



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

Call to Order

- CDR Postelle Birch-Smith, BCOAG Chair, called the July 14, 2011 BCOAG meeting to order at 1100 EST.

Roll Call & Introductions

- LT Nikkia Powell, BCOAG Executive Secretary, conducted a roll call of voting members- a quorum was present.
- All non-voting members participating via teleconference were asked to email their name (including rank) to bcoag.org@gmail.com to be included on the attendance list.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June 2011 BCOAG meeting were approved with correction to CDR Maekele's rank

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Awards Committee: CAPT Beverly Dandridge

- Appropriate 2011 BCOAG Annual Award nominators were notified of non- selections.
- Revisions of the award criteria will be reviewed by the EC for approval and implementation in 2012.
- Committee will assess other recognition strategies to support an officer's accomplishments.

Career & Professional Development Committee: CDR Karen Beckham

- **Committee Overview**
 - Continuing with the Committee's goal to "serve as a resource to BCOAG members to help manage their careers", each of the four teams have developed specific activities to help meet your needs (the BCOAG Membership) related to career and professional development. We encourage you to help increase BCOAG's reach by volunteering to serve on one of the teams.
- **TEAM Reports**
 - **Career and Professional Development**
 - The C&D Team meets the 4th Monday of the month to discuss activities planned for the year, current goals and plans for the future. These goals include development of topics for distribution via the BCOAG listserv and/or presented during the monthly BCOAG Calls. To assist with career and professional efforts, topics may include the following: Awards, Continuing Education, CV



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

Formats/Benchmarks, Licensing/Certification, Leadership, PACs, PHS Activities, Professional Organizations, and Basic Readiness.

- Interested officers should contact LCDR Shary Jones at shary.jones@hhs.gov or LCDR Kimberley Hawkins at khawkins@hrsa.gov
- **Mentoring**
 - The mentoring team met on 11 JULY 2011 at 1100.
 - Mentoring Program e-Booklet: Developed in 2009, revised in 2010. CDR Dorse submitted a revised version of the e-booklet for the team members to review for approval and finalizing. This e-booklet will be distributed to all mentors and mentees upon final review by team members.
 - Application for mentor and mentee requests – no updates/revisions for the application was submitted to CDR Dorse by team members. This application will be sent to all interested persons requesting to be mentors and mentees. This will be finalized after the July meeting.
 - Lunch and Learn – team members discussed possible topics that we could collaborate on with other teams, i.e. preparing for retirement, TSP, COER preparation, etc. Would like to initiate or collaborate a lunch and learn event for August. Will need to solicit speakers for the presentation. Any suggestions will be helpful
 - Scheduled meetings – scheduled meetings will be the 2nd Monday of the month, until further notice. Meetings are open to all Corps officers who wish to participate.
 - Mentor-Mentee solicitation – CDR Dorse submitted a notice to the BCOAG weekly e-announcements. Pending approval from committee.
 - SOP workgroup volunteer – CDR Dorse provided the draft for the SOP workgroup and submitted to CDR Beckham for approval
 - If anyone is interested in joining the BCOAG mentoring team or becoming a mentor or mentee, please contact CDR Karen Dorse at 301-594-5954 or email at: Karen.dorse@foh.hhs.gov
- **Recruitment**
 - To help lead recruitment efforts in the DC metro area, two co-chairs were procured: LCDR Danielle Russell and LCDR Doris Wurah.
 - The team recently met to discuss regular monthly meeting schedules, recruitment efforts targeted for the remainder of the year and to explore recruitment efforts in the Atlanta area including the HBCU 2011 College Fair.
 - Questions should be directed to CAPT David Foley at david.b.foley@dhs.gov
- **OBC Open House Group/Officer Mid-Level Course**
 - Represented BCOAG at the Officer Mid-Level Course (OMC) Open House on 6/12/11 – Officers participating in this event were LT Hamet Toure, LT Michael Bowens, LCDR Trellis Adams and CDR Kofi Ansah. Some BCOAG rank coins were sold and 3 officers signed up to be added to the BCOAG listserv. These 3



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officers have since been added to the listserv. Majority of the officers who stopped by our table were BCOAG members and already on the listserv.

- The Group will represent BCOAG at the OBC Open House on 7/14/11.
- Officers interested in volunteering/helping with this or future events should email CDR Ansah at Kofi.Ansah@fda.hhs.gov with their availability.
- **Retention**
 - The Retention Team is pushing forward with the Financial Planning Series. The last call had about 25 participants and there were a fair amount of questions! A follow-up email was sent out with past slide and a document for officers to begin their estate planning.
 - It should be noted that officers would only receive a snapshot of the topic if they miss the conference call. The slides are merely as a guide and not a strong informational packet.
 - A survey has been created for participants to provide feedback regarding the calls. The next call will be: Tuesday, July 19th at 2pm on Investing {Aggressive vs. Non-Aggressive}.
 - Volunteers are still needed. All interested officers should contact LT Lamar Henderson at LaMar.Henderson@SAMHSA.HHS.Gov

Health Disparities Committee: LCDR Pilgrim Spikes

- New Subcommittee
 - Each month the federal government recognizes health issues that negatively impact the nation's health. A subcommittee and chair are needed to determine the best way for BCOAG to become involved with the effort. The subcommittee would brainstorm and initiate action plans of how best the Health Disparities Committee and BCOAG can address the issue. Ideas include finding events occurring at the national, state, and local levels (i.e. within federal agencies) that highlight the health issue and letting the BCOAG membership know about the events. Factsheets associated with the monthly health issue could also be highlighted. If anyone is interested in joining or heading this committee, please let LCDR Pilgrim Spikes know.
- Factsheet Update
 - The Health Disparities Group met and made decisions concerning the factsheets.
 - They were placed in the following categories:
 - Suitable for General Audience (Handout at events)
 - Suitable for Health Professionals or Providers
 - Cannot use/Link not available.
 - More factsheets are needed.
 - The category numbers are placed next to the factsheet link denoting the group's decision
 - Factsheets are needed on the following Health Disparities:
 - Pregnancy
 - Prenatal Care



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

- Anemia / Sickle Cell Anemia
- Seasonal Flu
- Tobacco and Youth
- Lupus
- Breast Feeding
- Healthy Eating

Communications and Public Relations Committee: LCDR Charlene Sydnor

- Updates are being made to the BCOAG website. If officers have information that they would like posted on BCOAG's website, they should please submit that information to LCDR Sydnor at sydnorc@mail.nih.gov.
- A special thank you goes to LCDR JeanPaul and LT Rhoden for maintaining the website.
- BCOAG is now on Facebook. The page was launched last month (June 2011). A special thank you goes to LT Chi-Chi Umejei for her efforts and leadership in handling this project. Also, a special thank you goes to LCDR Danielle Russell for her efforts in obtaining photos from the BCOAG community to post on BCOAG's Facebook page.
- There are currently five (5) officers on deck who monitor the page on a weekly basis. Those officers include:
 - LCDR Shary Jones
 - LT Jemekia Thornton
 - LCDR Kimberly Raines
 - LCDR David Wright
 - LT Zewditu (Zewde) Demissie
- BCOAG members should show their "like" for BCOAG's Facebook page by going to the link provided in the July 11th announcements or search for BCOAG on Facebook and click the "like" button on the page.
- Officers who have pictures that they would like to post on BCOAG's Facebook page, should contact LCDR Danielle Russell at Danielle.Russell@dc.gov
- LT Umejei will lead the first Facebook Moderators Meeting. The meeting will be held Wednesday July 20th at 2 pm EST.

Community Outreach Committee: CDR Monique Fountain-Hanna

- **June Activities Summary**

We would like to extend a huge thank you to our BCOAG/COF New Orleans Community Outreach leads LCDR Lorraine Williams and LT Natalie Williams and the many, many volunteers from across PHS who joined in the June 19-24th events in New Orleans, LA. [If LT Gibson or LCDR Williams are on the phone can they please provide a brief summary of the events in New Orleans.](#)

- **Upcoming Activities for August and September**

- **August Activities**

Volunteers Needed Dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

When: The August 25th-28th, Culminating in the Dedication Ceremony on August 28th

Who: Washington, DC Area BCOAG Officers Needed, 10-15 officers needed

What: The dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial has been scheduled for August 28, 2011 on the 48th anniversary of King's "Dream" speech. The event will begin with a pre-dedication concert at 10 a.m. The dedication ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. and a post-dedication concert will follow beginning at 2 p.m. Tickets for seating were distributed through an online lottery system. Public standing areas that do not require tickets will also be available. (More Details to Be Announced)

A public expo will be held August 25-28, 2011 at the [Washington Convention Center](#), including information booths, performances and a tribute to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Hours will be Thursday 2-8 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday 2:30-6 p.m.

Activity Leads: CDR Wanda Chestnut and LCDR Anitra Johnson, please contact CDR Wanda Chestnut if you are interested in participating in the planning for this event. She can be reached by phone at 301-443-0947 or email at wchestnut@hrsa.gov.

Membership Committee: LCDR Lynda Bishop

- BCOAG Membership Committee updates from Tuesday, July 5, 2011:
 - *****Announcement:** The **Call for Nominations for BCOAG Voting Membership** has been released. Only three (3) applications have been received to date. All interested officers are encouraged to apply. The deadline has been extended to **Friday, July 15, 2011**.
 - **Requests for updates to the 2011 BCOAG Networking Spreadsheet** have been released in the BCOAG weekly Announcements. The Networking spreadsheet aims to facilitate collaboration among members of BCOAG.
[POC: **LT Umejei**; Volunteers – LCDR Eddie Hall and LT Kendra Bishop]
 - The **Review Tool** utilized to evaluate applications submitted by officers interested in applying for voting membership has been revised and submitted to the Executive Committee for review and approval in preparation for the 2011 application review cycle.

Ad Hoc Committees:

Social Committee: LCDR Zanethia Eubanks

- **Planned Social Events**
 - The upcoming BCOAG Atlanta Area Meet and Greet social event will be held on Thursday, August 18 at 5:00 pm Location: Captain Wanda Barfield's Home. The social leads for this event are LCDRs Jemekia Thornton, Malaika Washington, and Zewditu Demissie.
 - Officers are strongly encouraged to RSVP for this social. Spouses, significant others, children and friends are welcomed.



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

- Officers will participate in “Speed Mentoring/Networking” for more information, please contact LCDR Darryln Cornelius-Averhart at zrv4@cdc.gov.
- **BCOAG Social at the COF Symposium**
 - The BCOAG-COF Social took place on Wednesday, 6/22/2011 on the Creole Queen Paddleboat-Jazz Cruise.
 - “A Night on the Queen” was a **HUGE SUCCESS!** Over 100 officers and friends were in attendance.
 - Pictures for the event can be viewed on BCOAG’s Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/media/albums/?id=154902697911674>.
 - If you have any pictures of any BCOAG events, please submit them to LCDR Danielle Russell at Danielle.Russell@dc.gov.
 - LCDR Eubanks thanked LCDRs Malaika Washington, Jemekia Thornton, and Zewditu Demissie and all those that participated for making the event a success!
- **Social Lead Updates/Reports**
 - BCOAG Social Committee is still seeking **Social Leads** throughout the nation. If you are interested in becoming a social lead in your city/duty station, please send an email at zae0@cdc.gov. A weekly reminder will be posted in the BCOAG weekly announcements. **Participation is critical.**
 - DC/MD/VA (DMV area): LCDR Howie lhowie@cdc.gov and LCDR Hawkins khawkins@hrsa.gov are the current social leads in the DMV area.
 - The 1st 2011 Meet-and-Greet social for DMV officers took place on Thursday, June 16, 2011 **at the Hudson Restaurant** and Lounge where 20 officers networked and socialized with one another.
 - Welcome was given by the 2011 BCOAG Chair, CDR Postelle Birch-Smith.
 - The next DMV event will be held on Friday, August 12, 2011. Location TBD.
 - South NJ/Philadelphia area:
 - Social leads: LCDR Enoch Boateng (eboateng@bop.gov) and LT Elizabeth Mohan (emoham@bop.gov).
 - The 1st 2011 Meet-and-Greet social took place on Saturday, June 25, 2011 at Tavola dei Amici Restaurant in Cherry Hill, NJ where four officers attended. They discussed future events and opportunities to participate in within the community.
 - The next event will be held on September 24, 2011. Location TBD.
- **Reminder/Requirements for Social Events**
 - Pictures from the event have been sent to LCDR Eubanks. These pictures should also be emailed to Danielle Russell (Danielle.Russell@dc.gov) to be uploaded to the BCOAG Facebook page.
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Dedication will occur in DC on **August 28th**
 - CDR Postelle Birch-Smith has suggested that this event combine both the August DMV Family Social with the MLK Dedication for DC area officers. The executive committee will discuss participation in the MLK Memorial Dedication and coordination of a social event following the ceremony.
 - CDR Abnnah Forbes and LCDR Zewditu Demissie are working with Atlanta area officers to plan a trip to support the event in DC. They will also look into



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

any events that may be going on in Atlanta (i.e., through the King Center). If officers would like to participate, please email CDR Forbes at hka2@cdc.gov or LCDR Demissie at izj5@cdc.gov.

- For Community Events that you would like to lead in your area, please email CDR Monique Fontaine Monique.fontaine@hrsa.hhs.gov
- **End of Year Annual Social (October - December 2011)**
 - **Atlanta update:** The Atlanta “**End of Year Social**” will be held at Dobbins Air Force Base on Saturday, December 17, 2011.
 - The planning committee for the “**End of Year Social**” for Atlanta officers includes officers CAPT Gail Stennies, CDR Leslie Leonard, and LCDRs Darrylyn Cornelius-Averhart, Zewditu Demissie, Pilgrim Spikes, and Jemekia Thornton.
 - The planning committee for the “**End of Year Social**” for DMV officers is CAPT Michaele Smith, LCDR Danielle Russell, and LCDRs LaJeana Howie and Kimberly Hawkins (social leads for DMV). LCDR Hawkins has been looking into 3 bases in the area as a venue.
If officers would like to help with these committees, please reach out to them or email LCDR Zanethia Eubanks at zae0@cdc.gov.

Charter and Bylaws Committee: Candace Griffin

- The BCOAG Charter and Bylaws committee submitted a final version of the Bylaws unit award on July 15, 2011. The Executive Committee provided feedback for the charter draft on July 14, 2011. The Charter and Bylaws committee will review the feedback and make all necessary changes to the charter.

Office of Force Readiness Deployment: CDR Sean David Waterman

- Current deployments-OFRD has deployed 16 a sixteen-officer team consisting of Environmental health professionals from APHT #2 and from Tier 3 Roster B to support home inspections in Minot, North Dakota after recent flooding displaced 11,000 residents, one third of the population.
- Basic Readiness- updates to the OFRD website and to Direct Access will be uploaded by the end of next week. If you have questions about your status after the update, contact OFRD for guidance. OFRD@hhs.gov
- FMRB – the eligibility review for the FMRB awards for the 3rd quarter of FY 2011 will commence shortly. If you are missing any recent deployments that would make you eligible for a FMRB, send an email to OFRD@hhs.gov with “FMRB- missing deployment “ in the subject line. Be sure to include your legal name, PHS number the name of the mission and the dates you believe should be included.
- Upcoming Deployments- Martin Luther King Jr Memorial dedication Aug 28th – Washington, D.C. (Tidal Basin). Plans are tentative but may be a multiday event. Updates will be provided as soon as received.



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Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

Minority Officer's Liaison Council: CAPT Beverly Dandridge

- MOLC Awards Ceremony & Luncheon was held Wednesday, June 22, 2011, 11:45 am – 1:15pm at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel, for approximately 75 attendees. Keynote speaker was RADM Epi Elizando, Regional HSA. A Native American drummer provided cultural music during the program. LCDR Dwayne Jarman, MOLC Chairperson, provided opening remarks and introduced the keynote speaker. RADM Mishoe, BCOAG member and MOLC Senior Advisor, provided closing remarks.
- Each CMAGs presented their respective coin to RADM Elizando as a token of appreciation for his attendance.
- Respective CMAG award presentations [10] were distributed. Photos will be posted on the MOLC website www.usphs.gov/corpslinks/molc.
- MOLC display booth was well staffed with photos of officers in action. CMAG coins and BCOAG rank coins were sold. A total of 65 rank coins were sold. A second MOLC banner will be requested to allow for simultaneous posting at the booth and during the awards program.
- CDR Jorge Ruano-Rossil assisted at the booth and subsequently attended the League of United Latin American Citizens [LULAC] conference in Cincinnati, OH. CDR Ruano-Rossil represented MOLC and interacted with the Department of Defense, US Navy, US Air Force, US Coast Guard and US Army. Among the prestigious attendees were the US Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, the US Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and the former President of Mexico Vicente Fox. CMAG printed information was distributed and 5 challenge coins for HOAC, 4 coins for the DC COA, 5 for BCOAG, and 5 lanyards for the SoCal COA were sold.
- July 5th MOLC meeting was cancelled.

COF Liaison: LCDR Jennifer Jones

- BCOAG COA account balance as of 7/14/11 is **\$4181.68** – which does not include a pending deposit for \$352.90 in rank coin and lapel pin sales and pending reimbursements of \$191.47 in postage and other expenses. \$210.00 is being held by the Chair as petty cash. The order for more BCOAG and PHS rank coins is on hold until the EC meets this weekend.
- Rank coins are available for purchase at the following locations and by mail order:

Parklawn

POC, LCDR Tracy Pace tpace@hrsa.gov

FDA White Oak

POC LT Hamet Toure hamet.toure@fda.hhs.gov

CDC Atlanta

POC LT Zanethia Eubanks zae0@cdc.gov



BLACK COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP (BCOAG)



Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

BOP Butner
POC CDR Robin Hunter Buskey bibihunter@earthlink.net

CMS and Baltimore Area
POC LT Adrienne Hall ahall@fms3.dhs.gov PHS Rank Coins

New Business/Open Floor

- Congratulations to all officers promoted for the 2011 promotion cycle. Those who were promoted please share your experience with those who are coming up for promotion or those who may have been past over this year.
- BCOAG represented well at the 2011 COF conference; many BCOAG officers were speakers as well. Thank you to all who participated in the COF including the outreach activities and the social. Those who did not get a chance to attend are encouraged to attend in the future; the conference is great for networking and it is a lot of fun.
- DC/VA: National Tuskegee Airman Ceremony will be held at the Inner Harbor Aug 3-7th; Announcement will be posted to listserv.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 1156 EST.
- The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Aug 11, 2011 at 1100.

BCOAG meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (EST) in FDA White Oak Silver Spring Room TBA (Contact CDR Birch-Smith).

- If you are unable to attend and wish to participate via teleconferencing, please call:
Dial: 1-877-798-6354
PIN: 129733

If you are participating via phone from your office, please invite other officers interested in participating to join you in order to limit the number of lines required.

In order to have your attendance recorded, please email your name, rank and agency to: bcoag.org@gmail.com. Attendance must be submitted within 24 hours of meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

LT Nikkia Powell
Executive Secretary

CDR Postelle Birch-Smith
Chairperson



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Surgeon General's Conference Room Teleconference only

Attendance for 14 July 2011

Voting Members

CAPT Beverly Dandridge
CAPT David Foley
CAPT Michael Smith * (CDR Terry
Harrison)
CDR Postelle Birch-Smith
CDR Monique Fountain-Hanna (excused)
CDR Karen Beckham
LCDR Candace Griffin
LCDR Jennifer Jones
LCDR Shary Jones (excused)

LCDR Lynda Lee-Bishop
LCDR Michelle Haamid
LCDR Morrisa Rice
LCDR Sylvester Smith
LCDR Pilgrim Spikes
LT Nikkia Powell
LCDR Charlene Sydnor
LCDR Zanethia Eubanks
LT Natalie Gibson
LT Chinyelum Umejei

* Represented by alternate

Non-Voting Members

CAPT Marinna Banks-Shields
CAPT Thel Moore
CDR Shirley Thompson
CDR Anita Pollard
CDR Chekesha Clingman
CDR Diahann Williams
CDR Rhondalyn Cox
CDR Cedric Guyton
CDR Trellis Adams
CDR Karen Dorse
LCDR Malaysia Gresham
LCDR Danielle Russell
LCDR Deidre Washington-Jones
LCDR Teresa Baptiste
LCDR Erika Odom
LCDR Jamar Barnes
LCDR Aisha Mix
LCDR Qiana Coffey

LCDR Darrlyn Cornelius-Averhart
LCDR Jemekia Thornton
LCDR Kimberley Hawkins
LCDR LaJeana Howie
LCDR Jill Hammond
LCDR Zewditu Demissie
LCDR Kimberly Rains
LCDR James Carr
LCDR Tarsha Cavanaugh
LCDR Samantha Fontenelle
LCDR Eddie Hall
LT LaMar Henderson
LT Kathy Holiday
LT Garman Williams
LTJG Nicole Carr
LTJG Andriane Fisher