Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way
Uniformed Services University Launches Health Professions Education Degree Program

By Allen Kay, Department of Medicine

Advancing its mission of preparing the next generation of health educators and leaders in the military and public health systems, the Department of Medicine of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is launching two new innovative and rigorous programs – the Master’s and Doctoral degrees in Health Professions Education (HPE).

Advanced degrees in health professions education are increasingly emphasized as a requirement for academic leadership positions in the medical education system in North America. USU’s F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine has developed the new HPE degree programs to address the growing need within the Military Health System (MHS). The MHS is one of the largest health systems in the U.S. with 9.6 million beneficiaries.

“The MHS has a pressing need for physicians with educational expertise to serve as leaders in undergraduate and graduate medical education,” said Dr. Brian Reamy, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in the School of Medicine. “All military services have suffered a significant attrition of senior ranking physician-educators and program leaders through retirements, separations and changes in promotion pathways, yet the number and scope of our educational programs continue to expand.”

The Master of Health Professions Education (MHPE) degree and the Doctor of Philosophy in Health Professions Education (PhD in HPE) degree in the USU Department of Medicine, were established to develop educational scholars to serve as academic leaders (e.g., program directors, clinical directors, and educational deans) who will then contribute to the continuous advancement of health professions education and research in the MHS and civilian communities. “Our goal is to show that aligning educational programs will have a lasting impact on the MHS system,” explained Dr. Louis Pangaro, chairman of the Department of Medicine at USU.

“We anticipate the need for a cadre of new leaders with expertise in the theory, research, and practice of health professions education within the MHS,” Dean Arthur Kellermann, MD, MPH, said. “The need to restructure medical education to meet the needs of the public, and especially to ensure safe, cost effective healthcare, is universally accepted,” he explained, citing a number of recognized experts.

The University is seeking aspiring medical education leaders for these programs. The degree programs are geared to active duty military personnel who are health professionals, including physicians, dentists, nurses and veterinarians, as well as civilian health professionals working in the Military Health System or the Public Health Service.

For more information about the HPE programs, please visit: https://www.usuhs.edu/hpe. To register, please visit: http://www.usuhs.edu/graded/application.html.
Enlisted to Medical Degree Program Now Accepting Marine Applicants
By Military Health System Communications Office

Enlisted Marines who’ve thought about a career path in medicine can now apply for a unique program offered through the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU). The Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program (EMDP2), which got underway in 2014 with its first class of five soldiers and five airmen, is now accepting applications from enlisted Marines for its 2016 class.

The Secretary of the Navy has authorized five slots for Marine applicants in the 2016 EMDP2 class. The application deadline for the 2016 class is Nov. 1, 2015, and the selection board will convene in December. Additionally, any Marine who feels he or she meets the requirements in Marine Administrative Message 277/15 (MARADMIN), and would like to apply for EMDP2’s 2015 class, must do so by June 30.

The EMDP2 Program is a two-year undergraduate program open to enlisted personnel of all ranks with less than 10 years of service. The program is a partnership between USU and the services to provide opportunities for highly motivated enlisted service members with strong academic records. It prepares candidates to apply to USU or civilian medical schools through the military’s Health Professions Scholarship Program. Applicants selected for the program incur a five-year service obligation, which includes the two years of the program.

Among the EMDP2 application requirements detailed in the MARADMIN, Marines must have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited academic institution in the U.S., its territories or Canada. An international bachelor’s degree is acceptable if the applicant has a master’s degree from an accredited institution in the U.S., its territories or Canada. Applicants must be citizens of the United States with no record of court-martial conviction, nonjudicial punishment or civilian felony convictions. For all of the application requirements go to MARADMIN 277/15.

Program participants are selected by a consolidated Navy and Marine Corps board, and assigned to USU in Bethesda, Maryland, for two years. Students remain on active duty while completing coursework at George Mason University-Prince William Campus in northern Virginia, and receive pay and benefits of their current pay grade. Tuition, books and other expenses are paid for by the program.
Medics to help Warrior Games athletes compete at highest levels

by Military Health System Communications Office

Professionals from the military’s medical school are on hand to support the athletes of the 2015 Department of Defense Warrior Games that began Friday, June 19, at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, and run through June 28. The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) in Bethesda, Maryland, is helping by coordinating care from physicians, physical therapists and medics who belong to the school and who are traveling to the games from other bases. They’ll support the approximately 270 athletes taking part in the adaptive sports event.

Army Col. Jeff Leggit with USU said there are two categories of issues USU medical staff deal with: illness and injury. “Illnesses happen no matter what you are doing,” explained Leggit. “Injuries at the games can vary from overuse of upper body muscles for athletes in wheel chairs to strains any able-bodied athlete might have. We’re here to support them all.”

Leggit explained there are some unique injuries for these athletes, including stump care for amputees or urinary issues for paralyzed athletes. The venue provides a concentrated opportunity for medical staff to treat injuries that are unique to the wounded warrior.

“There’s some prototypical overuse injuries we know most wounded warriors are going to suffer, such as irritation from prosthetics and upper extremity overuse,” he said. “We recommend what we call pre-habilitation, focusing on strengthening those upper extremities.”

Even with such preventive measures, Leggit still expects a certain number of injuries because of the nature of competitive athletics. USU personnel are there to ensure the safety of the athletes, whether this involves relieving the aches and pains of these fierce competitors or giving game officials advice in case the weather turns too hot for safe competition. Said Leggit, “Our role is to make sure people compete to their maximum ability in a safe environment.”

While Warrior Games participants have had to learn new sports, the medics have become well-versed in a variety of games to help athletes compete at the highest level. “Even though I played rugby as an able-bodied person, wheelchair rugby has different rules and different requirements, so I need to understand those to help the teams compete at the maximum level,” Leggit said.

Leggit added the athletes involved are competitive by nature, and events such as wheelchair rugby and basketball turn some of the games into true contact sports. “These are warriors, and we expect we’ll see injuries from the leaving-it-all-on-the-field mindset.” Overall, Leggit expects the Warrior Games to be a positive experience for athletes and medics alike.

“The Warrior Games use sports as a way to heal,” he said. “Anywhere we can help push the idea of using exercise as medicine, we’ll do it.”
USU’s DVCIPM is leading advancements in pain management, battlefield anesthesia

by Kiernan Kiser

Since October 2003, when the first continuous peripheral nerve block was placed in an American soldier on the battlefield, this technique has become a primary method for management of extremity wounds in combat zones. While morphine has been the most common solution to ease pain on the battlefield since 1803, regional anesthesia is a 21st century answer to pain management. This method is an ideal anesthetic for the battlefield because it does not require much equipment, has few unwanted side-effects, and it allows patients to control their pain.

Early in the conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan, the austere medical conditions associated with rapid air evacuation from the battlefield were resulting in severe pain issues since morphine use in this environment was difficult and sometimes dangerous. The Army anesthesiology consultant to the Surgeon General, then-Col. (Dr.) Jack Chiles, recognized the importance of finding safer analgesic alternatives for evacuating wounded. Army Col. (Dr.) Chester ‘Trip’ Buckenmaier, III, had recently trained as the first fellow in advanced regional anesthesia and was deployed by Dr. Chiles to the 21st Combat Support Hospital in Balad, Iraq, to demonstrate the utility of continuous peripheral nerve block in managing pain during evacuation flights.

The Army Regional Anesthesia and Pain Management Initiative was subsequently established in an effort to introduce and further the research of regional anesthesia and other analgesic modalities on the battlefield. Directed by Buckenmaier, the organization quickly realized that any battlefield pain management solution required not just in the Army, but Navy and Air Force involvement as well. This resulted in the first tri-service pain organization, the Military Advanced Regional Anesthesia and Analgesia group.

“We saw two major issues that we needed to fix. First, we recognized the need for a coordinating activity among the Department of Defense (DoD) and the uniformed services to ensure collaboration across the government. Second, we realized that the three uniformed services needed to be represented and collaborated with equally,” said Buckenmaier, who is now retired from the Army.

The program, which was headquartered under Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC, changed its name to the Defense and Veterans Center for Integrative Pain Management (DVCIPM) when the activity began coordinating with the Veterans Administration on casualty pain issues. In 2014, to better meet its mission of coordinating the pain efforts of the military services, they were realigned under the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences’ F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine. Since pain management involves many diverse medical disciplines, not just anesthesiology, the university aligned the program under the School of Medicine’s Department of Military and Emergency Medicine (MEM).

“The University and, more specifically MEM, accepted us as a program because our missions were consistent and mutually supportive of one another,” said Buckenmaier. “Similar to the University, DVCIPM’s three main areas of focus are on clinical pain medicine, education of providers and students, and research into emerging pain management therapies with utility in military environments.”

Along with the Pain Management Task Force (PMTF) charted by then-Army Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Eric M. Schoomaker in 2009, DVCIPM has a focus on tapping the unrealized benefits of integrative and complementary medicine in pain management. Through alternatives such as acupuncture, massage therapy and yoga, patients are able to decrease their dependence on some medications and play a role in their own pain condition.

Over the last five years, in response to the PMTF directive to develop more functionally based pain patient outcome screening tools, the program has developed the Pain Assessment Screening Tool and Outcome Registry (PASTOR). In conjunction with the Patient Reported Outcome Measurement Information System (PROMIS), developed by the National Institutes of Health, PASTOR works to provide a comprehensive database that can...
The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently announced that there was a cybersecurity incident affecting its systems that may have exposed personal information of current and former federal employees.

"Some unethical organizations are using this situation for fraudulent purposes," said Charles L. Rice, M.D., president of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU). "Notifications will address you by name, and you should be cautious if asked to offer any personal information. It is best to utilize the web sites or telephone lines listed to obtain more information rather than clicking on any suspicious email links."

Initially, OPM announced that they would be notifying the four million persons affected between June 8-19 through email.

In addition, if OPM does not have a current e-mail address on file for you, notification will be sent through regular mail, via the U.S. Postal Service.

OPM contracted with CSID, a company which specializes in identity theft protection services and credit monitoring, to assist in the notification and protection effort. The notification e-mails to individuals potentially affected are currently originating from the following non-standard e-mail address: opmcio@csid.com.

"A number of personnel have received the email and questioned its validity," said Rice. "It is not spam. Please make sure you don’t inadvertently delete the e-mail from OPM, and ensure that you check all of your incoming e-mail accounts to ensure that you do not miss the notification."

"USU civilian personnel are increasingly being notified that they are among the ranks of those affected by this breach of sensitive PII information at OPM," said Christopher P. Jodrie, the information systems security officer and an information technology specialist in the Cybersecurity branch at USU. "If you receive a notification like the one described, it is indeed legitimate and you are encouraged to take action. The subject will always be "Important Message from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management CIO." Any messages from other account addresses or with alternate subjects should be forwarded to the USU Cybersecurity branch for investigation."

Information on the breach is available from CSID at: http://www.csid.com/opm.

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**Dental, Cont. from Page 3**

Charles L. Rice, M.D., conferred the master’s degrees, emphasizing the importance of the graduates’ contributions to readiness.

"Dentistry holds enormous importance in ensuring the nation’s health and that of our troops. Your contributions are essential to the health and well-being of the force. The importance of your service cannot be overstated. I am very proud of this year’s graduates," said Rice.

USU master’s graduates from the NPDS include:
- Lt. Cmdr. Heidi Ellis (Navy Comprehensive Dentistry)
- Lt. Kurt Allan Eriksson (Navy Comprehensive Dentistry)
- Lt. Christopher Hanson (Navy Comprehensive Dentistry)

Naval Postgraduate Dental School’s graduation ceremony, June 12, 2015. (Photo by Danielle Snowden)

Lt. Andrew Knofczynski (Navy Comprehensive Dentistry)
- Cmdr. Thomas Carroll (Navy Endodontics)
- Lt. Cmdr. Kittima Boonsisirermsook (Navy Endodontics)
- Lt. Cmdr. Allen Rasmussen (Navy Endodontics)
- Lt. Cmdr. Frederick Rumphford IV (Navy Endodontics)
- Maj. Samuel Pointdexter (Army Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology)
- Lt. Cmdr. Teresita La Ronce Alston (Navy Periodontics)
- Lt. Stephen Hutton (Navy Periodontics)
- Lt. Barak Wray (Navy Periodontics)
- Lt. Michael Andersen (Navy Prosthodontics)
- Lt. John Chamberlain (Navy Prosthodontics)
- Lt. James G. Linkous (Navy Prosthodontics)
- Lt. Noel Rodriguez (Navy Prosthodontics)
- Dr. Alejandra Ortega (Veterans Administration-Prosthodontics)
- Maj. Alexander Smith (Army Orofacial Pain)
- Lt. James Hawkins (Army Orofacial Pain)

Captain Glenn Munro concluded the events by stating “These graduates now become proud alumni of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, adding to the health care team who ensure the health and well-being of our military members, and directly increase the readiness of the force,” said Munro.
America's Medical School: 5,000 students later

by Allen Kay, Department of Medicine

Since its humble beginnings in a Bethesda storefront 40 years ago, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) has produced 5,000 physicians, many of whom have distinguished themselves on battlefields, in military clinics worldwide, via research, and throughout official Washington.

To help commemorate this remarkable journey, the university's leadership commissioned a special edition of Military Medicine, International Journal of AMSUS. (http://publications.amsus.org/pb-assets/LTCOS%20Special%20Issue_April.pdf)

"I have long been confident that the education we provide at USU motivates our students to remain committed to the military and to seek leadership opportunities wherever and whenever they become available. What the LTCOS has done is to provide the factual basis for that confidence and I am grateful to Dr. Durning and his colleagues - and to all the students whose careers they have tracked - for these important data. They validate Mr. [Congressman F. Edward] Hébert's vision for the institution," said Charles L. Rice, M.D., USU president.

One of the unique facets of the School of Medicine has been its ability to track students' accomplishments across their education and training and into practice through the Long Term Career Outcome Study (LTCOS). Published papers in the Military Medicine special edition demonstrate "lessons learned" from this program of scholarship for purposes of admission, education and training while in medical school, and implications for graduate medical education and beyond. The issue also outlines a number of medical school innovations and essays on leadership. As Professor Lambert Schuwirth concludes in his guest editorial, "The stars seem to be aligned for USU with the combination of a high-quality educational program, top of the world researchers, and visionary leadership."

The issue begins with the article, "America's Medical School: 5,000 Graduates Since the 'First Class.'" It is at the same time a concise history of the school and also a succinct description of how its former students have fared when compared to their civilian counterparts. The article outlines findings from LTCOS studies such as showing that 93% of USU medical students go on to achieve board certification as compared to 88% of civilian graduates. The issue ends with the finding that USU-educated physicians have fulfilled one of the top goals for the program at the school's creation: USU graduates stay on active duty longer than their civilian-educated counterparts.

"We teach medical students to become good physicians," Brian Reamy, M.D., Senior Associate Dean said, "but we're also the leadership academy for the Military Health System and this special edition helps us demonstrate both."

DVCIPM, Cont. from Page 5

be used to coordinate and enhance pain treatment throughout all DoD healthcare facilities. This system leverages computer adaptive testing technology that allows the computer to select the most informative questions based on prior answers which greatly reduces the number of questions a patient has to answer on a given topic.

DVCIPM has delivered a number of innovating products and programs over the last decade through its research efforts that have fundamentally changed pain management for combat wounded. Committed to education, each year they conduct the Acute Pain Medicine and Regional Anesthesia Course that trains civilian and military anesthesiologists through an intense, cadaver anatomy based, hands-on workshop. This course is considered one of the best regional anesthesia anatomy courses in the country and serves as a model for other similar courses. The course, held at the University of Maryland, College Park, focuses on techniques required to perform successful regional pain blocks through hands-on instruction with non-embalmed cadaver specimens, as well as ultrasound anatomy skills training on live volunteers.

Buckenmaier, who routinely teaches at the Acute Pain course, said "I never intended on being a consultant on pain management. I was trained in regional anesthesia, my specialty is acute pain. The research I do is for the advancement of general pain management, but it’s not just me. The whole DVCIPM organization, through USU, plays a vital role in what I am able to do and is collectively responsible for the success DVCIPM has experienced in changing battlefield analgesia.
The Martha Cancer Center held its annual Cancer Awareness Day at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, June 23. USU’s Center for Prostate Disease Research was among the programs represented at the event. (Photo by Danielle Snowden)