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USU Surgical Global Health Expert Named Fulbright Alumni Ambassador

Bethesda, Md. – Navy Capt. (Dr.) Tamara Worlton, director of the Division of Global Surgery at the Uniformed Services University (USU) and director of Surgical Operations at USU's Center for Global Health Engagement (CGHE), has been selected as a Fulbright Alumni Ambassador, one of the most prestigious international exchange programs in the world.

Fulbright Alumni Ambassadors serve as a bridge between their communities and the Fulbright Program, administered by the Institute of International Education in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. They play a crucial role in promoting international understanding, collaboration, and cultural exchange through their continued engagement with the Fulbright community and their broader networks, engaging in outreach, networking with stakeholders in their communities, and building networks to support those involved in the program. To be selected, applicants must demonstrate that they meet the education, experience, and career profile requirements, which often includes holding the highest degree in their field. Fulbright Alumni Ambassadors are chosen for their talent, commitment, and professionalism, and have served at universities and research institutions in more than 160 countries. Worlton will serve as a Fulbright Alumni Ambassador from 2024 through 2026.

"The Fulbright Program is an amazing opportunity to broaden cultural exchange and deepen international relationships. This fits so well with our efforts in DoD global health engagement with promoting capacity building, interoperability, and subject matter expert exchanges," said Worlton. "Additionally, it gives those of us in DoD an appreciation of the diplomacy and development efforts of the State Department. My experience in Sri Lanka was life changing on a personal and professional level. Through the Fulbright Program, I was able to spend the time needed to really appreciate the challenges and opportunities of trauma care in resource constrained settings."

A 2003 USU medical school graduate, Worlton completed her general surgery residency at the former National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., in 2008, before completing a fellowship in bariatric surgery at the Cleveland Clinic in 2010.

Worlton is recognized as a Navy expert in surgical Global Health Engagement (GHE), and has earned the additional military qualification in GHE as well as a Graduate Certificate in Global Health and Global Health Engagement from USU. She has worked extensively in civilian academic global surgery and within DoD GHE for surgery and trauma care, which culminated in being awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 2020 to Sri Lanka to study trauma systems. Her research has led to a research collaboration with Harvard Medical School's Program for Global Surgery and Social Change. The joint effort, the Integrating Military Partnerships and Civilian Trauma (IMPACT) study, is investigating integration of military and civilian trauma systems as a potential method to address the disproportionate burden of trauma mortality in low and middle income countries.

“Dr. Worlton is a respected expert in global health engagement, and her international experience and scholarship make her an excellent (and obvious) choice for this distinction,” said Dr. Eric Elster, dean of USU’s Hebert School of Medicine. “She is an ideal ambassador for the Uniformed Services University who exemplifies the best of military medicine at home and abroad.”

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About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences: The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation’s federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active-duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. USU also has graduate programs in oral biology, biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research. The University's research program covers a wide range of areas important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.