists, CDR Jill Breitbach and LCDR Wade Keckler, were selected for the Senior Career and Early Career Achievement Awards this year respectively, and unit awards for 2016 PsyPAG executives were submitted to HSPAC. The Awards Committee helped to maintain a robust awards program that fosters professional development and morale within Corps psychologists.
- PsyPAG challenge coin, representing the split between two categories, was designed and finalized. The challenge coin is ready for purchase.
- Supporting HS 2017 open call for clinical psychology applicants from 14 AUG-08 SEP 2017 – we received 23 complete preliminary applications from the open enrollment. Eleven senior officers volunteered to serve as reviewers (two officers withdrew due to deployments in response to Hurricanes Irma, Harvey, and Maria). Three teams of three reviewers assessed each application and scored the application using the psychology specific rubric. The scores were rank-ordered and provided to HSPAC leadership to determine a cutoff value. Additionally, the Recruitment and Retention Committee provided support to several USPHS officer candidate psychologists as they advanced their application into the Corps, with at least five (5) psychologists receiving their CAD in 2017.
- PsyPAG maintains an active listserv and recently updated the PsyPAG webpage design to include information on best kept secrets, mentoring, recruiting, uniform wear, etc. Impact: These efforts have broadened awareness of the breadth of roles that psychologists serve.
- PsyPAG is currently developing a sub-committee to pursue history of psychologist within the Commissioned Corps as such history has yet to be published. Behavioral health has been a surging field with ongoing efforts on addressing drug addiction (opioids), resilience of officers on deployment, and every-day mental health care.

Recommendations:

- We would recommend that the bi-laws to be signed off in order for the Vice Chair position to be official.
- We encourage the continued support of the Vice Chair of PAC Affairs position. The position continues to serve as an important mechanism for psychologists and other Scientists to collaborate and communicate.
- We are interested in developing a Senior Advisor position to serve on PsyPAG, preferably an active duty O-6 psychologist who served as a former PsyPAG Chair.
- We would like to continue working with the Chief Professional Officers (CPOs) of the Health Services (HS) and Scientist (Sci) Categories on aligning all psychologists into one Category and on specialty pay for psychologists.

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



United States Public Health Service



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 Commissioned Corp. These activities demonstrate the integral force and scientific impacts the Scientist Category brings to the USPHS Commissioned Corp.

Respectfully submitted January 2017

CDR Jennifer Adjemian
Scientist PAC Chair 2016-2017
Deputy Chief, Epidemiology Unit, Laboratory of Clinical
Immunology and Microbiology, Division of Intramural Research
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health
Qrts 15 B-1, 8 West Drive, MSC 2665
Bethesda, MD 20892-2665
Tel: (301) 761-5654
Email: Jennifer.Adjemian@nih.gov