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the pulse

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Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way

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Air Force Colonel (ret.) Dr. Tom Piazza demonstrates battlefield acupuncture on Chinese PLA Senior Col. Xiaojie Huang with assistance from Air Force Col. (ret.) Richard Niemtzow, who created the technique. Read about the exchange on pg. 4. (photo by Thomas Balfour)

In Memoriam: Brig. Gen. (ret.) John E. Hutton, Jr.

by Christopher Austin, editor/layout design



President Ronald Reagan and Brig. Gen. (ret.) John E. Hutton, Jr., share a conversation in the White House. (White House photo)

Retired Army Brigadier General (Dr.) John E. Hutton, Jr., 83, former professor of surgery in the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine, Uniformed Services University, passed away Dec. 19.

The former chief, Division of General Surgery, and Vice Chair of the Department of Surgery at USU, joined the university in 1981.

Hutton was born in New York City in 1931. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1953, the same year he began his military career as a Marine Corps officer. After three years and attaining the rank of captain, he left the service and went on to attend medical school at the George Washington University School of Medicine, graduating in 1963.

He returned to active duty as an Army Medical Corps officer and completed his surgical residency in 1968 and his peripheral vascular surgery fellowship in 1970 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Two notable positions Hutton held during his career include Chief of the General Surgery Service at Letterman Army Medical Center, Presidio of San Francisco, and Chief of the Department of Surgery at WRAMC, among many others.

He was a White House physician and physician to President Ronald Reagan and maintained a very close relationship with the president and first lady well beyond his White House years.

Dr. Hutton is survived by his wife, Barbara Joyce Hutton; and children, John E. Hutton III, Wendy Hutton-Little, James Seward Hutton and Elizabeth Hutton-Shiau (husband, Danny Shiau, USU SoM '97); sister, Deirdre Driscoll; grandchildren Brittany Ann Hutton, Kristin Elizabeth Hutton, Grace Seward-Hutton, Holly Catherine Hutton, John E. Hutton IV, James Ten Yen Shiau, Daniel Seward Shiau and Kimberly Ashley Shiau.

Associate Professor Recognized for Infectious Disease Research

by Carey Schlett, MPH and Gene Millar, PhD, IDCRP

Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) Michael Ellis was the 2014 recipient of the John F. Maher Award for Research Excellence in the Department of Medicine, Uniformed Services University. The award recognizes research that represents a significant contribution to the understanding, remedy or prevention of disease or an innovative contribution to medical education.

Dr. Ellis, an associate professor in the department, also received the William Crosby Superiority in Research Award from the Army chapter of the American College of Physicians, as well as the Army A Specialty Designator from the Army Medical Department. These awards were presented to Dr. Ellis by Dr. Arthur Kellermann, dean of the School of Medicine, and Col. Kevin Glasz, brigade commander, during a USU Department of Medicine faculty meeting on December 2.

These awards recognize Ellis' achievements as a clinical

researcher, underscored by his leadership of IDCRP-055, a field-based, cluster-randomized trial of personal hygiene measures to prevent skin and soft tissue infections (SSTI) among military trainees at Fort Benning, Ga. In addition to evaluating the effectiveness of hygiene against SSTI, this study has yielded a wealth of data with respect to the epidemiology, pathogenesis, immunology and microbiome of SSTI in a population known to be at increased risk for *Staphylococcus aureus* colonization and disease.

Ellis and his team found that in general, personal hygiene-based measures, including weekly use of a chlorhexidine-based body wash, were ineffective at preventing SSTI in trainees. There was, however, an observed reduction in methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* SSTI rates among CHG-randomized trainees during the summer months, the peak period for MRSA colonization



Doctor Arthur Kellermann, Dean of the School of Medicine, Lt. Col. Michael Ellis, and Brigade Commander Col Kevin Glasz. (photo by Thomas Balfour)

and SSTI (Ellis ME et al., *Clinical Infectious Diseases* 2014).

Knowledge gleaned from these studies of SSTI and acute gastroenteritis is critical for the development of disease treatment and prevention strategies in this particularly vulnerable population of military trainees. Ellis and the SSTI investigative team, much has already been accomplished, and the foundation for future efforts in this research area has been solidified.

USU Strategic Framework Issued

by Chris Shoemaker, contributing writer

The 2014-2018 Uniformed Services University Strategic Framework has been approved and released for distribution.

The Strategic Framework, which USU President Charles Rice described as “a concise summary of where we are headed, the values that define our collective character, our unique mission and the essential task we must accomplish if we are to serve the nation,” is the product of a four-month effort by the Strategic Framework and Performance Assessment Task Force. The SFPATF was established last spring and includes the school deans.

The five-page document is rooted in the university's overarching mission to support the nation, the uniformed services and Depart-

ment of Defense's Office of Health Affairs. The Strategic Framework describes five mission domains that include education and training, research and scholarship, leadership, global health and national security, and service. Each of these mission domains is further defined by a series of essential tasks that provide a roadmap by which the university community can navigate into the future.

While the strategic framework is directive in nature, Rice describes it as “a living document, receptive to new ideas and responsive to our evolving environment.” In order to ensure that the entire university is aligned with the Strategic Framework, each school, institute and center is required to review and, where necessary, revise its

own strategic plans and documents.

As with all strategic planning documents, its enduring value lies in its execution. Each school, institute and center is required to review, and where necessary, revise its own strategic plans and documents to ensure that the entire university is aligned with the Strategic Framework. To that end, Rice tasked each person in the USU community to “review the Strategic Framework and to plan for your role in its implementation.”

The 2014-2018 Strategic Framework is available on the USU website: at www.usuhs.edu/pres/pdf/USUHSstrategicframework.pdf.

U.S. and China Build Relationship Through Acupuncture Medical Exchange

by Christopher Austin, editor/layout design



Military medical professionals from The People's Republic of China met with their U.S. counterparts at USU to exchange knowledge on the application of acupuncture in a military setting. (photo by Thomas Balfour)

American military medical personnel met with their Chinese counterparts at Uniformed Services University this past December to discuss applications of acupuncture in a military setting.

From Dec. 8-10, six senior Chinese military acupuncturists visited USU to discuss with U.S. representatives how the non-traditional medicine can be used to treat short-term and long-term conditions.

“Not only was there some valuable information sharing, but the level of genuine collegiality and camaraderie that emerged over the two days was truly rewarding,” said Air Force Col. (Dr.) Arnyce Pock, F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine assistant dean for Curriculum, who served as primary coordinator for the exchange. She called the event “an example of global health engagement at its best.”

The engagement was part of a series of exchanges that were initiated with the help of retired Air Force Col. (Dr.) Richard Niemtzw, consultant for the Air Force Surgeon General on alternative medicine and the creator of battlefield acupuncture (BFA), one of the techniques that was presented during exchange.

The initial idea for the event came about in the late 2000's when Niemtzw was invited to a meet with the Air Force Surgeon General

and the Chinese Surgeon General in Washington. Niemtzw had been visiting the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine to demonstrate BFA to the staff and students there and the generals were both interested in setting up an official exchange.

“I think that having this exchange at [USU] and having students attend will allow the next generation to be able to benefit and influence exchanges with China in a very positive manner that will help both countries grow to a peaceful arrangement between the two militaries using perhaps acupuncture and other areas of medicine as a common denominator,” said Niemtzw.

Both Niemtzw and Pock praised the exchange, noting the advantages of using medical diplomacy to help foster ties between the two countries.

Pock was one of the American representatives that attended the initial exchange in Oct. 2012.

“That was the inaugural exchange in which I and several of my colleagues had the honor of visiting the Chinese School of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Beijing, as well as a People's Liberation Army Air Force hospital and meeting some of the military acupuncturists there,” said Pock. “That's what established the foundation for this follow-on exchange.”

The BFA technique was one of the main topics discussed during the event. It involves the application of up to five tiny gold needles to points on either or both of the external ears that are used to relieve acute and chronic pain and is cited by Niemtzw as one of the most popular ear-acupuncture techniques being used in the armed forces.

“It has become very, very popular in garrison, in peacetime settings and clinics but also in an operational environment where you may need to do something very quickly to reduce someone's pain but without having to rely on high doses of narcotics,” said Pock. “Especially if it's a potentially hostile environment, at least until you can extricate the patient and get them to a more stable secure situation and then you can give them more definitive care.”

Pock cites the positive results that the BFA technique has had on patients, noting that 80 to 85 percent of patients who have had the treatment alone have noticed a significant reduction in pain within minutes of application.

USU Launches First Program Dedicated to Educating Students on Treating Sexual Assault Victims

by Christopher Austin, editor/layout design

Uniformed Services University launched a pilot program for its first course focusing on Military Sexual Assault Assessment last semester.

The goal of the online course is to provide students of the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Nursing with the knowledge necessary to properly respond to a sexual assault as a provider.

The program was created by Professor Ann Burgess of Boston College, a leader in the field of forensic nursing who has worked with the FBI in the past.

“I was originally brought in as a visiting professor about a year ago because of my research in the field of sexual assault,” Burgess said during a phone interview. “Over time, [it was] suggested that I meet with the medical school faculty to see if they had any needs in that area. And that was the important meeting in which they said maybe GSN and SOM students could combine to have a course in military sexual trauma since it was a priority issue for the military.”

To get the course online, Burgess partnered with Air Force Lt. Col. Wendy Lee, GSN assistant professor, who has prior experience in researching sexual assault education and the creation of online courses.

Lee explained that Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel made a point of calling attention to the military’s need to combat sexual assault, and that this program seeks to help by providing information on rape prevention along with education on the treatment of victims.

The course is also getting input from Air Force 1st Lt. Felicia Keith, a clinical psychology student at the SOM, who is focusing her study on sexual assault in the military.

Keith gave input for the section on rape myths and on how the attitudes of the providers impact their



The online course uses videos providing hypothetical examples with actors, like the one pictured above, along with real-world cases in order to demonstrate proper care procedure. (courtesy photo)

behaviors around sexual assault victims.

“One of the things I really focused on [was] male rape victims and some of our prejudices and biases we have against male rape victims,” Keith said. “Some people believe that men can’t be raped, or men can’t be raped by a woman; just challenging [students] to challenge themselves about their pre-conceptions.”

Guest speakers participate in the course by providing narration for PowerPoint presentations and videos discussing real-world instances of sexual assault in the military and the responses taken by care providers.

One case examined was that of Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Wilt, who in 2012 was convicted of sexual assault against a female shipmate and sentenced to life in prison with possibility of parole after 20 years. The presentation described the incident in detail and then examined the legal and medical follow-up to demonstrate what proper procedures were followed or mishandled.

This example, along with other

sources such as interviews with sexual assault victims and legal teams in prior cases, are meant to give the course an interactive aspect through use of multimedia, said Lee.

Another reason for the creation of this course is what the creators see as a lack of sexual assault assessment training coming out of medical schools across the country.

“I had to do a systemic research, a lit review, on [sexual assault education practices] just these last few months and I found very few high-quality research studies looking at educational interventions for providers, health professional college students,” she said.

Lee cites in her systematic review that a 2014 report from the Association of American Medical colleges shows that 38 percent of graduating U.S. physicians have received training to care for victims of sexual assault. This percentage has decreased from 45 percent in 2010.

“There’s a lot of differences in caring for a sexual assault victim because of all the forensic evidence that needs to be

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Specialty Night: “An Honest Look Into the Future”

by MC3 Laura Bailey, writer and photographer

Uniformed Services University students and faculty took part in Specialty Night, sponsored by the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society, at USU, Dec. 3, 2014.

Specialty Night provides students with the opportunity to meet with program directors throughout the country in one convenient setting at USU where the specialties come to them, according to Student Coordinator Army 2nd Lt. Noel Dunn, a fourth-year medical student at USU. The informal setting allows for open dialogue between students and residency leaders from various specialties and helps students understand what each specialty entails and the locations of these residencies. Opportunities unique to the military such as dive medicine provide even more possibilities for students to consider.

“I really enjoyed talking to both physicians and residents from a number of different specialties,” said Air Force 2nd Lt. Robin Alonge, a second-year medical student at USU. “It gave me an honest look into the future. I now have a better understanding of what would be expected of me as a



Air Force 2nd Lt. Robin Alonge, a second-year medical student at the Uniformed Services University, uses a simulator for ophthalmology during Specialty Night at USU, Dec. 3, 2014. The simulator allows students to get an idea of the types of technologies used in the ophthalmology specialty. More than 20 specialties and sub-specialties were represented at the event sponsored by the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. (photo by MC3 Laura Bailey)

resident or a physician in different fields.

“By the end of the night, I was feeling much more hopeful and optimistic about the future. I’m really looking forward to my upcoming rotations and I have a good idea of what advanced rotations I’ll want

to take later. It will be a pleasure to explore some of these fields more thoroughly and to work with the physicians I met that night. Specialty Night was a worthwhile experience, in my opinion, and I highly recommend that students attend in the future.”

Educating Students Continued

Continued from pg. 5

attained than you would if a person got hurt in a car accident...The interview and documentation [are] important, and different.”

The course is online to better allow both GSN and SOM students an opportunity to take the course at the same time despite separate schedules. This also helps students who might not be able to get to campus for the class, according to Lee.

Since this is the first year for the course, and it is the first of its kind, Lee has integrated multiple surveys in to gain feedback from students on its effectiveness

“Since it’s online, that’s the beauty of it; we would be able to substitute things if they were found to not to be as effective as we had hoped,” said Burgess. “We would also hope to include maybe some of [the student’s] comments in future courses.”

During the 2014 Operation Bushmaster, a scenario was played in all four platoons that saw the students interacting with male and female sexual assault victims. Students were expected to explain restricted and unrestricted reporting options and do everything possible to respect the patient’s privacy, said Lee.



Professor Ann Burgess and Lt. Col. Wendy Lee at a lecture on sexual assault hosted at USU. A video of the lecture is featured online for one of the course’s units. (photo by Richard Price)

The course counts as one credit hour for GSN students while SOM students utilize it as a resource that integrates into their Bench, Bedside and Beyond class.

MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING YIELDS CLARITY FOR TODAY'S WARFIGHTER

By: Paul Bello, National Museum of Health and Medicine

Success and safety of the nation hinge upon the well-being of today's Warfighters. Dr. Tim Herzog, Sport Psychology Education Specialist with the Uniformed Services University Human Performance Resource Center offered insight into a service member's human performance optimization during the Medical Museum Science Café in Silver Spring, Md.

Entitled "Mental Skills for Energy Management," the discussion was hosted by the National Museum of Health and Medicine and concludes a year-long series of informal discussions dedicated to evolving health, science and medical technologies.

Herzog stated that mental skills training and sport/performance psychology are integral to the health and well-being of American service members. Some areas of HPRC focus include physical fitness, nutrition, family and relationships. As with any profession, he noted there are demands associated with these areas. From a military perspective, he said they can stem from such things as deployments, job performance and personal finances.

Performance in a military context is vastly different from that of a sports context, where the stakes aren't as high. According to Herzog, there is a much more serious set of threats facing those charged with defending a nation as opposed to those tasked with athletic challenges like hitting a baseball or throwing a football. Sport psychology principles for dealing with pressure still come into play, though.

"When thinking about the demand resource model, the concepts the military has arrived at mesh quite well with sport psychology," he said. "Experiencing

flow, or being 'in the zone' as the media calls it, is a psychological state associated with people's best performance. Part of flow is that you are completely immersed in what you're doing, so you can set the stage for flow but you cannot force flow."

By letting their training take over and not focusing on self-evaluation until later, the actions of Warfighters will lead more often to positive results. When personal demands become a dominant factor, Herzog said these demands may make flow less likely and impede a Warfighter's performance. Part of flow is feeling in control and prepared. Mental skills are a sport/performance psychology resource that can help in feeling prepared to meet big demands, Herzog said.

The role of sport/performance psychology within the military has evolved over the last 25 years, as Herzog explained. The U.S. Military Academy at West Point started their Center for Enhanced Performance in 1989. Since that time, he said the program has trained cadets in the use of mental skills for performance in sports, combat, and life. In 2006, the U.S. Army's Center for Enhanced Performance Program, which was based on the CEP at West Point, was introduced to installations around the country.

In 2007, the work of Martin Seligman, referred to as the "father of positive psychology," was integrated with another Army program called Battlemind to form the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program. This aimed at improving resilience before battle as a means of improving subsequent transitions to life back home. That program has since been expanded to include soldiers, families and Army civilians, Herzog said. He also spoke of a customizable



Dr. Tim Herzog, speaks about mindfulness-based approaches to human performance optimization during the November 2014 Medical Museum Science Café hosted by the National Museum of Health and Medicine. (courtesy photo)

performance enhancement training program that was also first developed in 2007, called "One Shot One Kill," which has a curriculum available on HPRC's website.

"Mental skills training can affect the mind-body interaction and lead to better performance," Herzog said. "Self-talk, the things you say to yourself inside your head, is a skill that can be developed largely through awareness of your habits. Mental imagery, where you can develop physical skills by practicing them in your head, is also useful."

Herzog said it's also important to focus on communication and that empathy can help Warfighters accept difficult emotions to regain focus on the task at hand.

For more information on USU Human Performance Resource Center, visit www.hprc-online.org.

USU Hosts Implementation Ceremony for EMDP2

by Christopher Austin, editor/layout design

Uniformed Services University hosted representatives from the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marines along with several prospective students on Dec. 17 to formally acknowledge the partnership of USU, George Mason University and the Services for the Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program.

The EMDP2 is a new program started this year that is designed to help enlisted men and women set themselves on the path to becoming medical professionals while remaining on active duty.

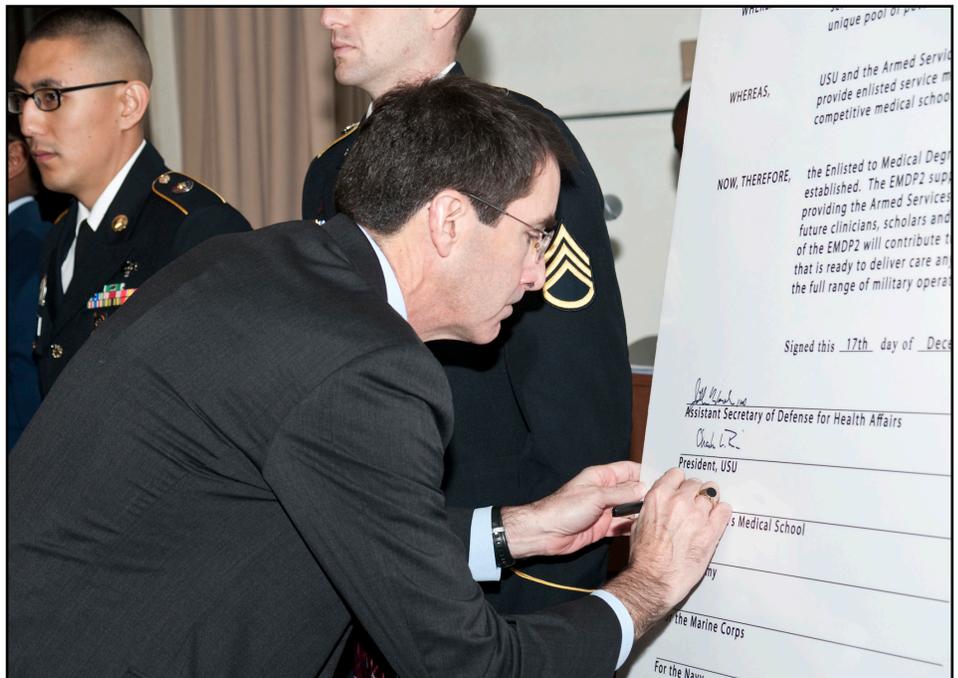
“We are deeply grateful that our sponsoring services adopted the enlisted to physician reparatory program,” said Dr. Arthur Kellerman, dean of the Hébert School of Medicine, at his opening remarks during the implementation ceremony.

“From the earliest days of USU, some of our best students have come from the enlisted ranks. EMDP2 is designed to substantially boost the number of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines who can pursue the dream of becoming a military doctor here at USU and other medical schools around the nation.”

The partnership between USU and GMU allows students to take their prerequisite classes for medical school at the GMU Prince William Country campus.

Each service branch devised its own criteria for selecting enlisted for the program. These criteria had to be approved by USU before they could be officially implemented. The Air Force and Army were the first services approved. The Navy and Marines have formally approved criteria and are working on the application process. It is anticipated they will begin the program in the next cohort.

“We wanted to make sure that the criteria was as consistent as we could make it,” said Althea Green-Dixon, director, Recruitment and Outreach for the F. Ed-



Dr. Arthur Kellerman signs the proclamation of partnership between USU, George Mason University, Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. (photo by Thomas Balfour)

ward Hébert School of Medicine, USU. “We understand that there are differences within the services so the criteria that each service was developing would certainly be based on service requirements. But we also wanted to make sure that those criteria were as consistent as they could be under the circumstances.

“We wanted to make sure that the service members that were going to be coming into the program were going to be the best quality with the highest potential for success. You can go out and earn a college degree, but that doesn’t necessarily portend well for success in a program that’s going to be science based. The services did a great job in selecting the right kind of people.”

Students will be able to apply to any medical school in the country once they complete their courses at GMU and pass the Medical College Admission Test, but Kellerman hopes that they will consider going to USU.

“No good idea stays isolated for long,” he said. “I actually had a

dean of a medical school approach me in the last couple of weeks and say their institution is strongly considering creating something that would allow a pathway for enlisted service members to go to their medical school and I said ‘Great! We want all the competition we can get.’ I can’t imagine a better group of young men and women to go into American medicine than people who have served their country in the enlisted ranks.”

For more information on EMDP2, visit: www.usuhs.edu/adm/emdp2.html.

Final Frame



Third-year medical students at the Uniformed Services University (USU) participate in a laboratory class at USU, Jan. 3. Under instructor supervision, students learn to close wounds and dissect, scrub, gown, glove, prep a sterile field for surgical procedures and insert a catheter during the two-day lab. (photo by MC3 Laura Bailey)