Junior Officer Advisory Group

A newsletter for junior officers by junior officers

Volume 5 **Winter 2008**

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A Message from our Chair

Fellow JOs:

This is my first message for the JOAG newsletter since beginning my term as Chair on October 1, and coming up with an idea of what to write about was challenging. I am the first to admit that being the JOAG Chair is the easy part—the bulk of JOAG's work is done by our voting and non-voting members in our committees. So what could I possibly say to this group of dedicated professionals that they do not already know?

After several ideas that ended up in the trash can, I finally decided that I could use my space in the JOAG newsletter to address the most common questions that I hear from other junior officers: How do I become involved in JOAG? And as a follow-up to that, how can an already active JOAG member become more involved? These are excellent questions, and I have asked them both over the past few years.

How do I join JOAG?

The first step is to join the JOAG listserv to receive information relevant to junior officers. For example, the JOAG meeting call-in information, agenda, and minutes are distributed via the listserv. Instructions for joining the listerv are at our website: www.joag.org.

The second step is to call into the JOAG conference calls on the second Friday of every month. We have two different types of meetings, and they alternate each month. Every other month we have a general membership meeting where we provide updates about issues affecting the Corps, discuss on-going JOAG projects and issues, and hear reports from our committees and PAC liaisons. On the off months, we are hosting a speaker series to provide relevant information to junior officers.

The third step is to become involved in a JOAG committee. As I mentioned before, the majority of JOAG's projects come from the committees. Being involved in a committee project can provide valuable leadership experience. In addition, it provides an opportunity to interact with other junior officers from different agencies and duty stations. It is a great way to network professionally, and also a great way to meet like-minded officers. I have met some of my closest friends in the Corps by being involved with them on JOAG committee projects.

At the beginning of the operational year, we issued the JOAG Call for Volunteers, which has information about each of the ten JOAG committees, including the contact information for each committee chair. E-mail me at alt5@cdc.gov if you would like a copy of this document.

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Holiday Edition

Junior Officer Spotlight:
Lieutenant William A. Lanier

Category: Veterinarian

Education: BA, History, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA, 2001.
DVM, University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine, Urbana, IL, 2005.

Home town: Anchorage, Alaska

Agency: USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

Current Assignment and Duties:
Supervisory Public Health Veterinarian, Willamette Valley, Oregon
I oversee the work of other inspectors at several slaughter and meat-processing facilities to help promote food safety and food defense. We examine animals before and after slaughter to make sure that diseased animals do not enter the food chain, and that animals are treated humanely before and during slaughter. We also screen animals and meat products for pathogenic microorganisms and antibiotic residues.

Previous Assignment: Public Health Veterinarian
After veterinary school, I took a job with FSIS as a civil servant in Utah, doing much the same thing that I do now, except without as much supervisory responsibility.

How did you find out about the PHS?
My civil-servant supervisor in Utah had known several officers and thought that I might be a good match. I looked into it, and was pleased with what I discovered. I applied and was able to "convert in place"—keep the same job but change from a civil servant to a PHS officer—in July 2006.

What was the most challenging part of applying for the PHS?
To my knowledge, I was the first in FSIS to "convert in place" to the PHS. As such, there were a number of challenges to my conversion. These included FSIS determining whether it was financially feasible for me to convert, and figuring out what to do with my civil service leave balance. It may not have happened if I did not have the help of an excellent liaison (many thanks to CAPT Michelle Poindexter!) and a supportive civil service supervisory chain. Eventually, all the wrinkles were ironed out, and I was able to join!

What are your goals with the PHS?
The PHS has definitely been good to me and my family. I would like to stay long-term with the PHS and make a career out of it, if possible. I strive to further the goals of the PHS by advancing public health. More specifically, I hope to combine my veterinary training and public health interest to improve health at the human-animal interface.

What is your most memorable PHS experience so far?
I had a blast at the Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC) I attended in Bismarck, ND in early August 2007. I enjoyed learning the "ins and outs" of the Corps. It was also fascinating to meet so many other officers and learn of the contributions they are making in diverse arenas of public health.

What advice would you give to prospective PHS applicants (or other Jr. Officers)?
Check out the PHS! It is a very rewarding organization for those with a strong commitment to public health. If you apply and encounter difficulties in the application process, don't give up! There are usually ways around the obstacles that crop up. I would be happy to answer any questions about my "conversion" process. Email: Willy.Lanier@fsis.usda.gov

Be sure to check out the new look of JOAG

WWW.JOAG.ORG

JOAG Executive Committee: "What is your New Year's Resolution?"

"My New Year's Resolution is to spend less time worrying about the things I can not control"
- LCDR Aimee Treffiletti, Chair

"To be the best scientist I can be and continue to do my best to promote science. I believe this is imperative in order to conduct high quality research and service for the prevention of disease and maintenance of health, both at home and abroad."
-LCDR Maleeka Glover, Chair-Elect

"My resolution (in its definition) is to have an impact on at least one Jr. officer, a potential officer or the PHS mission each month"
- LCDR Jean-Pierre DeBarros, Treasurer

"To continue to do my best to improve access to health care and safe living conditions for everybody worldwide, and to help expand the commonly accepted notion of basic human rights to include health care and safe living conditions"
- LCDR Jonathan Rash, Vice-Chair

"To run in (and complete) the Surgeon General's 5k this year at the COF symposium"
- LTJG Jessica Schwarz, Secretary

"To get the word out on the best kept secret this Nation has to offer-The United States Public Health Service"
- LCDR Thomas Pryor, Ex Officio

"I will look to evaluate my life's goals and the pathways I will need to travel in order to reach them. The first step of that quest being an honest introspective reflection of myself, as that truth must be actualized prior to truly dedicating one's self to these times of great challenge"
- CAPT Dean Coppola, Senior Advisor

Gallup area officers and staff participate in charitable event

A friendly competition between two Gallup, New Mexico hospitals benefited the community's food pantry supplies for the busy holiday season. This event was organized by the Navajo Area Branch of the Commissioned Officers Association and involved employees from Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC) and nearby Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital (RMCH). GIMC's goal was to beat RMCH's donations by 100 pounds. They exceeded this goal by gathering a total donation of 2711 pounds of non-perishable goods, compared to RMCH's 20 pounds of goods. LT Jennifer Bebo, a junior officer and Navajo Area Branch COA president boasted, "I am extremely impressed with the response from all of the

Pictured left to right: Ashley Watchman, CDR Barbara Werito, LT Dawn Dineyazhe (Co-Vice President, Navajo COA), Fermalena Spencer, LCDR Brian Elza, and LT Jennifer Bebo (President, Navajo COA)

Miss a JOAG Meeting?

Don't despair! JOAG meetings are now being recorded
Audio recordings are available at WWW.JOAG.ORG
Be sure to check it out!

JOAG thanks LCDR Sonny Saini and webmasters LT Steve Miller & LT Mark Rives for making these available.

Highlights of the COSTEP Connection Program

Contributed by: LT Tracy Gualandi on behalf of the Recruitment & Retention Committee

One of the accomplishments of the R&R committee for the 2006-2007 operational year was expanding JOAG's COSTEP Connection Program. (CCP). The CCP provides COSTEP students assigned to active duty tours with a junior officer contact to be available to answer questions, assist with career opportunities, and provide support when needed. The CCP was formed to improve the students' experience while on active duty, increase their awareness of Commissioned Corps activities and opportunities, and ultimately result in an increase in the number of COSTEP students that apply for extended active duty upon graduation. While it is recognized that COSTEP students have assigned preceptors, not all of them are Commissioned Corps officers. In addition, the level of officer support at COSTEP duty locations can vary widely. CCP volunteers serve as "informal" mentors, and every effort is made to partner COSTEPs with junior PHS officers from the same category, agency/OPDIV, geographic location, and any additional JO volunteer qualifications (whether or not they were a former COSTEP or current Associate Recruiter).

One of the goals for improving the JOAG COSTEP Connection program this operational year was to expand on the number of COSTEPs assigned to Junior Officer volunteers. Another primary goal was to make assignments in a more timely fashion, thus allowing Junior Officers to contact their COSTEPs before they departed for their active duty tours. The number of COSTEPs assigned to Junior Officer volunteers increased from approximately 50 last year to 92 this year. In addition, approximately half of the Junior Officers assigned to a COSTEP were able to get in touch with them before they left for their summer tour.

Other goals included: improvement of the resources provided to Junior Officer volunteers, strengthening quality control of the program, and improving the guidance provided by volunteers to COSTEPs. The mentor resource document provided to volunteers was updated, expanded, and made more readable. Program quality control was improved by developing a list of suggested discussion topics for volunteers and their COSTEPs as well as development of an evaluation form for volunteers to fill out at the end of the year. Evaluation forms will be used to improve next year's program.

Pictured above: ENS Jessica Meed (center) at her Commissioning Ceremony with RADM Craig Vanderwagen and her mother, Dr. Rita Meed

Based on the evaluation forms developed and distributed, the outcomes of the CCP workgroup were overwhelmingly favorable. The majority of COSTEPs and Junior Officer volunteers that took advantage of the program found the information valuable and enjoyed the networking opportunities. One of the strengths identified by the volunteers was the overall organization of the program and 98% of the Junior Officer volunteers reported they would serve as a mentor in the future. Those that did not feel the need to participate in the program were COSTEPs in locations where they felt adequate mentorship was provided.

Special thanks to the 2006-2007 COSTEP Connections workgroup for their hard work and congratulations on another successful year for the CCP!

7 Reasons Why USPHS Officers Get a Kick Out of the Winter Season

Contributed by: LT Jerry Zee

#7 We're anxiously waiting to hear what the projection is for next year's hurricanes from the sister service, NOAA!

#6 We don't have to worry about shopping for holiday gifts since we have coins that we purchased at the COA training symposium or from the different PACs or associations/ groups throughout the year which we can now happily wrap up as unique gifts for our family and friends!

#5 We finally get to wear our spiffy and premium priced BDUs with pride and distinction after patiently waiting for 2 1/2 seasons (Spring, Summer, ½ Fall)!

#4 We're racking our brains to fill out, review or rate the COER online with nouns, adjectives, and verbs that we have saved up for the entire year. Maybe a new dictionary for a Christmas gift is in order!

#3 We get to use our charm and kind words to frantically persuade our supervisors or managers to write a ROS for those of us who are up for competitive promotion next year before the December deadline. Big smiles now!

#2 It's the time of the year where annual flu shots bring out the true joy of happiness in us. Tears anyone?

#1 After a whole year of trying to be in top physical shape and passing the APFT with flying colors, holiday feasts knock us back to square one again since the aroma of delicious foods are just too hard to let it pass by. Do I hear New Year Resolutions?

****The first Junior Officer to email LT Zee the meanings of all acronyms mentioned above will receive their own JOAG Challenge Coin****

An Officer's Holiday Tale

Contributed by: LT Lorraine Williams

I was torn between accepting a job in my hometown of New Orleans at Charity Hospital or stepping out on faith and relocating to a city that I never knew existed. Without a doubt, I stepped out on faith to explore my career opportunities as a Commissioned Officer with the U.S. Public Health Service. I relocated to San Jose, CA from New Orleans, LA September 2002.

The excitement of pursuing the highlight of my career posed its challenges. Before relocating I had never been separated from my family for an extended period of time, with the exception of vacations. I became extremely homesick and began to wish to move back home. I spent numerous days counting down my two year fulfillment and relocation obligation at my current duty station. Even though I enjoyed my job, the majority of my days were filled with agony and despair because I had a strong desire to return to New Orleans, which was my comfort zone. All of my family and many of my friends reside in New Orleans. I didn't have any friends or family in San Jose, CA.

In addition to the homesickness, Thanksgiving and Christmas were rapidly approaching. Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday primarily due to my mom's cooking and the annual family gathering. Thanksgiving 2002 was not the norm for me. My Thanksgiving meal consisted of deli sliced turkey breast, instant macaroni and cheese, box cornbread stuffing and a can of pre-cooked yams. I remember sitting on the floor in the kitchen while crying hysterically and eating what was the worst Thanksgiving meal ever.

It has been five years since I began my journey as a Commissioned Officer and my life has changed drastically. I am now married to a chef (in training) and have 7-month old twins. Thanksgiving 2007 was the first year I opted to stay in California and prepare my first Thanksgiving meal for my family. I am no longer homesick. I visit my hometown often to remind myself of the beautiful city of New Orleans and the wonderful culture that remains despite the wrath of Hurricane Katrina. I still enjoy visiting with family and friends. I am truly thankful and grateful for the opportunity to be a U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Officer because the experience is immeasurable!

Mass Vaccination Exercise

tests a system, helps a community, and sharpens skills of a new officer

Contributed by: LTJG Tim Taylor

On Saturday November 3rd, Commissioned Corps Officers from the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Health Care Center, and Aberdeen Area Office participated in the first ever Point of Dispensing (POD) activation. Officers assisted with administration of influenza vaccinations to 573 adults and children from Sisseton and surrounding areas of the Lake Traverse Indian Reservation and Roberts County, South Dakota.

In order to prepare for incidents requiring mass vaccination or other rapidly delivered medical care (pandemic influenza, bioterrorism, etc.), regional points of dispensing have been in the planning stages for up to two years. In this first ever activation of the POD, free influenza vaccinations were administered in order to test the surge capacity of the POD, as well as overall patient flow and design of the POD.

Planning and activation of the POD exercise involved nearly every facet of the community to include local ambulance service and fire department, local government, state health department, Indian Health Service, Tribal emergency management, and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as some of the supplies were released from the Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS).

Not only did this exercise allow us to work out the kinks involved in a mass vaccination deployment, it also allowed all facets of the emergency health care delivery team to come together for a shared purpose. Since we now know the people involved with each agency and their response roles, we can respond to actual emergencies much more quickly and efficiently. Participating in the POD exercise was very rewarding and enabled us as Commissioned Officers to get to know the community in which we serve.

Before joining the Commissioned Corps, I was a Paramedic for many years. I maintain my certification as a Paramedic by taking emergency and patient transfer calls for the local ambulance service after regular duty hours and on weekends. The POD exercise helped me maintain my skills as a Paramedic as I assisted with patient flow, drawing up vaccine, and providing emergency medical coverage in the event of sudden illness at the POD (allergic reaction, etc.)

Working with Senior Officers was especially rewarding in that they were able to share their unique insight and past experiences with me. In fact, one of our officers with past mass vaccination experience was able to suggest an improvement in patient flow which enabled the triage section to drastically decrease patient waiting times. I have only been in the Corps for 10 months and the mentoring and guidance I have received from my senior officers as well as JOAG has enabled a smooth transition into the Corps. My experience with this POD and my overall experience in the Corps has far exceeded my expectations. I enjoy tremendous job satisfaction through my service with the Corps.

Officers who participated in the POD exercise include: CDR Robin Lee (Nursing), CDR Jennifer Borden (Dental), CDR Mary Ann Niesen (Pharmacy), and **LTJG Tim Taylor (EHO) who is pictured above**

Message from our Chair (continued from front page)

I'm already actively involved on a committee. What's next?

Apply for voting membership! Regardless of rank or time in the Corps, JOAG is always looking for motivated junior officers who are dedicated to JOAG's mission*. JOAG has twenty voting members, with at least one representative from each category within the Corps. Voting members serve as committee chairs or liaisons to their respective PACs. Ten voting member positions are available each year, with about half for category-specific liaison slots, and the rest for at-large membership slots. In addition, each year we elect a Vice Chair, Chair-elect, Treasurer, and Executive Secretary from the voting membership. Voting membership is a two year commitment, and each voting member receives a Special Assignment Award at the end of their term. Nominations for voting membership come out in early spring.

I am grateful to JOAG for what it brought to me professionally and personally. As a voting member, I have been given the opportunity to contribute to an organization that has an impact on the Corps. In addition, I am developing my leadership style, meeting officers that I would not otherwise have the opportunity to know, and gaining valuable experience that will stay with me throughout my career.

I hope that you are able to find the same things in JOAG that I, as well as many other officers, have found. If you are not already an active member of JOAG, make it your New Year's Resolution to join us. And if you are an active member, make it your New Year's Resolution to consider applying for voting membership this spring.

All my best,

LCDR Aimee Treffiletti

**** JOAG's mission is to provide advice and consultation to the Surgeon General, Chief Professional Officers, Professional Advisory Committees, & other Commissioned Corps groups on issues relating to professional practice and personnel activities affecting Junior Officers in the USPHS Commissioned Corps.***

Uniform Corner - The Navy Uniform Sweater

Contributed by: LT Leslie Cartmill

Effective January 1, 2008, the black U.S. Navy pullover sweater is approved for wear (PPM 07-014). The sweater is available in both acrylic and wool weaves and contains fabric epaulets, shoulder patches, and elbow patches.

A black leather nametag with Velcro backing (2" x 4") is required for wear on the sweater. The black leather nametag is a special order item that is available at a local Navy Exchange. It may also be ordered over the phone through the Navy Exchange Uniform Support Center (1-800-368-4088). The nametag is printed with gold lettering in all capital letters. The officer may choose either of the following name options, centered in the middle of the nametag:

1. First initial of the first name followed by a period, first initial of the middle name followed by a period, and full last name (e.g., J.A. Smith) ***OR***
2. Full first or full middle name and full last name (e.g. John Smith)

The officer's rank abbreviation is placed in the lower left corner (e.g. LTJG, LT, LCDR). "USPHS" is placed in the lower right corner.

Only one authorized skill badge may be printed on the nametag, centered at the top. As of 12/21/07, the Navy Exchange Uniform Support Center does not have the capability to print the Field Medical Readiness Badge. There is currently no expected release date, but they are working on the issue.

LTJG Frosty T. Snowman always has difficulty locating his size at the local uniform sale.

Metal ranks, badges, and insignia are not authorized for wear on the sweater. Soft shoulder boards are required. The shirt collar is worn inside the sweater when a tie is worn and outside the sweater when no tie is worn.

Beginning January 1, 2009, the Army cardigan and Army sweater will no longer be authorized for wear (POM 08-001).

PHS uniform regulations can be found at: http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/CCISToc.aspx?ShowTOC=N
Please send ideas for future "Uniform Corner" features to LT Leslie Cartmill at leslie.cartmill@fda.hhs.gov

Uniform Too Tight? Which Way is Your Calorie Balance Tipping?

Contributed by: LTJG Shanna Moeder

Now that the holidays are over, are you noticing your uniform is feeling a bit snug? As the New Year comes, so do most people's New Year resolutions. Many people have resolutions to start exercising that may last only a month or two and dieting (not a healthy diet that is life long.) Instead of setting our selves up for failure why not think about "what way our calorie balance is tipping?" Are you wondering what this statement means or is asking? "Calorie balance is the balance between calories (or energy) you take in by eating and the calories (or energy) you use up by being active." [1]

When we eat food, we take in calories or energy. These calories come from nutrients in our food such as protein, carbohydrates, fat and alcohol. The number of calories that we consume depends on what type of foods we eat. Fat is the most concentrated in calories with 9 calories per gram, which is more than twice the number of calories in carbohydrates and proteins. Foods high in fats are also high in calories.

Just like we need an appropriate amount of carbohydrates, proteins and fat everyday, we need to also concentrate on getting enough calories in order to just stay alive, breathe, and to do all of our activities. However, we need to pay attention to our calorie amount that we eat or drink so that we are not over-consuming too many calories and not expending out those extra calories. If this happens, it is guaranteed that we will see weight gain, and for many, this could be unwanted weight gain.

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- To ***maintain or keep our weight the same***, the "calories in" from food are *equal* to the "calories out" from activity.
- To ***gain weight***, "calories in" from food are *higher* than "calories out" from activity. Either calories have increased or your activity has decreased or both.
- To ***lose weight***, "calories in" from food are *less* than "calories out" from activity.

If you are looking to lose weight, a healthy weight loss should be slow and steady with 1-2 pounds per week. One pound of fat is 3,500 calories, so by cutting out 500 calories each day for 7 days would help you achieve the 3,500 calories in one week.

If your New Year's goal is to lose some extra weight, you will need to tip your calorie balance more towards "calories out" with activity or with less "calories in". You can do it, keep moving more and keep choosing those healthy choices everyday!

[1] Lifestyle Balance Diabetes Prevention Program Lifestyle Intervention Manual, Session 7

LTJG Moeder is a registered and licensed dietician stationed in Nome, Alaska

'Tis the Season for Giving

A Book Review of Bill Clinton's "Giving: How Each of Us Can Change the World"

Contributed by: LT Amy Constantine

During the summer of 2007, the 42nd President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, debuted his latest book entitled *Giving: How Each of Us Can Change the World.* This book was an uplifting read not only because it describes how people across the globe are "giving" of their time, money, and skills, but also because it highlights the amazing organizations that are helping to make a difference right now.

Clinton says in the earlier pages of the book that "I've always respected people who found a way to give when it isn't easy to do."

Our eyes are opened to the existence of numerous foundations and citizens of all ages and financial levels that have shown the initiative to help others.

We learn that in 2006 Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for founding Grameen bank, which offers small loans to poor people, 97% which are women, and has a payback rate of 98.3%. The bank has lent seven million dollars since 1983.

America's second wealthiest man Warren Buffet gave 30 billion dollars of his own money to the Gates Foundation since he thought Bill and Melinda Gates could spend his money better than he could in an effort to help others.

Make-A-Wish Foundation has been in existence since 1980 and has granted the wishes of more than 144,000 children around the world with life-threatening medical conditions.

After the tsunami, *World Bicycle Relief* teamed up with *World Vision International* to raise 1.5 million dollars to give 24,000 bicycles to people in Sri Lanka. This program fights poverty in the region too, as the bikes are manufactured locally and help citizens to go about their life and daily business activities with more ease.

The Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy located in Las Vegas is a non-traditional charter school that gives its' students the skills that have helped its at-risk students to improve academically and be prepared to attend college.

An organization that truly offers gifts of reconciliation and new beginnings is *Seeds of Peace,* which brings together teens from troubled parts of the world that have long had historical and cultural conflicts in an effort to create safer, more harmonious futures for all involved through forgiveness and peace.

The *Dutch Postcode Lottery* which was started in 1989 offers a great way of generating large sums of money from small contributions, with a twist. Each month and twice in July there are thousands of winners selected. Besides the Jackpot winner there are street and neighborhood winners and everyone who buys a ticket in the winning area shares the prize. 50 percent of the gross proceeds of the lottery go directly to charities, with special focus on those that deal with environmental protection, development aid and social justice. All Dutch citizens know that half the proceeds of every lottery ticket go directly to good causes.

Clinton gives a nod to the best book he's read about giving (besides his own) entitled *A Kid's Guide to Giving* by Freddi Zeiler, a 20 year-old student.

If you have the time to pick up a copy of *Giving: How Each of Us Can Change the World,* make sure to view the index and the great resources section, which lists the foundations and organizations mentioned in the book.

♦ ♦ ♦ CALL FOR NOMINATIONS - J O A G AWARDS ♦ ♦ ♦

The JOAG Awards Committee is requesting nominations for three awards to be presented at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium 9-12 June 2008 in Tucson, Arizona.

The **Junior Officer of the Year Award** recognizes a Junior Officer at temporary grade O-1 through O-4 in the United States Commissioned Corps that has made a significant contribution to the overall mission of the Public Health Service.
(Self-nominations welcome.)

The **JOAG Excellence Award** recognizes a non-voting, active member of the JOAG for demonstrating outstanding, dedicated effort, and commitment to JOAG through active committee participation. (Self-nominations welcome.)

The **VADM Richard H. Carmona Inspiration Award** recognizes a retired or active duty Senior Officer at temporary grade O-5 or above who exemplifies outstanding leadership by example, mentorship and empowerment of junior officers, unwavering support of the Commissioned Corps and its mission, and overall inspiration and motivation to the PHS community. (Nominations only accepted from Junior Officers.)

Send nominations for
Junior Officer of the Year to:
LCDR Carolyn Tabak
carolyn.tabak@fda.hhs.gov
phone: 240-276-8823
fax: 240-276-8844

Send nominations for
JOAG Excellence Award to:
LCDR Melissa Robb
melissa.robb@fda.hhs.gov
phone: 301-827-1516
fax: 301-443-9718

Send nominations for
VADM Richard H. Carmona Inspiration Award to:
LT Joseph Shurina
joseph.shurina@ihs.gov
phone: 406-353-3262
fax: 406-353-3227

If you know any outstanding officer deserving recognition of theses awards, please review the nomination forms, awards guidelines, and companion documents available on the JOAG website www.JOAG.org.

Nominations due no later than **29 February 2008**.

Announcing the new JOAG speaker series

coordinated by our Professional Development Committee

This series will take place via conference call on the second Friday of the months that we do not have our regularly scheduled general membership meetings. A schedule is below, so be sure to mark your calendars! Our goal for this series is to provide speakers on topics that are of interest to our JOs and that will enhance officership development.

J O A G M E E T I N G S C H E D U L E , 2 0 0 8

January 11: Speaker Series, 1300-1400 EDT

February 8: JOAG General Membership Meeting, 1300-1500 EDT

March 14: Speaker Series, 1300-1400 EDT

April 11: JOAG General Membership Meeting, 1300-1500 EDT

May 9: Speaker Series, 1300-1400 EDT

June 13: JOAG General Membership Meeting, 1300-1500 EDT

July 11: Speaker Series, 1300-1400 EDT

August 8: JOAG General Membership Meeting, 1300-1500 EDT

September 12: Speaker Series, 1300-1400 EDT

How did Junior Officers spend their holidays?

Left to Right LT Morrisa Rice, LT Lynda Bishop, LT Donnelle McKenna at a holiday party

LT William Lanier and his wife Janelle, daughter Annie, and son Ethan while sledding in Oregon's Cascade Mountains, December 29, 2007.

LCDR Suzanne Wolcoff and family attended a holiday reception at the White House this year

ENS Sam Imbriale being sworn in by RADM Williams, December 7.

LTJG Stacey McBryde and LCDR Henry McMillan (both Transformation Officers at OCCO/OCCFM) at a Christmas party at the home of CAPT Byron Bailey on December 1, 2007

(Above) LCDR Jessica Feda and LT Felipe Zamarron, in the Rehabilitation Services Clinic at FMC Rochester. Many of the rehabilitation staff in the Federal Bureau of Prisons are Public Health Service officers.

LTJG Nisha Antoine with husband, Knowlton, and son, Nehemiah, while at her husband's office holiday party.

(Above) Holiday celebrations with LCDR Mimi Phan (back row) and her extended family

(Below) LT Morrisa Rice and family celebrating a Christmas at Disney

The Montgomery GI Bill – Pathway to an Education

Contributed by: LCDR Chau Vu
on behalf of JOAG Professional Development Committee

The GI Bill of Rights, also known as the Servicemember's Readjustment Act of 1944, was first signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on June 22, 1944. Now known as the Montgomery GI Bill, the bill provides educational benefits to active duty servicemembers, some Vietnam Era veterans, certain veterans and reservists, and National Guard members.

Officers who first entered active duty after June 30, 1985, and didn't decline the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) in writing upon entry into active duty, are eligible. Once an officer declines participation in the MGIB, he/she permanently loses eligibility for MGIB benefits. Newly commissioned officers can opt to have $100 per month (before taxes) deducted from their salary for the first 12 months, for a total contribution of $1,200. This contribution will earn the officer a basic entitlement of up to $36,000 for full-time student status. In addition, under the $600 Buy-up Program, an officer is eligible to buy additional MGIB benefits by contributing up to a maximum of $600, to receive up to $5,400 in additional GI Bill benefits. (Of note, full-time students will benefit from the increased MGIB benefits for higher tuition costs, while part-time students are limited to the part-time rate even when tuition costs are higher.)

An officer is eligible to use the funds after completing 24 continuous months of active duty, and eligibility continues for up to 10 years after an honorable discharge. MGIB funds will only cover tuition and fees and will not cover other expenses such as books. The officer receives monthly payments for up to a maximum of 36 months. For example, effective as of October 1, 2006, a full-time student with 3-year commitment may receive up to $1,075 per month for tuition costs.

Servicemembers can only use the MGIB once. If they were prior service and had used up all of their benefits, they cannot sign up and pay for MGIB benefits again after joining a different service. Also, if a servicemember used ROTC benefits for college, they are not eligible for the MGIB.

Approved training can include the following:
- An undergraduate or graduate degree or certificate at a college or university including an accredited distance education program
- A certificate or diploma from a business, technical or vocational school
- Accredited independent study courses leading to a certificate at colleges, universities, and other degree-granting educational institutions.
- An apprenticeship or on-the-job (OJT) program offered by a company or union.
- A correspondence course
- Flight training
- Licensing & Certification, up to $2,000 per exam
- National exams (ie.GRE, LSAT)

Any Small Business Development Center (SBDC), administered by the federal Small Business Administration, or The National Veterans Business Development Corporation

For more information on Montgomery GI Bill, visit http://www.gibill.va.gov/

Or, contact:
Mr. Norman Chichester at
OCCO,
1101 Wootton Parkway,
PL Room 100
Rockville, MD 20852
240-453-6034

JOIN OUR MEETINGS!

Join us for JOAG's monthly meetings via teleconference or in person.
Our meeting is the 2nd Friday of each month from 1300 to 1500 EST.
Call in information: Phone: 888-322-1791 Password: 83301
Surgeon General's Conference Room (18-57) Parklawn Building,
5600 Fisher's Lane, Rockville, MD

JOAG Welcomes 115 Newly Commissioned Officers !

Sept—Nov 2007

From ATSDR:
LTJG Christopher A. Fletcher

From BOP:
LT Catherina P. Walker
LT Philip M. Chorosevic
LT Kianne D. Casper
LT Vivian M. Elbert
LT Barbara J. Mock
LT Brooke W. Heroux
LT Michael G. McClain
LT David R. Bruno
LTJG David A. Wheeler
LCDR Tonya S. Brown-Stobbe
LT Brett A. Clark
LT Benjamin S. Kanten
LT Thomas W. Garbarini
LT Cindy A. Keefer

From CDC:
LCDR John F. Beltrami
LT Heather D. Bairbrake
LCDR Rachel N. Bronzan
LTJG Deborah V. Myers
LT Jennifer M. Dolan
LTJG La'Trice N. Fowler

From CMS:
LT Crystal J. Russell
LTJG Tiffany M. Taliaferro
LCDR Evelyn Blaemire
LCDR Amy H. Hesselgesser

From DHS:
LT Robert S. Swanson
LCDR Paul S. Kruszka
LTJG Dave J. Erezo
LT Dawn E. Thomas

From FDA:
LT Richard W. Ishihara
LT Monique-Rachelle Lester
LTJG April R. Bowen
LTJG Merideth K. Rose
LT Glendolynn S. Johnson
LT Shani J. Smith
LTJG Christine M. O'Leary
LTJG Aaron B. Otis
LCDR Denise M. Digiulio
LT Margaret E. Faulkner
LT Chung Y. Cho
LCDR Carolyn J. Tabak
LT Brian P. Putz

From HRSA:
LT Enrique Vega
LT Mun K. Vega
LT Keisher Highsmith
LT Tracy L. Pace
LCDR Elmer G. Martin
LT Grafton G. Adams
LT Christian A. Meyer
LT Monica M. Morris
LCDR Christopher D. Cline
LT Julie A. Niven
LTJG Karen Charles
LTJG Julie M. Clement

From IHS:
LT Jon C. Stucki
LT Andrew J. Terranella
LT Abram H. Tanner
LT Ryan M. Freeman
LCDR Ted A. Schlueter
LT Kevin Bliese
LT Kris D. Neset
LT Charissa C. Williar
LTJG James C. Earl
LTJG Craig A. Grunenfelder
LT Anthony P. Tranchita
LT Trent L. Danielson
LT Brittany L. Jarvis
LT Cassi L. Leiferman
LT Julie E. Mannello
LT Aaron P. Middlekauff
LT Terry L. Teller
LT Weston D. Thompson
LCDR Ramon L. Ector
LT Johanna G. Alsayyid
LT Macarthur E. Lucio
LT Sheila A. Weagle
LT Linda S. Zaske
ENS John I. Young
LCDR Mark W. Kleve
LT Joseph W. Collins
LCDR Lisa J. Townshend-Bulson
LT Lori L. Goulet
LT Andra L. Rasmussen
LTJG Scott P. Fillerup
LCDR Tracy L. Williamson
LT Bethany A. Arsenault
LT Cassandra M. Brockelman
LT Ulysses W. Pappas
LT Darrell W. Jones
LT Cara A. Nichols
LT Stephen M. Meacham
LT Matthew J. Zoch
LTJG Douglas W. Barber
LT June P. Hall
LT Kelly L. Thompson
LTJG Shanna M. Moeder
LTJG Carol A. Baughman

From NIH:
LT Radha Nandagopal
LT Phoebe A. Underwood-Davis
LTJG Rafael O. Torrescruz
ENS Dimana Dimitrova
ENS David M. Gianferante
LCDR Paul A. Sato
LT Elijah M. Weisberg
LT Derek A. Newcomer

From OS:
LTJG Jennifer J. Lunney
LTJG Solomon M. Tadele
LT Kenneth M. Monahan
LTJG Elizabeth P. Leavitt
LCDR Harvey J. Ball, Jr.

From PSC:
LT Evelyn A. Seel
LTJG Kristen L. Baker
LCDR Sylvie I. Cohen
LTJG Matthew R. Deptola
LT Shawn D. Taylor

From SAMHSA:
LCDR Nicole D. Gaskin-Laniyan
LT Bethanie R. Parrish
LTJG Benoit K. Dagadu
LCDR Willie Tompkins, Jr.
LT Dexter E. Pritchett, Sr.
LTJG Stacey B. Lesko

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levanshall@cdc.gov

2007-2008 JOAG Voting Membership
would like to wish everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year!!

LCDR Mehrdad Amani, Dental Category
LCDR Philantha Bowen, Nurse Category
LCDR Rhondalyn Cox, Health Services Category
LCDR Jean Pierre DeBarros, Health Services Category
LT Blakeley Denkinger, Dietician Category
LCDR Jessica Feda, Therapist Category
LCDR Maleeka Glover, Scientist Category
LCDR Lori Hall, Pharmacist Category
LCDR Rich Henry, Health Services Category
LCDR Kristina Joyce, Pharmacist Category
LCDR April Kidd, Nurse Category
LCDR Diem-Kieu Ngo, Pharmacist Category
LCDR Mark Osborn, Physician Category
LCDR Dianne Paraoan, Nurse Category
LCDR Thomas Pryor, Ex-officio
LCDR Jonathan Rash, Engineer Category
LCDR Michael Schmoyer, At-large member
CDR Erica Schwartz, Physician Category
LTJG Jessica Schwarz, Environmental Health Category
LCDR Julie Sinclair, Veterinary Category
LCDR Aimee Treffiletti, At-large member