



Leadership, Service, Integrity, and Excellence

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Commissioned Officers Association

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Newsletter Editors

DC COA Publications Subcommittee

LCDR Bic Nguyen

LCDR Kevin Denny

LCDR Yen Anh Bui

LCDR Ryan Presto

LT Stephanie Lim

President's Corner



Dear District of Columbia Commissioned Officers Association Members,

Happy New Year! What an amazing year 2016 has been! As I reflected on the past year and reviewed all the accomplishments of DC COA, I was amazed and inspired by all the events and activities that our members have coordinated, invested and participated in. You have advanced the mission of USPHS of protecting, promoting and advancing the public health in the DC metropolitan area as well as supporting and advocating for the officers of the Commissioned Corp.

The DC COA currently has over 930 active members. There are nine Committees and 25 Subcommittees which are actively involved throughout the year. I would like to take an opportunity to highlight some of DC COA's outstanding accomplishments in 2016:

- We had over 250 officers, families and friends participate in the Army Ten Miler with 27 volunteers manning the PHS tent, as well as many other races and walks to support great causes.
- The golf tournament had over 70 golfers and raised over \$5700 which was donated to the PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation.
- A new subcommittee, PHS Foot March, was formed and the event occurred in November with 55 service members from all branches of the uniformed service. This event was the first of its kind as the only PHS sponsored/led march for all branches of the uniformed service.
- Over 50 officers volunteered at ten regional science fairs as judges throughout the DC metro area and 20 officers from seven PHS categories and seven agencies participated in the Science and Engineering Festival.
- Countless officers volunteered at numerous community outreach events including volunteering at National Capital Area Food Bank and Oral Rehydration Projects, Toys for Tots, World Refugee Day, Guru Nanak Foundation of America health fair, and many PACE educational programs and presentations at local schools.
- Over 50 officers volunteered at numerous veterans outreach events such as Wreaths Across America, Winterhaven Stand Down for Homeless Veterans, the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration Ceremony, the HUD/VA Veteran's Day ceremony, and a Christmas drive for homeless veterans.
- We conducted an educational webinar with over 50 participants highlighting "National Prevention Strategy – Prevention through Active Community Engagement."
- Our Communication Committee is diligently updating our members with volunteer opportunities and events as well as highlighting our accomplishments through weekly email announcements, Facebook, DC COA website and our own newsletters.
- Our Merchandising Committee is always tirelessly working to raise funds for this branch; raising over \$2300 just this past year alone through vending PHS merchandises at multiple events.
- Our Membership Committee is actively recruiting and informing members about DC COA through Officer Basic Courses and PHS Awareness Day.
- We also had many fun, social events for the branch such as a bowling party and summer picnic.
- Our Awards Committee issued more than 430 certificates and letters of appreciation in the past year alone. This number should give you a glimpse of all the great accomplishments this branch has and is doing.

The list goes on and on and I am just amazed by your dedication, commitment and sacrifice to serve this DC metropolitan area and make PHS known to the public. Thank you for your time and using your talents to support this organization. I am so proud of this amazing organization and salute all of you for making DC COA and PHS shine in the DC metropolitan area.

Sincerely,

CDR Judy Park
DC COA President

DCCOA
Board Members
2014-2016

President	CDR Judy Park
Vice President	CDR Qiao Bobo
Treasurer	LCDR David Foss
Secretary	LCDR Sarah Lee
Member-at-large Nurse	CDR Lakeeta Carr
Member-at-large Engineer	CDR Brad Cunningham
Member-at-large Scientist	LCDR Neil Bonzagni
Member-at-large Medical	CDR Suzette Peng
Member-at-large Dental	CAPT Phillip Woods
Member-at-large Pharmacist	CDR Kristina Donohue
Member-at-large HSO	CAPT Dimitrus Culbreath
Member-at-large Combined category	CDR Hien Albright
Member-at-large Retired Officer	Rebecca Ashery (CAPT, ret.)
Immediate Past President	CDR Jeremy Wally

John H. Enders

**FIRE COMPANY & RESCUE SQUAD
BERRYVILLE, VIRGINIA**

John H. Enders Fire Company & Rescue Squad Volunteer Firefighter

By LT Gene Crisp

On July 25, 2016, IHSC (ICE Health Service Corps) Office of Communications, Communications Specialist, LT Gene Crisp, was selected and appointed by the John H. Enders board of directors as an official volunteer firefighter in Berryville, Virginia. A typical probationary firefighter task usually consists of swapping out Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) cylinders, assisting with connecting and laying out water supply lines, flaking out attack hose lines, and setting up positive pressure ventilation (PPV) fans and portable lighting. In addition to learning probationary firefighter duties and responsibilities, volunteer firefighters have to complete emergency medical technician (EMT), paramedic and advance firefighting training. LT Crisp successfully completed his orientation and SCBA training with the department. During orientation probationary firefighters are required to study the fire and rescue apparatus and basic procedures. In addition to learning where the fire and rescue equipment is located on the ambulances and fire trucks, they also need to learn fire safety, the administration and organization of the company,

and familiarize themselves with the EMS and fire equipment.

Eventually all volunteer firefighters will be required to attend an all-expense paid firefighting academy where they will be taught advanced firefighting skills. Every firefighter is trained on how to use different types of firefighting equipment and machinery used when responding to emergency situations. SCBA is a self-contained breathing apparatus used to enter smoke-filled buildings or used during structure fires. SCBA gear prevents firefighters from experiencing severe smoke inhalation while combating fires. During SCBA training firefighting, students are taught how to refill, clean, and maintain their SCBA bottles and gear. They are also taught techniques like how to “Buddy Breath”. “Buddy Breathing” is when two firefighters learn how to share one SCBA oxygen tank to breathe oxygen while exiting a smoke filled room of a burning building during an emergency situation.

Since LT Crisp has joined the John H. Enders Fire Company & Rescue Squad as a Volunteer Firefighter, it has taught him how to identify, analyze, and resolve complex problems. Becoming a volunteer fire-

fighter has inspired LT Crisp to motivate co-workers faced with work related issues by encouraging them to work hard toward achieving their personal best. Problem-solving is an essential trait that all United States Public Health Service (USPHS) officers should strive to learn, if they haven't already. Getting involved in community events and activities has allowed LT Crisp to develop his interpersonal skills, enhance esprit de corps, and gives him the opportunity to collaborate with the general public. Engaging in conversation with city officials and people in the community during these public events gives an officer the perfect opportunity to promote



LT Crisp standing next to a fire engine with his SCBA gear on.

USPHS Officers Educate Children on Healthy Lifestyles

By CAPT Sandeep (Sonny) Saini and CDR Elaine Cunningham

Approximately one year ago, two USPHS pharmacist officers, CAPT Sandeep (Sonny) Saini and CDR Elaine Cunningham, educated preschool students at The Goddard School in Herndon, VA on medication safety and poison prevention. The officers received such an outstanding response from parents, children, and teachers of the school that they were invited back to discuss another important public health topic for children -- healthy lifestyles. Specifically, CAPT Saini and CDR Cunningham presented to 35 pre-kindergarten and elementary school age students on making smart choices when it comes to healthy eating and active living, both of which are amongst the U.S. Surgeon General's top priorities in improving the health of the Nation.

The officers arrived in their Summer Whites and attracted the attention and curiosity of the students and teachers. CAPT Saini and CDR Cunningham took this opportunity to discuss their responsibilities as USPHS Pharmacist Officers and the role they play in protecting public health.

The topic of healthy lifestyles is extremely important, especially with current childhood obesity rates hovering over 20% in the United States and with children spending less time being physically active. CAPT Saini and CDR Cunningham created an interactive presentation that encouraged children to make healthy choices in regard to eating and fitness. The officers discussed the consequences of poor health and emphasized the importance of a balanced, nutritious diet and exercise to grow strong and healthy.

The officers used ChooseMyPlate.gov as a resource to educate the students on ideal dietary guidelines, including the different food groups they should eat from (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy) for a healthy diet. To reinforce the children's

knowledge, the officers then presented the children with graphics of "healthy" foods and "unhealthy" foods and quizzed the children on which foods are healthy choices. The officers also taught the children to "eat the rainbow" and presented them with five special bracelets, each of a different color representing a food group

(green=vegetables, red=fruits, orange=grains, blue=dairy, and purple=protein). They explained to the students that each day when they eat something healthy from one of the food groups they should move the corresponding-colored bracelet to the other hand. The goal is to have all five bracelets move from one hand to the other hand at the end of each meal, which represents that they had something healthy to eat from each food group.

Furthermore, CAPT Saini and CDR Cunningham discussed the benefits of physical fitness and that children should be active for at least one hour each day. To serve as examples and to underscore the importance of physical fitness, the two officers engaged in an outdoor activity with the children after the presentation. CAPT Saini and CDR Cunningham explained the rules of their favorite childhood game, kickball, and



CDR Elaine Cunningham and CAPT Sonny Saini and their children presenting at The Goddard School in Herndon, VA on healthy lifestyles.

played a fun game with the children. The kickball game brought back enjoyable childhood memories for the officers and created new memories for all the children.

The students and teachers of The Goddard School in Herndon, VA were truly appreciative of the officers for presenting at their school to educate them on healthy lifestyles. In the following weeks, the teachers reported that the children were very excited to "eat the rainbow" and to move their bracelets from one hand to another. In addition, the teachers incorporated more physical activities into the children's daily curriculum. The officers enjoyed interacting with the children and teachers and were thrilled to learn that they inspired others to live a healthy lifestyle.



CDR Cunningham playing kickball with The Goddard School student.



DC COA Golf Tournament 2016

By LCDR David Schwab

The District of Columbia branch held its 9th annual golf tournament fundraiser on September 12, 2016. The location was once again the scenic Maryland National Golf Club in Middletown, Maryland. A field of 76 golfers participated in the event along with a number of volunteers, including COF Executive Director James Currie. We got off to a great start with Mr. Caleb Green singing the National Anthem before the start of the tournament. The weather was a perfect 80 degrees and rain was not even remotely in the forecast as everyone enjoyed a fun-filled day of golf, contests, and prizes. There were many raffle prizes handed out and we even had some fun on the course with multiple Hole-in-One chances, including a chance to win a brand new Toyota. We also featured a putting contest and had folks from Dixon Golf at two locations offering golfers chances to win more prizes. The field consisted of both current and retired PHS officers, and many civilian friends and family from all over the DC Metropolitan area.

At the end of the day, everyone relaxed at Maryland National's own Schroyer's Tavern and enjoyed a fantastic lunch menu provided by Executive Chef Matt Strawsburg. Throughout the afternoon, raffle prizes were given to lucky winners and other great prizes were given to the top 3 teams and other contest winners.

The amount of money taken in at this year's tournament was just under \$6000. Thanks to all of the sponsors for their support and participation who helped make this event so successful. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to everyone who took the day off to come out and play. Thanks again to LCDR Andrew Fine for helping to plan the event, CDR Hien Albright, LCDR Renee Humbert, and to the staff of the Commissioned Officers Foundation for coming out and showing their support for this great event. Additional thanks to Mr. William Jones for assisting with the photography duties, helping me to capture all of the action from the tournament. If you would like to see the action for yourself, you can visit:

<https://flic.kr/s/aHskGTfZVu>



Clubhouse at Maryland National Golf Course in Middletown, MD



CDR Matt Albright hitting his tee shot as LCDR Andrew Fine watches

PHS Officers Help a Local Community and Much More Through Habitat for Humanity

By CDR Vincent Sansone and LCDR Sasha Latonis



CDR Vincent Sansone, LT Kyle Snyder, LCDR Kevin Denny, LCDR Sasha Latonis, LT Yen Anb Bui, and LCDR Garrette Martin-Yeboah



LT Kyle Snyder

The mission of the USPHS and FDA go hand in hand to enhance, promote and protect the health of our nation. The officers stationed at the FDA’s Office of Generic Drugs work extremely hard to ensure this mission is carried out. Sometimes their impact is intangible and not easily seen. A group of these highly dedicated officers had a chance to volunteer for an event where they could actually see the benefit of their contributions. This event was a Habitat for Humanity ReStore Project located in Aberdeen, MD. Habitat for Humanity ReStores are nonprofit home improvement stores that

receive donations such as furniture, appliances, and building materials and then sell them to the public. The profit is then used to help build houses in the community. The officers assisted in building out the interior of this ReStore in order to get it ready for its grand opening.

with drywall. This allowed for these officers to successfully hang doors, install drywall, cut trim, remove debris, and repair the concrete floor. The civilian counterparts at the build also saw our PHS shirts being worn proudly and we took this opportunity to educate them regarding the importance of the Public Health Service and our contributions to the Nation. After the event concluded, the overarching sentiment among the officers is hard to put in words. The pride, sense of accomplishment and feeling that one truly helped comes close. If these or any fellow PHS officers have the chance to volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, the reward is well worth it.



LCDR Kevin Denny, LT Yen Anb Bui, and CDR Vincent Sansone

Situations in life that are a win for everyone come rarely. This however was one of those rare instances. The most obvious benefit was that these efforts help less fortunate families procure a home they may otherwise have never known about. This alone was enough to motivate these PHS Officers to give up a Saturday and volunteer. These PHS officers soon found out this opportunity went well beyond this obvious cause to help. The fellow officers had a chance to get to know each other outside of work, forge new friendships, and acquire new skills. Bill Schmidt, construction supervisor for the build, provided expertise in techniques for measuring wood, using a table saw, using a drill, and in how to make a clean cut



LCDR Garrette Martin-Yeboah

Thermy™ the Thermometer

By LT Shercoda “Cody” Smaw

The USA Science and Engineering Festival (USASEF) free Expo was held on April 16 and 17, 2016 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. The mission of the USASEF is to stimulate and sustain the interest of the nation’s youth in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) by producing and presenting the most compelling and educational festival in the world. There were many outstanding exhibits for children to enjoy. Professionals in all of the STEM fields volunteered to engage the youth and the adults that were present.

A true crowd stopper that all the children loved was Thermy™ the Food Safety Thermometer. Thermy™ is the symbol of a national consumer education campaign designed to promote the use of food thermometers. The campaign is a consumer education initiative of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This year at the Food Safety Discovery Zone exhibit, Thermy™ the Thermometer (LT Shercoda Smaw) showed children the appropriate tem-

peratures that your refrigerator and freezer need to be to keep food safe for consumption. Thermy™ also displayed to the children the “danger zone” temperature where bacteria (such as *Salmonella* and *E.coli*) grows and why it is very important to have several thermometers in your home, for not only storage in the refrigerator and freezer but also when checking if food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature when cooking meat, poultry, and egg products to pre-



LT Shercoda Smaw, LT Erin Kincaid, Kevin Dutch, Melissa Hammar, and Kyle Brierly (All from USDA/FSIS/IS)

Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS) officer playing the food safety game with children where they won prizes. My elevator speech got many high school students interested in joining the USPHS. The other half of the time was spent as Thermy™ which I felt made a huge impact. I look forward to volunteering again and putting my acting skills to use as Thermy™ the Thermometer.



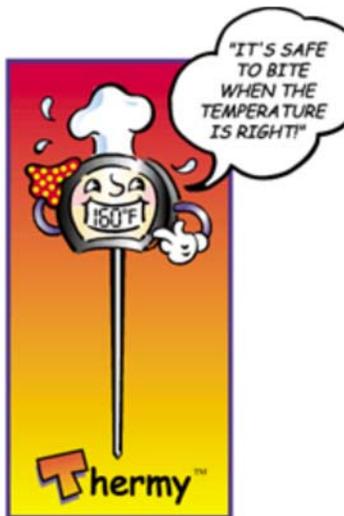
LT Shercoda Smaw (Thermy™the Thermometer costume), Shelby Blake, and Charles Blake

vent undercooking and foodborne illness. Thermy™’s message is: “It’s Safe to Bite When the Temperature Is Right!”

The experience as Thermy™ the Thermometer was awesome. The children were so much fun and they really wanted to learn about food safety. I spent half my volunteer time as a U.S.



LT Shercoda Smaw (USPHS/USDA) at the Food Safety Wheel Game, Kyle Brierly (USDA), Jessica Forshee (USDA), and Charles Blake (Salmonella costume)



National Cancer Institute Preparedness Fair

By Jeff Alderdice and Mona Patel



Left to Right: CDR Vandna Kishore, LCDR CDR Mona Patel, LCDR Jonee Mearns, CDR Carol Corbie and LCDR Antoinette Percy-Laurry (not in photo) Organized by CDR Latonia Ford

Each year, FEMA designates September as National Preparedness Month and encourages preparedness partners nationwide to remind the public that we must take action to prepare, now and throughout the year, for the types of emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, and visit. The



2015 National Preparedness Month theme was “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today.”

On September 9th, a team of Public Health Service officers, led by LCDR Mona Patel, teamed up with preparedness partners at the National Cancer Institute’s Emergency Preparedness and Physical Security Branch and participated in a National Preparedness Fair at the Johns Hopkins University Montgomery County Campus in Rockville, MD. This fair was open to the public and provided attendees with information on how to make an emergency plan, how to put together an emergency supply kit, and how to stay informed during emergency situations.

This fair was very well attended and included educational booths from a wide variety of preparedness stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors including:

- American Red Cross
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Johns Hopkins University
- MD Responds
- Montgomery Amateur Radio Club
- Montgomery County Auxiliary Communications Service
- Montgomery County Community Emergency Response Team
- Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
- National Cancer Institute Emergency Response Team
- National Cancer Institute Emergency Management and Physical Security Branch

- National Institutes of Health Division of Emergency Management
- National Library of Medicine’s Disaster Information Management and Research Center
- City of Rockville, MD Police Department
- U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

The variety of these groups provided great value to the participants, with each organization being able to offer information that was specific to their mission and also differed from the other information being offered that day. The Public Health Service team was able to disseminate information regarding the various categories within the Public Health Service as well as speak to people about all the benefits and career paths as an officer.

One of the goals of National Preparedness Month is to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to all types of emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks. The Public Health Service was able to materially contribute to this national goal on a local level through the service of the dedicated team of officers that participated in this fair.



PHS Memorabilia

Show Your "PHS Pride"

United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

Increase Esprit De Corps!!

Fleece Jacket



Non-pilling fleece coat

- Features 1" elastic waist and cuffs.
- Full zip front and 2 zippered pockets.
- USPHS Logo embroidered in full color on the left chest.

Colors: Yellow, Royal Blue, Navy and Black,

Unisex Sizes: S, M, L, XL

\$35 Each



Water Bottle



32 oz. Nalgene Water Bottle

- PHS logo screen-printed
- BPA Free
- Tritan Wide Mouth
- Blue bottle with gold logo or Clear bottle with blue logo

Ideal for staying well-hydrated throughout the day.

\$15 Each

Padfolio



PHS logo debossed imprint on front of padfolio.

- Size-13"x 10"x 1"
- Zippered closure, with exterior and interior document pockets
- 8-1/2"x11" writing pad
- Pen loop, 6 business card holders 2 flash drive holders, 2 mesh ID windows, and 1 media pocket

\$20 Each

For more information, visit our website, www.dccoa.org/phs_pride_merchandise or contact CDR Jill Hammond at jill.hammond@fda.hhs.gov or LCDR Nisha Antoine at Nisha.Antoine@fsis.usda.gov.

Email your order to: dccoamerchandise@gmail.com and send a check payable to "DC COA" with \$8 postage to:

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FCON, DCCOA, & USPHS Music Ensemble: The USPHS Holiday Mingle and Jingle Concert 2016

By: CDR Diane Nhu, Photo Credit: CDR Kun Shen

These photos highlight the collaboration between DC Commissioned Officer Association (DCCOA), FDA Commissioned Officer Network (FCON), and the USPHS Music Ensemble. They put together the first ever USPHS Mingle and Jingle Concert. The event was held at the FDA, White Oak Campus in Silver Spring, MD. The event also included a Cookie Contest. It was well attended, not only by PHS officers, but also civilians. RADMs Schweitzer and Giberson also stopped by!

USPHS Ceremonial Band



USPHS Choral Group



CAPT Coppola



Cookie Contest



RADM Schweitzer



RADM Giberson

Registration Open!!!!

2017

USPHS SYMPOSIUM

Chattanooga Marriott & Convention Center

Chattanooga, TN June 6-9

Join fellow officers at this year's
Symposium for great networking opportunities
and continuing education credits!

Highlights include:

- Keynote presentation by Dr. James Marks
- Panel discussion featuring RADM Ali Kahn (ret) and CAPT Lynn Slepiskii looking at "A culture of Health: Success and Challenges"
- Anchor and Caduceus Dinner and Silent Auction
- Category day
- And much more!

For more information, please visit the [symposium website](#).

