

The Official USU Newsletter

the pulse

Volume 8, Issue 10 • June 24, 2013
www.usuhs.edu



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The Pulse is printed by USU's Duplicating Center.

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The Pulse is funded by the Department of Defense and published by the Uniformed Services University. It is authorized for members of the U.S. military services, USU alumni, faculty and staff. Contents of the Pulse are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the DoD or USU. Appearance of anything resembling advertising in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the DoD, USU or Pulse staff members.

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Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the USU Office of External Affairs. The editor reserves the right to edit articles to conform to DoD policy and Associated Press style. All photos are DoD photos unless otherwise indicated.

The Pulse will be published bi-weekly on Mondays. The deadline for submissions is at 4 p.m. Tuesday prior to the publication date. Submissions can be sent to christine.creenan-jones@usuhs.edu or 301-295-3338.

USU establishes first brain tissue bank to study traumatic brain injury in service members

Department of Defense News Release



Courtesy graphic

prevent, diagnose and treat traumatic brain injuries and to ensure that service members have productive and long, quality lives. Our research efforts and treatment protocols are all geared toward improving care for these victims. And that will have benefits to the American public, at large.”

The Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine Brain Tissue Repository for Traumatic Brain Injury was established at the USU with a multi-year grant from the U.S. Army Medical

Research and Material Command, to advance the understanding and treatment of TBI in service members.

“Little is known about the long-term effects of traumatic brain injury on military service members,” said Dr. Daniel Perl, a neuropathologist and director of the brain tissue repository. “By studying these tissues, along with access to clinical information associated with them, we hope to more rapidly address the biologic mechanisms by which head trauma leads to chronic traumatic encephalopathy.”

CTE is a neurodegenerative disorder that involves the progressive accumulation of the protein tau in nerve cells within certain regions of the brain. As the tau protein accumulates, it disturbs function and appears to lead to symptoms that can be seen in affected patients such as boxers and, more recently, football players with multiple head trauma.

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The world’s first brain tissue repository to help researchers understand the underlying mechanisms of traumatic brain injury in service members has been established at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU).

The announcement follows Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel’s Symposium on Traumatic Brain Injury. Secretary Hagel convened a group of senior defense officials, experts in the medical field, and outside organizations to discuss advancements and areas of collaboration regarding traumatic brain injury.

“We have been at war for more than a decade, and our men and women have sacrificed,” said Dr. Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for Health Affairs and director of TRICARE Management Activity. “The military health care system is bringing all the resources it can to better understand how to



Courtesy photo

On the cover

Thousands of servicemembers have been diagnosed with traumatic brain injury. As a result, the Uniformed Services University’s Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine created a brain tissue repository to help researchers understand the underlying mechanisms of TBI in servicemembers.

(See story, page 2)



Blended learning initiatives focus of USU's Education Day

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor



Jane Clark, PhD



Marcio Oliveira, PhD

The Uniformed Services University's 6th annual Education Day featured two keynote lectures on this year's theme, "Blended Learning Initiatives for the 21st Century Student," June 11.

The first presenter, Jane Clark, PhD, dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Maryland, delivered a talk called, "Introduction to Blended Learning: Possibilities and Pitfalls."

Clark opened with a brief historical narrative of American public education, beginning with the Massachusetts School Laws that helped create compulsory, government-sponsored education in the United States in the 1640s.

Back then, classroom learning was rudimentary at best with teachers reading from books at the front of the room. Over the ensuing centuries, however, much has changed, including technology.

"Everything's in the cloud now," Clark said, referring to the Internet and its widespread use as a platform for educating 21st century students.

The Internet and other technological advancements led to the creation of new teaching methods, including distance or online education, flipped classrooms and massive open online courses.

These mediums are becoming standard educational modes at

universities across the nation, and Clark, an expert on this front, offered an insightful critique of technology-enhanced education.

It's more convenient, there's better control, and faculty members have opportunities to create refined, near-perfect lectures, she said. On the flip side, creating blended learning lesson plans can be a laborious and time consuming, especially for teachers who aren't tech-savvy. Furthermore, not all students respond well to online courses, and it can also be difficult to gauge their level of understanding through traditional methods like social cues and body language, since face-to-face time is more limited with blended learning.

Marcio Oliveira, PhD, assistant dean for Educational Innovation in the School of Public Health at the University of Maryland, offered tips for overcoming these shortfalls in his keynote talk, "How to Achieve Faculty and Student Acceptance of New Teaching Technologies – Strategies and Examples."

Oliveira believes blended learning platforms can be adapted to meet everyone's needs. Podcasts, video recordings and digital books, for example, can be integrated into distance learning curriculums that engage all types of learners.

Innovation in Learning Awards

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Barbara Knollmann-Ritschel, an assistant professor in the Department of Pathology at the Uniformed Services University, and Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) William Kelly, the third-year clerkship director for the Department of Medicine at USU, won this year's Innovation in Learning Award, sponsored by the Faculty Senate Education Committee.

Knollmann-Ritschel and Kelly were selected because they made a significant impact on the education of students at USU through innovative methods. Knollmann-Ritschel used concept maps to engage students in discussions about topics that are integrated but diverse, and Kelly had students participate in structured patient encounters that included a pre-patient briefing on heart disease, an interview and examination of real heart-failure patients and follow-up presentations with student findings.

These teaching innovations were heralded by Knollmann-Ritschel and Kelly's peers, who selected the Innovation in Learning Award winners on June 11 during Education Day.

"Sometimes you have to think outside of the box or use creative teaching methods for online learning," he said.

Even complex topics, like the Krebs cycle – a series of chemical reactions that generate energy in all aerobic organisms – can be taught online, using innovative methods like digital diagrams, animation and recorded lectures, Oliveira added.

For many faculty members, these methods are unconventional, but Oliveira encourages educators to "think wild" and challenge conventional standards to meet the needs of 21st century students.

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USU faculty member receives Lifetime Achievement Award from Society for Vascular Surgery

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor



Courtesy photo

Dr. Peter Glaviczki (right), president of the Society for Vascular Surgery, presented SVS's 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Norman Rich, founding chair of the Uniformed Services University's Department of Surgery.

Norman Rich, MD, the founding chair and namesake of the Norman M. Rich Department of Surgery at the Uniformed Services University, was awarded this year's Lifetime

Achievement Award from the Society for Vascular Surgery.

The prestigious award, SVS's highest bestowed honor, is given to individuals who make outstanding contributions to vascular surgery while demonstrating exemplary leadership and professional practice.

Rich, a Stanford-educated surgeon and retired military officer, is best known for his work in vascular trauma. He helped establish the Vietnam Vascular Registry in 1966, and later served as its director.

Rich is also a highly esteemed teacher and writer. He's published more than 300 manuscripts and authored or co-authored five books, including the internationally recognized publication, "Vascular Trauma." Rich has also trained dozens of vascular surgery fellows and played a vital role in creating several different premier surgery programs across the United States, including USU's Department of Surgery.

USU Brigade celebrates service birthdays

By MC2 Brittney Cannady, writer

In two separate celebrations, members of the Uniformed Services University came together to observe special milestones in military history.

The university recognized the Army's 238th birthday with a cake-cutting celebration and remarks by Dr. Eric Schoomaker, former surgeon general of the Army and USU's first scholar in residence, June 14.

"I hope you all recognize that within the limits of civilian fashion and good taste, I am dressed today in as much Army green as I could muster from my closet," he said. "Although

I take great pride and pleasure in working at a joint DoD organization here at USU, there are certain days, such as today, where I am afforded the opportunity to play favorites among the services. My trust, faith and respect is with all of our Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Public Health Service officers, but my heart is with Soldiers and the Army."

Three days after Schoomaker delivered a heartfelt speech about the Army, USU personnel gathered to celebrate the 115th birthday of the Navy hospital corps. Laura Martinez, a retired master

brain tissue bank...

Continued from page 2

DoD researchers will look at the brain tissue samples to characterize the neuropathologic features of TBI in service members. Important questions to be addressed include: "What does blast exposure do to the brain?" and "Do the different forms of brain injury experienced in the military lead to CTE?"

Service members exposed to blasts "are coming home with troubling, persistent problems and we don't know the nature of this, whether it's related to psychiatric responses from engagement in warfare or related to actual damage to the brain, as seen in football players," Perl said. "We hope to address these findings and develop approaches to detecting accumulated tau in the living individual as a means of diagnosing CTE during life - and, ultimately, create better therapies or ways to prevent the injury in the first place."

"We are learning though the process of discovery the effects of repetitive mild traumatic brain injury and also how to prevent this issue of chronic traumatic encephalopathy," Woodson said. "The brain tissue repository will enable us to learn even more about how we can treat injuries and prevent future calamity for service members."

For further information on donation to the brain tissue repository for traumatic brain injury, please contact the repository team at CNRM-TBI@usuhs.edu or 855-DON-8TBI (855-366-8824).

chief with more than 32 years of active duty service, was the guest speaker.

"The legacy of the hospital corps lives in each of us who wear or have worn the caduceus of the hospital corps... a badge of mercy and valor," she said. "You've done this while practicing faithfully all of your duties as a hospital corpsman, and you've continued to hold the care of the sick and injured to be a privilege and sacred trust."

Trivia Question #1 Graduate School of Nursing 20th Anniversary



Photo by Thomas C. Balfour

The Graduate School of Nursing has a broad reach with many different programs to choose from. Its origin, however, was not as diverse or multidisciplinary as today's school. In fact, students from the first class were all part of this program, the only one offered in 1993.

Do you know which GSN program was the first to enroll students? If so, e-mail your answer to christine.creenan-jones@usuhs.edu. The first person to answer correctly wins a large coffee and doughnut, courtesy of USU's cafeteria.

Education Day...

Continued from page 3

"The old model will not work," he said. "We need to change the way we think about education."

Heeding this advice, USU has changed significantly over the past several years. A postgraduate dental college was added, the School of Medicine overhauled its program and the Graduate School of Nursing added a new Doctor of Nursing Practice degree last summer. These changes were highlighted during Education Day as well, with talks from USU's senior leadership about the university's growing enterprise.

Maryland Congressman presents Legion of Merit

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor



Photo by Thomas C. Balfour

Congressman Chris Van Hollen presented the Legion of Merit to Dr. William Gilliland, the associate dean for Medical Education at the Uniformed Services University, May 2.

Dr. William Gilliland, the associate dean for Medical Education at the Uniformed Services University, earned the Legion of Merit for his exceptional service while commissioned in the U.S. Army.

United States Congressman Chris Van Hollen presented the award to Gilliland, a 25-year medical corps officer, at a ceremony held at USU on May 2.

During the ceremony, Van Hollen thanked Gilliland for his outstanding service to the nation and shared highlights about Gilliland's illustrious career, including his leadership roles at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he served as the co-director of the Pediatric Rheumatology Clinic and director of Continuing Medical Education; the National Capital Consortium, where he served as program director of the Rheumatology Fellowship, which boasted a 100-percent board certification passing rate for all trainees in the program; and the Uniformed Services University, where he served as a course director for the ICM-3 course, director of the Fourth Year Programs for the

Department of Medicine and assistant dean for Curriculum before assuming his current position.

Gilliland has also contributed to military medicine and public health through membership on a wide variety of committees and professional organizations, including the American College of Rheumatology, the Army Chapter of the American College of Physicians, the Executive Committee on Curriculum and many others.

"In all of my military assignments, I have always been fortunate to be assigned duties that interested me – undergraduate and graduate level teaching, programmatic administration, patient care and research," he said. "When I first came to USU as a medical student in 1983, I never intended to complete a military career, but stayed because of the opportunities, patients and especially the amazing military and civilian employees with whom I had the pleasure to work. While I am honored to be recognized by the Army with the Legion of Merit, I always felt that I was simply doing my job, and that was reward enough."

USU Corpsman receives Junior Enlisted Member of the Year Award

By Marie-Reine Maroun, Health.mil staff writer



Daryl A. Mercado

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Daryl Mercado will mark 10 years of Navy service, June 23. His first decade in the service has been memorable – so much so that he recently was chosen to receive the Secretary of Defense’s 2012 Junior Enlisted Member of the Year Award.

“It was a surprise,” he said, recalling how he found out by accident while rehearsing for the commencement ceremony at the Uniformed Services University, where he is based. “I am also extremely humbled because I could not have done this without my senior leaders, peers and my family,” he said.

Born in the Philippines, Mercado immigrated with his family to Chicago when he was a young boy. Upon graduating from high school in 2003, he joined the Navy in the hopes of becoming a corpsman and later a doctor.

“Growing up, I spent a lot of time in the hospital because of my grandfather, who was sick. I saw all the pain and struggles he went through. He motivated me,” Mercado explained.

Following the completion of his studies at the Naval School of Health Sciences, Mercado served as a laboratory technician at the Naval Air Facility in Atsugi, Japan, where he gained clinical experience.

Mercado was ambitious, though, and wanted more. He began working as an

emergency medical technician during his off-duty hours.

After Japan, Mercado served as the sole laboratory technician aboard the USS Cleveland from 2007 to 2010. Upon completion of the two tours, he came to USU where he serves as lead petty officer and the enlisted advisor for the Graduate Education Office, where he provides guidance to company commanders on professional development.

“It’s a team effort,” is how Mercado describes his job at USU. “I can’t do it without my fellow first classmen.”

Mercado is busy outside of work, as well. The father of two children, ages seven and three, he also is working on completing his Masters of Business Administration from George Washington University.

He’s not stopping there, either. Mercado hopes to apply to the Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program at USU, which is a new program that allows enlisted service members to complete preparatory medical school coursework while maintaining an active duty status.

“I always wanted to go to USU,” Mercado said. He has about a year left of prerequisites to complete before he can apply to medical school. USU is his number one choice, he said, because, “you learn more about how to become a doctor in a military setting.”

Mercado said he wants to give back to the organization that has given him so much.

“The military has been really good to me,” he said. “There are a lot of programs out there. All you have to do is express what you want to do and your leaders and peers will help guide you. I had the same mentality throughout my Navy career and it’s been working out for me.”

Mercado added, “with hard work and dedication, you can achieve anything you want as long as you put your time and effort and heart into it.”

Mercado will be formally honored by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel later this year.

GSN faculty member receives high honors from American Psychological Foundation

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor



Patrick DeLeon, PhD

Patrick DeLeon, PhD, a distinguished professor in the Graduate School of Nursing at the Uniformed

Services University, received this year’s Gold Medal Award for Life Achievements in the Practice of Psychology by the American Psychological Foundation.

DeLeon was lauded by the APF for several large-scale, enduring contributions to psychology, including his work to establish the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services and the National Institute of Mental Health at the National Institutes of Health. He also helped rewrite Medicare regulations to give psychology more weight and its practitioners more autonomy, and changed the eligibility requirements for becoming surgeon general to include psychologists as contenders.

Furthermore, DeLeon, former chief of staff to Senator Daniel Inouye, used his political influence to change outmoded standards to reflect the importance of psychology in healthcare today. His advocacy led to the creation of more interdisciplinary community health centers and the establishment of the Emergency Medical Services for Children program, a national initiative designed to reduce childhood disability or death because of illness, injury or trauma.

USU professor selected for prestigious pediatrics society membership

Courtesy of USU Department of Pediatrics

Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Cade Nylund (SoM '04), assistant professor in the USU Department of Pediatrics was selected for membership in the prestigious Society for Pediatric Research this year. Nylund and other new inductees were recognized at a special presidential reception during the Society's annual meeting held recently in Washington, D.C.

"The Society for Pediatric Research is one of the largest academic research organizations in pediatrics. Selection is a very formal process that requires specific nomination and endorsement by several members," said retired Air Force Col (Dr.) Martin Ottolini, who nominated Nylund on behalf of the Pediatrics department in a process that began in early 2012. "They use a rigorous review of a candidate's entire academic research record. They don't begin to look

at candidates until they have established their own sustained academic productivity beyond completion of sub-specialty training, and select members who are 'actively engaged in and have ongoing commitment to conducting research that creates new knowledge to advance the health and well-being of children and youth. It is a distinct honor that Dr. Nylund was selected at such a young stage of his professional career."

Nylund's nomination focused on both his earlier clinical studies of the immunopathology and potential new therapies of Crohn's Disease in children, followed by his more recent work using the electronic databases of the military health care system to identify risk factors for a variety of chronic diseases, including the identification of risk factors and comorbid conditions



Courtesy photo

Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Cade Nylund, assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the Uniformed Services University, and Army Capt. (Dr.) Luis Lozada, a third-year pediatric resident at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, were recognized by the Society for Pediatric Research for outstanding contributions to the field of pediatrics. Nylund was also selected for SPR membership this year.

associated with autism spectrum disorders in children. He was recruited to USU by Ildy M. Katona, MD, Pediatrics department chair, in 2010 after completion of his training in gastroenterology to support this and other aspects of the pediatric clinical research portfolio.

Medical student makes a splash, saves a life

By Christine Creenan-Jones, editor

Navy Ensign Teresa Gilbride, a first-year medical student at the Uniformed Services University, has been swimming for as long as she can remember. Growing up, she spent a lot of her free time in the pools around Washington, D.C., as both a lifeguard and member of her local pool's swim team.

Nowadays, Gilbride is busy with a full course load at USU, but she still finds time to swim laps in the Olympic-sized pool at Naval Support Activity Bethesda.

Gilbride's hobby – laps up and down NSAB's 164-foot lanes – also became someone's saving grace earlier this month when she used her swimming and first-responder skills to help a man in dire straits. On that day, she was doing her usual laps when something unusual caught her eye.

"As I was coming toward the wall, I noticed a guy lying at the bottom of the pool in the lane next to me. At first I

thought he was just holding his breath, but I went down anyway," she said.

By the time Gilbride reached him, the man was unconscious. She brought him to the surface, where she was met by a lifeguard, who helped keep him afloat, while Gilbride and others pulled the man onto safe ground and checked for a pulse. They found none.

Gilbride and a bystander began administering CPR, a lifesaving technique she had reviewed just a few months earlier in a Military and Emergency Medicine department first responder skills class, and which was still fresh in her mind.

"I did the chest compressions while a bystander performed the rescue breathing. After a while, he began coughing and gasping for air, and I knew everything was going to be O.K.," she said. He was taken to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for treatment.



Photo by Sharon Willis

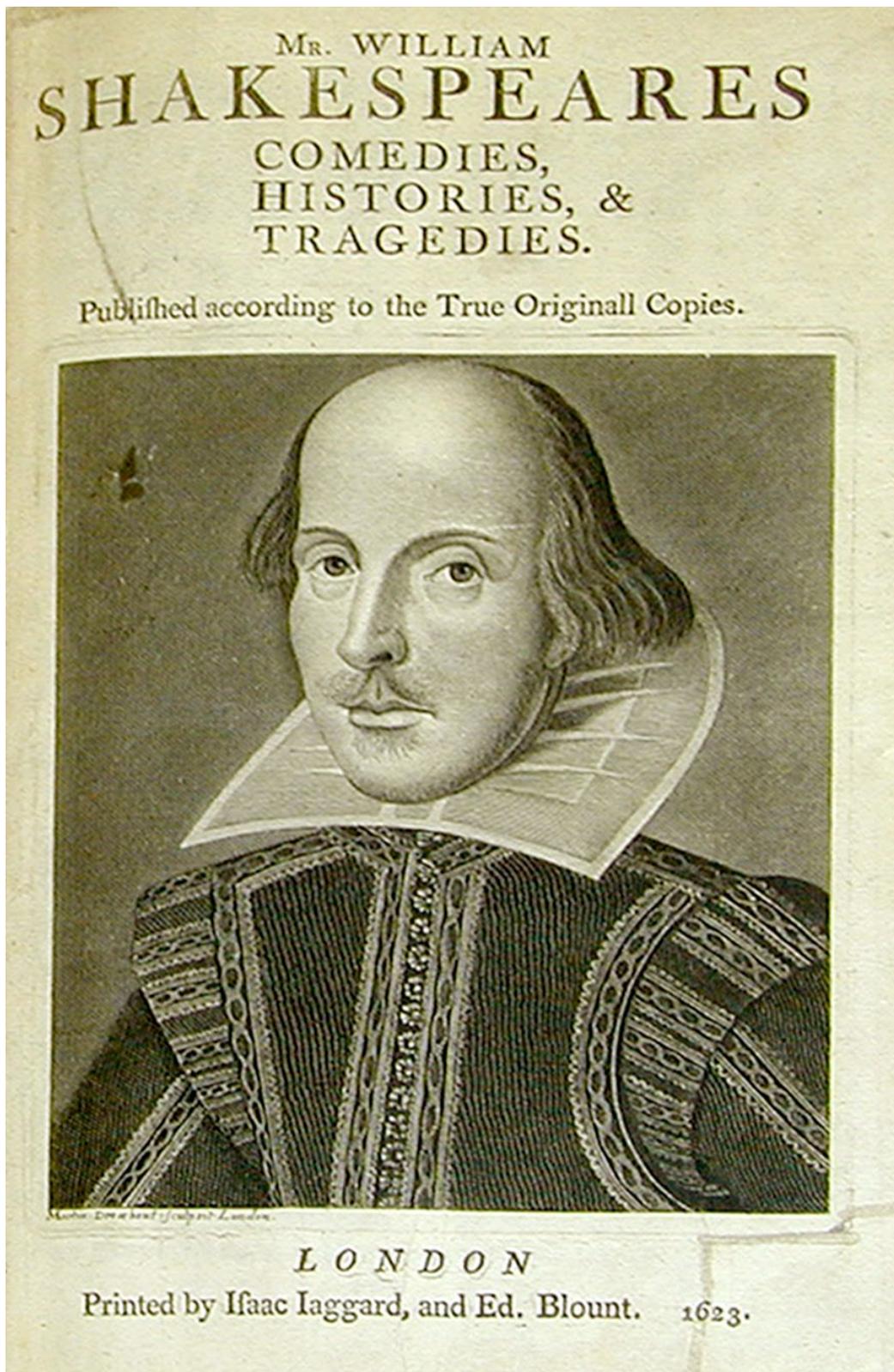
Navy Ensign Teresa Gilbride

The man survived, thanks to Gilbride's swift response and the others on the scene. Still, she doesn't think her actions were heroic.

"It was a team effort. Plus, any one of my classmates could've done what I did. Still, I feel overwhelmingly thankful I was in a position to help," she said.

It also underscored a simple habit – when you see something out of the ordinary, investigate the situation – and drove home the importance of practicing skills that save lives, which for Gilbride, means swimming and studying.

Final Frame



The Learning Resource Center is hosting a poster exhibit from the National Library of Medicine called, "And There's the Humor of It: Shakespeare and the Four Humors."

The exhibit, on display until July 6 on the first floor lobby of the LRC, discusses the four bodily humors - black bile, phlegm, yellow bile, and blood - which were believed to define health, mental state and personality from the time of Greek philosophers such as Aristotle, Hippocrates and Galen through Shakespeare's era.

Drawing images from historical texts and examples from characters portrayed in Shakespeare's many plays, the exhibit illustrates the role of the humors in historical health through images taken from rare texts found in the collections of the Folger Shakespeare Library and the National Library of Medicine.

Visit <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/shakespeare/introduction.html> for more information about the exhibit.