

The Official USU Newsletter

the pulse

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Safety Award presented to USU-led team

by Ken Frager

Sharon Willis

Deputy Vice President for External Affairs and Managing Editor

Ken Frager

Public Affairs Specialist

Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine

Production Editor

MC1 Chad Hallford

Writer

Christine Creenan-Jones

Contributing Writer

Lori Fields

Layout and Design

Production

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Courtesy Photo

Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Anthony Artino, (left) monitors a naval aviator's heart rate and blood-oxygen saturation during dynamic hypoxia training in a F/A-18 tactical operational flight trainer.



Photo by Ken Frager

On the cover

Navy Religious Programs Specialist 2nd Class Ayanfemi Ayanwale helps to prepare the National Naval Medical Center Chapel for one of the day's religious services. (See story page 3)



Navy Lieutenant Commander (Dr.) Anthony Artino, assistant professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics, led a team of researchers who were presented the 2010 SAFE Association Award for Team Achievement. The award, which recognizes their work on the Naval Aviation Survival Training Program Reduced Oxygen Breathing Device (NASTP ROBD) Training Development project, was presented during the 48th annual SAFE Symposium, held recently in San Diego.

The research team was selected for their work to significantly change and vastly improve the way the Navy provides aviation physiology and survival training. "This team has been working together effectively for several years and we have made great strides," said Artino, "and saved lives. It's an

honor that we were selected for the recognition, but our work continues here at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and at our affiliated program sites."

According to the selection committee, as a result of their efforts, the U.S. Navy is the world leader in the delivery of simulator-based hypoxia training, having trained thousands of aviators from all services and dozens of countries with one-on-one hypoxia recognition and recovery using aircraft-specific procedures and equipment for the utmost in training realism. The ROBD training concept, as developed by the NASTP ROBD Training Development Team, has been widely adopted within the U.S., by both the Air Force and civilian aviation, and is now being exported to improve aviation safety abroad.

Citizen Sailor's prayers answered

by Christine Creenan-Jones



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class Ayanfemi Ayanwale supports the USU's chaplain in all matters, from coordinating services to protecting him on the frontlines of battle. "My job is very rewarding," he said. "I work with the chaplain to increase morale and make people feel good. It's important to know that I'm making a difference."

Religious Program Specialist 2nd Class (Fleet Marine Force Warfare) Ayanfemi Ayanwale grew up in a tight-knit family with many traditions and customs. Music and laughter filled his home, but life was still hard in Lagos, a bustling city on the south western coast of Nigeria.

Poverty was rife in his community and opportunities were scarce, but Ayanwale – a student at the time – dreamed of a better life.

"America is full of possibilities," he said. "I wanted to come here from the time I was a little boy because I knew I could find what I was looking for – a great education and the chance at prosperity."

The search for these ideals began when Ayanwale was still a young man attending a local Nigerian university. A gifted scholar, he was invited to the United States through a visa lottery. He travelled more than 5,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean and eventually settled in Houston, Texas. There, he attended school and took various jobs, including work as a corrections officer in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Ayanwale's image of America wasn't tarnished by his job in a grim prison system full of rigors and despair. He fell in love with his new home and everything it represented.

"There is freedom here that people don't get to experience in other parts of the world," he said.

Protecting this freedom became Ayanwale's next goal. Like many, he was struck deeply by the September 11 terror attacks on America.

"I wanted to serve the country that had done so much for me," he said.

To Ayanwale, this meant enlisting in the Navy. He joined under a special provision allowing non-citizens into the armed forces in 2004.

"I am so proud to call myself a Sailor," Ayanwale said. "The Navy is a part of who I am today."

Religion is also very much a part of Ayanwale's life. On campus, he works with the chaplain to create spiritual programs for USU's servicemembers and their families. As an RP, he may also travel with the chaplain, often times to remote parts of the world where deployed military can use an extra dose of moral support.

"I chose this line of work because I am very religious myself and I like helping people," Ayanwale said. "I love my job, but there are challenges. I'm away from my family a lot, and the separation can be hard, but it feels good knowing I make a difference."

Over the years, Ayanwale has travelled to many different places including war zones like Iraq, he's spent months on ships and foreign shores, and in between duty assignments, Ayanwale also became part of the heritage he was fighting to protect.

"I became an American citizen on March 21, 2005," he said. "It was one of the best days of my life because now I wasn't just serving a country I admired, I was serving a country I was a part of."

He's experienced many other triumphs throughout his military career. Service awards have followed promotions, more education has taken Ayanwale to new heights, and marriage and three children have completed his American dream.

"There have been many struggles in my family's journey. Life hasn't always been easy," Ayanwale said. "But the payoff has been huge and worth every hardship along the way."

*"I am not just serving a country I admire,
I am serving a country I am a part of."*

— RP2(FMF) Ayanfemi Ayanwale

Brothers both assigned to USU

by MC1 Chad Hallford



Courtesy Photo

Army Capt. Justin Beam (left) and Air Force 2nd Lt. Keith Beam are currently both assigned to USU. The brothers are taking advantage of the opportunity to spend time together during this joint service command assignment.

When Army Capt. Justin Beam reported to the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) in the summer of 2009, he wasn't entering the environment as a complete stranger. As luck would have it, Beam's older brother, Keith, an Air Force second lieutenant who started his career in the Army Nurse Corps before pursuing medicine and switching services, was already settled on the USU campus.

The brothers began having lunch almost every day, spending time together in the joint service command and sharing memories, including the birth of Keith's daughter only two weeks after Justin arrived at USU. With their current assignments at USU, Justin and Keith have closed a gap in their relationship caused by past assignments and the commitments of military service.

"Captain Justin Beam is my younger brother and today does

outrank me. However, he remembers the day three short years ago, when I outranked him, and he remembers some brotherly banter," said Keith. "We appreciate and respect each other for where we've been, where we're at and where we're going. My brother is my best friend. I pay due respects to him in public and around his troops, but he's my brother first and foremost."

While the brothers have blazed their own distinct paths en route to USU, they are thankful for the result of their journeys.

Justin's tour is as the company commander for the School of Medicine's Army medical students. He is responsible for "everything non-academic in his students' lives," from directing development as military officers, to guiding and governing of personal finances and government travel cards.

Of Justin's four years before landing the company commander role at USU, two were spent deployed in Iraq with the 4th Brigade Combat Group. But he knew that operational tempo/deployments would be difficult to maintain over a 20-year career.

"My reason for seeking this position was two-fold," said Justin. "First, it holds the most authority while being tied-in with the troops — I love being tied-in with the troops. Second, the USU position attracted me because it was so different from the world I was used to — a traditional company combat role."

As Justin's career has been developed out of combat seen as an officer in the Army Medical Service Corps, Keith's calling developed a little differently.

"The decision (to attend USU) was very easy for me," said Keith. "We come from a military family and have only known military medicine. Our father was an Army general surgeon and our mother was a nurse, so to follow them into medicine and practice in the military has always been my desire." As a third-year medical student on rotation at varying military treatment facilities, Keith is learning and discovering from each opportunity of student clerkship.

While brotherly time at USU won't last forever, with shared lunches and family meals becoming fewer in number with each passing day, Keith flies with heavy wings through the remaining months of medical school before his hopeful walk across the graduation stage, a diploma and his practice of military medicine in the immediate future.

But, more memories are in the making for the brothers, as Justin and his wife are expecting the arrival of their first-born child in March 2011. Keith's graduation will hopefully follow in May 2012, and if the stars align properly and the services allow, their next assignments will be together in San Antonio.

The Human Performance Resource Center Health Tips is a new column intended to provide the USU community with information to help develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Check out the HPRC website at: <http://humanperformanceresourcecenter.org>.

Is it time for your sneakers to hit the road?

According to the American Council on Exercise (ACE), your sneakers are ready to be replaced after three to six months of regular use, or approximately 350 to 500 miles of running. Looking at the wear patterns can provide good indicators that your sneakers need to be replaced.

When the time comes to replace your sneakers, ACE has specific suggestions to help you find the perfect, and affordable, pair. They suggest that you buy sport-specific shoes, test for stability, try on shoes at the end of the day when feet are their largest, and allow room for socks. Although some sports scientists will advise you to consider your foot type when purchasing sneakers, there is conflicting scientific evidence on this recommendation.

All the hype about fiber: it's true!

Fiber has amazing health benefits: it aids digestion, helps lower cholesterol, and protects against some cancers. There are two types of fibers: soluble and insoluble. Both are good for your body. Choose oatmeal, oat bran, barley, beans, dried peas, nuts and citrus fruits for soluble fiber. Insoluble fiber is found in whole wheat products, vegetables, and fruits. Eat a variety of fiber-rich foods to help your body work better.

Visit www.humanperformanceresourcecenter.org/performance-news/healthy-tips for more details.

High school students explore medical careers at USU

by Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine



Photo by MC1 Chad Hallford

Army Col. (Dr.) Richard Conran, USU associate professor of Pathology, holds a human ovarian cystadenoma while encouraging a discussion among visiting JFK High School students about the field of pathology.

More than 20 John F. Kennedy High School students visited USU as guests of the Pediatrics Interest Group.

The students are all interested in pursuing medical careers, possibly in the military.

The event was an educational, interactive and fun way for these high school students to get a hands-on feel for medicine from some of USU's best and brightest.

"I think the best part of coming here for the students, is for them to see people like them doing this tremendous work," said Barbara Marchwicki, the high school's medical careers program instructor and a former nurse. "It is something they can really relate to and it plants the seeds of excellence for their future."

After arriving at the campus, the students received an introductory visit by USU faculty and staff. Then the students had a medical career question-and-answer period before splitting into small groups. These groups then dispersed and interacted with USU subject matter experts in a

variety of areas, including radiology, pathology, dental and the basic life-savers course.

In each of these areas the students were able to get hands-on insight into each of these medical career areas. They also interacted with University experts and were able to address areas of interest for their own futures in medicine.

Students like Matthew Walters and Megidelawit Yirefu said their visit was everything they had hoped.

"I loved the Pathology portion of our visit," said Yirefu, an 11th grader who plans on becoming a physician. "This is one of the best parts of the medical career program. We wanted to see what it is really like and this school has done exactly that."

Walters agreed.

"This was a great experience and I think USU is a great place to get into a career in military medicine," said Walters, a junior, who wants to join the Air Force as a pararescueman. "Being here has allowed me to actually see my future and what to expect."

Maher awards presented

By MC1 Chad Hallford

The USU Department of Medicine presented the 2010 John F. Maher Awards for Research Excellence, Nov. 2, to two USU assistant professors.

Army Major (Dr.) Ganesh Verrappan and Dr. Amy Weintrob received the award, now in its 13th year, in recognition of their prominent research contributions.

Dr. Verrappan is assigned to the Division of Digestive Diseases. His study, upon which the award was based, was published in the April 2009 issue of *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*.

Dr. Verrappan determined the prevalence and clinical predictors of an inflammatory condition of the esophagus called eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) in an outpatient population undergoing upper Endoscopy. The characteristic findings of EoE patients included male gender, history of asthma, and the presence of classic findings of EoE on endoscopy, which is the strongest predictor of this disease process.

Dr. Weintrob, who works with the Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program, received her award based on her paper published in the April 15, 2010 issue of *Journal of Infectious Disease*.

Dr. Weintrob noted that some people infected with HIV progress to AIDS and death quickly, while others may be

infected for decades without symptoms of disease. Her group conducted a whole genome association study looking for human genetic variations that influence how African Americans, an understudied population, respond to HIV infection. They found that a variation in the HLA-B gene was strongly associated with control of HIV infection. Individuals with HLA-B*5703 have lower levels of virus in their blood. Understanding why this genetic variation is beneficial in controlling the virus may lead to better treatment of people infected with HIV.

The award was established in memory of Professor John F. Maher, inaugural Director, Division of Nephrology, Department of Medicine. Maher was an outstanding teacher, clinician, researcher, and mentor to students and faculty. The research must represent a significant contribution to the understanding, remedy or prevention of disease, or an innovative contribution to medical education. The author must also vigorously support the USU mission. Nominations are submitted each winter and reviewed by a panel of Department of Medicine faculty selected by the chair.

To learn more about their research, go to www.usuhs.mil/med/Maher-Awardees2010.html.

The Pulse Spotlight:



Name:

Kelly Harrison

Duty title:

Residency Coordinator, General Preventive Medicine, Occupational and Environmental Medicine

How long have you worked with USU?

A little over two years.

What brought you to USU?

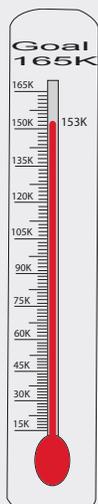
I heard of USU and its mission when I was searching for a job which would give me the opportunity to give back. USU offers a place where we can all support the military personnel who serve our country. A friend of a friend handed my resume to the leadership of the two residency programs at USU. They called me in for an interview and I was impressed with the sense of community and family at USU. I was excited to take the job. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.

What is your favorite part of USU?

My favorite part of USU is the sense of community and family. Just walking down the hall a myriad of different individuals call greetings and always offer a helping hand if you need anything.

What advice would you pass on to people new to USU?

Don't be afraid to talk to people that you don't know. Introduce yourself to people you meet and foster the connections that you make in various departments. There are so many different people here, each with their own little bit of expertise to offer, so you're bound to experience greater success if you recognize that. In turn, offer your own little brand of expertise when people ask you for help.



CFC Update!

USU is at approximately 93% of the \$165,000 goal as of January 7 according to CFC Leadership. The USU deadline has been extended to coincide with the National Capital Region's final date of January 17. Contact CFC Leadership, your department CFC keyworker or usucfc@usuhs.mil if any questions or concerns still remain on donating to the CFC.

Briefs

Town Hall meeting

The USU President is holding a town hall meeting Jan. 19, 2011, 3:00 - 4:00 pm. The new Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), Dr. Jonathan Woodson, will be a guest speaker.

Award nominations due

The award nomination packages for the upcoming Leonard and Wu Awards for Excellence in Research must be submitted by Jan. 31, 2011.

The Wu award is for excellence in the Basic Sciences and the Leonard award is for excellence in the Translational and Clinical Sciences.

Nominees must be either a member of the full-time faculty or an AFRRRI scientist at USU.

The award recipients will present their award lectures during the University's Research Week. Each recipient will also receive a memento and a cash award of \$2,500.

For more information about requirements in submitting a Leonard and Wu award package, contact Susan Rasmussen, Ph.D., at (301) 295-3303 or by e-mail at srasmsussen@usuhs.mil.

Inclement weather policy

During the upcoming winter season, weather conditions may impact on the University's operating status.

If the USU operating status changes, it will be updated immediately on the University's homepage, www.usuhs.mil.

Additionally, a broadcast to the USU community via email and recorded phone message will be available.

To access the phone message, call (301) 295-3039.

In some cases, USU's status will be made available via local news and radio stations. However, all USU students, staff and faculty are encouraged to check the University's Web site regularly.

Using computer resources

Security incidents continue to be a drain to limited USU Information Assurance manpower. The following highlight current DoD policy and best practices:

Personnel must not install self-coded or non-licensed software on network resources; add, remove, configure, or attempt to modify USU computer operating systems or programs; move audio/visual or network cables, computers or attempt to connect personal computers to the network including MDL and lecture hall spaces; connect personal devices except for those previously authorized by NOC; download pornographic material and store or display offensive material, such as racist literature, sexually harassing or obscene language or material; store or process classified information on any USU system.

Personnel must not permit unauthorized individuals access to a government-owned or government-operated system or program; access online gambling, games and social engineering sites.

ESC meetings

The Enlisted Social Committee holds its monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month.

Meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. in the cafeteria's small dining room.

Being a part of the ESC is an excellent way for USU enlisted personnel to actively pursue volunteer opportunities at USU.

50th Anniversary Web site

The Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute will be launching a new Web site to help celebrate the institute's 50th Anniversary.

The Web site is scheduled to launch this year and highlights AFRRRI's rich history and heritage. It also provides users with the opportunity to learn more about the unique mission at AFRRRI.

Media Briefs

From the strain of deployment to the risks of hospital-acquired infections, USU research has made news recently.

A study led by Navy Commander (Dr.) Gregory Gorman, an assistant professor of Pediatrics at USU and a practicing pediatrician, found children of active-duty military personnel make 18 percent more trips to the doctor for behavioral problems and 19 percent more visits for stress disorders when a military parent is deployed, compared with when the parent is home. The study of children ages 3 to 8 was published in the December issue of the journal *Pediatrics*.

The study was featured on several radio programs including Health Dialogues, a production of the San Francisco affiliate of National Public Radio, CBS Radio, an American Academy of Pediatrics radio broadcast, Military Times, and by many print and online media outlets.

USU Department of Pediatrics assistant professor Dr. Cade Nylund, an Air Force Major, published research findings in the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, one of the JAMA/Archives journals, that found an increase in the number of hospitalized children being infected with the *Clostridium difficile* bacteria, based on data gathered from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Nylund's study, done mostly while a gastroenterology fellow at the University of Cincinnati Children's Hospital, showed that not only were more children becoming infected, they were dying at a higher rate.

Nylund's findings were highlighted by the Wall Street Journal, CNN's Empowered Patient, Reuters News Service, WebMD, American Medical Association News, the Los Angeles Times, Armed With Science, SixtySecondParent.com, Infection Control Today and other online outlets.



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