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Dear District of Columbia Commissioned Officers Association Members,

Welcome to the 2018 fiscal year as July 1st kicks off the new fiscal year. I hope your summers are going well so far. Looking back on fiscal year 2017, DC COA has accomplished so much in promoting and advancing public health in the DC metropolitan area through numerous community outreach events as well as advocating for the PHS officers in the area.

All the hard work that you have poured into DC COA did not go unnoticed as DC COA was awarded the “Large Branch of the Year” award at the 2017 USPHS Symposium & Training in Chattanooga, TN. I had the honor of accepting the award on behalf of DC COA at the Awards Ceremony and I could not have been more proud of our organization. We were also recognized as one of the Distinguished Local Branches of COA during the Local Branch Leadership Workshop. As the biggest local branch, we have become an exemplary model branch, not just because of our size but because of the impact we have made in the DC metropolitan area through our various outreach and networking initiatives. I had the privilege of presenting during the leadership workshop to highlight all the amazing work that our branch is doing and also to show other branches how to plan some of our big events like the annual Science Fair Judging and PHS Foot March. I hope you know that your service and dedication to this organization are being recognized and that you are exemplary officers for the Corps. Keep up the good work and let’s continue to strive to become the model local branch and PHS officers. Congratulations DC COA!

Sincerely,

CDR Judy Park
DC COA President
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<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>CDR Judy Park</td>
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<td>Vice President</td>
<td>CDR Qiao Bobo</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>LCDR David Foss</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>LCDR Sarah Lee</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Nurse</td>
<td>CDR Lakeeta Carr</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Engineer</td>
<td>CDR Brad Cunningham</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Scientist</td>
<td>LCDR Neil Bonzagni</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Medical</td>
<td>CDR Suzette Peng</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Dental</td>
<td>LCDR Eleanor Fleming</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Pharmacist</td>
<td>LCDR Emily Baker</td>
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<td>Member-at-large HSO</td>
<td>CDR Elizabeth Garza</td>
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<td>Member-at-large Combined category</td>
<td>LT Courtney Drevo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member-at-large Retired Officer</td>
<td>J. Terrell Hoffeld (CAPT, ret.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Past President</td>
<td>CDR Jeremy Wally</td>
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DC COA Regional Science Fairs

By LCDR Ashlee Januszewicz Pharm.D. RAC

Each year the DC COA Science Fair Judges Subcommittee solicits volunteer officers to serve as judges in regional science fairs. The 2017 Science Fair season kicked off on March 4th with the Anne Arundel County Regional Science & Engineering Fair. This was the first out of eleven regional high school science fairs in D.C., Maryland and Virginia. This year, over thirty commissioned officers attended the fairs, offering their support and encouragement to local high school students by serving as science fair judges.

Anne Arundel County Regional Science & Engineering Fair March 4, 2017
Northern Virginia Regional Science & Engineering Fair March 4, 2017
District of Columbia Science & Engineering Fair March 11, 2017
Prince William Manassas Regional Science Fair March 11, 2017
Fairfax County Regional Science & Engineering Fair March 18, 2017
Morgan State University Science Fair March 18, 2017
Montgomery County Area Science Fair March 18, 2017
Prince George’s Area Science Fair March 18, 2017
Loudoun County Regional Science & Engineering Fair March 23, 2017
Baltimore County/Towson Science Fair March 25, 2017
Frederick County Science & Engineering Fair April 1, 2017

As depicted in the charts below, the judges represented numerous categories and agencies. The students benefited by interacting with judges from diverse science backgrounds. The science fairs were very well attended by teachers and other professionals in the health and science fields. The opportunity for officers to serve as a judge is not only great for officer networking but also allows for education on the USPHS to the many attendees.

The officers were busy listening, watching and mentoring over 350 high school science fair projects. The judges then deliberated to determine which students’ projects would win an award. This is an excellent opportunity for all parties involved. Don’t just take our word for it, LCDR Perrine has served as a judge for two years and says, “All the science fairs I’ve attended have been very welcoming, professional, and require limited preparation. The opportunity to advertise the commissioned corps to all present (and there are a lot of people at these events!) and talk to the next generations of public health practitioners is as much of an honor as a responsibility.”

If you have considered volunteering but hesitated in the past, we welcome you to experience this great opportunity. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to one of the DC COA Science Fair Judges Subcommittee members or to any of the officers who have served as judges.

2017 DC COA Science Fair Judges Subcommittee Members:
CDR Yvette Waples
CDR Katherine Won
LCDR Stephanie Begansky
LCDR Ashlee Januszewicz
LCDR Alicia Sherrell

Pictured (left to right): LCDR Camilli, LT Roxana Adeuya, LCDR Gwendolyn Hudson, and CAPT Beverly Dandridge

Pictured (left to right): CDR Robert Kang, LCDR Quynh-Van Tran, CDR Melissa Burns, LCDR Elizabeth Garza, and CDR Anthony Garza
National ParkRX Day at the Rock Creek Regional Park in Maryland

By CDR Ruby Lerner, CDR Christina Thompson, and CDR Hawye Yan

National ParkRx Day is a day of celebration throughout the United States as a growing number of healthcare providers prescribing to their patients a healthy dose of nature. It is a day for everyone to give themselves the gift of good health with a walk in national and local parks. Healthcare providers across the country are writing prescriptions for recommended activity. Being outdoors whether walking, relaxing, or engaging in an activity on a regular basis combats a number of health concerns including high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and depression. The National Park Service lists the following reasons to go outdoors and enjoy a walk in the park:

- Being in nature can improve your mood.
- Having access to parks can increase physical activity and combat obesity.
- Parks and their health benefits can be enjoyed by anyone regardless of who you are and where you come from.
- Contact with nature through parks improves all people’s physical, mental and spiritual health.
- Parks foster social connections which are vital to community cohesion and contribute to social well-being.
- For children, parks foster active play, which is associated with physical, cognitive and social benefits.
- For adolescents, parks improve mental and social health during what is often a challenging time of life.
- Park use is linked to physical and mental health benefits among adults, especially older adults.

In 2015, the former United States Surgeon General, Vivek H. Murthy, released a call to action to foster walking in parks and green spaces and creating walkable communities to promote public health. National ParkRx Day builds on this call to action and aligns with the U.S. Surgeon General’s Step It Up! Campaign.

ParkRx Day is typically on the last Sunday of National Park Week. This year, National Park Week was from April 15th to April 23rd. On Sunday, April 23, more than 50 ParkRx Day events took place in national, state, and local parks across the country. CAPT Sarah Newman, the National Park Service Director of the Office of Public Health, sponsored the ParkRx Day events nationwide. CDRs Ruby Lerner, Christina Thompson, and Hawye Yan invited local USPHS Officers to celebrate the second National ParkRx Day at the Rock Creek Regional Park in Derwood, Maryland.

The following USPHS officers and family members of CDR Matthew Sullivan, CDR Hawye Yan, LCDR Long Pham, and LT Kodilichi Nwankwo completed a 2.3-mile walk along the Lake Needwood trail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officer Name</th>
<th>Family Member Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>CDR Nam Jou Chun-Yi</td>
<td>LCDR Long Pham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR Carol Corbie</td>
<td>LCDR James Speckhardt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR Matthew Sullivan</td>
<td>LCDR Gail Tarlton</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCDR Kent Bui</td>
<td>LT Michelle Hoshue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCDR Kimberly Compton</td>
<td>LT Kodilichi Nwankwo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCDR Christopher Le</td>
<td>LT Santhana Webb</td>
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<td>LCDR Eithu Lwin</td>
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References:

(Photograph courtesy of LCDR James Speckhardt)
On April 5, 2017, the National Walk Day was celebrated at Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with over 200 officers and civilians participants. The National Walking Day is a month-long effort initiated by the American Heart Association to encourage Americans to be more active. In support of the National Walking Day and the Surgeon General’s Step It Up! Initiative, the Black Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG) Community Outreach Step It Up Subcommittee lead by CDR Latonia Ford and the Junior Officers Advisory Group (JOAG) Public Health and Community Service Committee’s Everybody Walk! lead by LCDR Margaret Caulk, invited officers and civilians to join together and walk around the FDA White Oak Campus in Silver Spring, MD. This event promoted walking and walkable communities was also supported by FDA, the Nurse Professional Advisory Committee (NPAC) and the District of Columbia Commissioned Officers Association (DC COA) by spreading the word.

FDA officers and civilians participate in national walk day 2017!
Volunteering at the Heart Ball Events
(Baltimore & Howard County)
By LCDR Garrette Martin-Yeboah

Officers making a difference for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Awareness

The Greater Maryland Chapters of the American Heart Association (AHA) annually sponsor two Heart Ball events. These silent auction and black tie gala fundraising events occur in Baltimore and Howard County, Maryland. Bringing together more than 400 prominent physicians, corporate, healthcare and community leaders, the events garner support for both prevention and awareness regarding heart disease, stroke prevention and research.

The Baltimore COA Public Health/Health Promotion and Environmental Subcommittee were pleased to have a total of 15 officers volunteering for these two events. The Heart Ball is the signature fundraiser for the American Heart Association as well as the American Stroke Association. Under the coordination of LCDR Garrette Martin-Yeboah, USPHS officers representing both BCOAG and Baltimore COA have participated in the Heart Ball event for the past 4 years. This year PHS Officers were requested, by AHA organizers, as the only set up volunteers due to their commitment, dependability, professionalism and enthusiasm for the event. Baltimore COA is committed to giving back to the community and advancing the nation’s public health by serving along with other health and wellness organizations.
The FDA White Oak Classic was held on May 12th, 2017. Although, the temperature outside was a little cool (~60 degrees) and the skies were overcast – this made for perfect running weather! As it has in years past, the event kicked off with a high energy warm-up session held just outside the FDA main entrance. The warm up session helped to get all participants loose and energized for their 5K run or 2.5-mile health walk. Following the warm up session, all event attendees were treated to a special performance of the national anthem by the White Oak Winners, and boy did they blow it out of the park! For those of you unfamiliar with the White Oak Winners, they are children aged 4-5, who attend day care at the FDA-White Oak Campus. After the national anthem concluded, a starting horn marked the commencement of the 11th annual running of the White Oak Classic! The out-and-back course which saw participants navigate long stretches of graded incline, presented quite a challenge.

USPHS Athletics had 43 participants and 54 supporters (first picture above); this included numerous PHS first responders (second picture above) coming out to cheer on fellow officers and displaying their PHS pride! Bearing the USPHS Flag throughout the challenging hill-infused 5K course was CAPT Chamberlain (Thank you CAPT Chamberlain)! Overall, this year’s White Oak Classic was once again a success in promoting healthy lifestyle activities and fostering greater interaction among FDA staff and PHS officers! The 5K race and 2.5-mile health walk combined to have 1,774 total participants (990 runners and 784 walkers) and comprised of FDA employees, FDA contractors, White Oak GSA employees, and White Oak Air Force employees. A special thank you goes out to all event coordinators and participants who made this year’s White Oak Classic possible. All race results are available at: https://my.racewire.com/results (search: White Oak Classic).
PHS Hike at Great Falls and C & O Canal National Historical Park

By LTJG Rachel Forche, LT Tuan Nguyen, CDR Matthew Weinburke, & CDR Marivic Fields

Carderock, Maryland – April 29, 2017
It was a beautiful spring day with people from all walks of life walking, jogging, and bicycling along the tow path. Seven officers, an endocrinologist (who has applied to USPHS), a U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman, and Lolek the Cockapoo, completed an 11-mile PHS Athletics approved hike on the scenic Great Falls, Maryland and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park tow path. The group met at the Carderock Recreation Area (near mile marker 10) and hiked to Swains Lock (mile marker 16) and back¹. This particular route is one of the most heavily traversed sections of Great Falls and the C & O Canal.

When the weather is nice, this area is crawling with outdoor enthusiasts out to enjoy hiking on the challenging Billy Goat Trail, rock climbing in Mather Gorge, kayaking in the Potomac rapids below Great Falls, or just strolling along the picturesque towpath. One can also simply enjoy the serenity and beauty of the surroundings.

Several of the participants also extended the hike and explored several of the Billy Goat trails. The Billy Goat trails are a wonderful feature of this area that can make hiking a more adventurous and strenuous activity². The group finished the hike in four hours. Everyone enjoyed the hike and it was a great opportunity to meet officers from various agencies within the National Capital Region. The organizers of this hike wanted to introduce hiking as another PHS Athletics event in order to take advantage of the natural resources that the area has to offer.

To note, PHS Athletics has now reduced the requirement length of a hike from 13 miles to 10 miles, so we look forward to having more PHS Athletics hiking opportunities in the future³.

This is only the beginning of exploring the many hiking trails that DC, VA, and MD have to offer!

References:
3. https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/phsa/

Pictured (left to right): PO3 Joshua Celis, LT Shercoda Smaw, CDR Jonathan Kwan, CDR Matthew Weinburke, LTJG Rachel Forche, LT Tara Lemons, Dr. Andrew Bremer, CDR Marivic Fields (and Lolek), and LT Tuan Nguyen.
Lolek attracted lots of positive attention as the group hiked on the tow path together in PHS apparel.
The 10th Annual DC-Commissioned Officer Association Golf Tournament to benefit PHS Family Programs and Scholarships

The District of Columbia Metropolitan Area Branch of the Commissioned Officer Association (DC COA) is proud to announce the 10th Annual DC COA Golf Tournament on September 11, 2017 at Maryland National Golf Club to benefit the Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Officers Foundation. This will be our fourth year at Maryland National, a Golf.com-rated top 10 course in Maryland.

There are numerous sponsorship opportunities which include customized tee sponsorship, banner recognition and printed tournament program recognition. Please also consider the donation of store merchandise or gift cards for an on-site raffle. All proceeds will benefit the PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation.

Proceeds from the event will be used for fulfilling the mission of the PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation [http://www.phscof.org]. Some of the programs funded by the event are:

- Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop Honorary Lecture
- Educational Scholarship Fund for children of officers
- Promote education and training for health professionals and improve the capabilities of the public health workforce

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is an elite team of more than 6,000 well-trained, highly qualified public health professionals dedicated to delivering the Nation's public health promotion and disease prevention programs and advancing public health science. As one of America's seven Uniformed Services, the Commissioned Corps fills essential public health leadership and service roles within the Nation's Federal Government agencies and programs.

Golf lovers can tee off for a good cause on September 11, 2017 at Maryland National Golf Club. Play format will be a four-person scramble with an entry fee of $115/person. This year is a big anniversary as we celebrate TEN years of putting on this fantastic event. We look forward to seeing all of our officers, families, friends, sponsors, and community members this year!

The PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. All donations to the foundation are fully tax-deductible as charitable donations for income tax purposes.
PHS Memorabilia
Show Your “PHS Pride”
United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps
Increase Esprit De Corps!!

- Non-pilling fleece coat features 1” elastic waist and cuffs.
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  Unisex Sizes: S, M, L, XL

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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.

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