

The Official USU Newsletter

# the pulse

Volume 11, Issue 1 • January 11, 2016  
[www.usuhs.edu](http://www.usuhs.edu)



*Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way*

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Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the USU Office of External Affairs unless otherwise indicated. The Pulse staff may include or exclude articles based upon news value, impact on the university and space availability.

**Submissions**

The Pulse is published biweekly on Mondays. The deadline for submissions is at 4 p.m. Tuesday prior to the publication date. Submissions can be sent to [eric.ritter2@usuhs.edu](mailto:eric.ritter2@usuhs.edu) or by calling 301-295-3791.

# Mottler takes helm as new USU security director

By MC3 Laura Bailey

A new director is at the helm of the Security division at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU). The former U.S. Army Special Forces Green Beret, Christopher Mottler, arrived in November 2015. As director, he will provide a complete security program for the university that includes all aspects of personnel, physical, information and industrial security.

Mottler may be new to USU, but he's no spring chicken when it comes to security. He has more than 24 years of security experience that includes his military career of more than 18 years. He's provided expertise to senior leadership at the U.S. Department of State and diplomatic security. He served more than six years as a captain for the Amtrak Police Department's entire Mid-Atlantic South Division and Special Operations Unit, where led 20 special agents, and was responsible for 24-hour police operations. In addition, he conducted regular security and vulnerability assessments of nuclear power plants as a physical security specialist in the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He has trained and advised U.S. Coast Guard Domestic Maritime Security Response Teams in counter-terrorist operations for high-risk maritime direct action missions and holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Madison University.

"I'm here to direct security so that's what I'm going to do," said Mottler. "I run a very tight ship. My main goal here is to legitimize

security by increasing our campus presence so that we will be taken seriously. I've got the drive, the initiative and experience to make that happen. I'm passionate about my job. I love what I do. I've already conducted my 30-day assessment of the security here. I know where we are, where we need to be and I know how to get us there."

In fact, Mottler is already taking steps to make improvements. Security guards at USU will soon have a new guard booth outside the USU parking garage entrance to protect them from the harsh elements this winter. Additionally, university staff and students needing to meet required overseas travel training will have convenient access to a regularly scheduled monthly anti-terrorism class starting in February.

"It's safe to say that with all of his experience, the university is in good hands," said John Pomerville, assistant vice president of Environmental Health and Safety at USU. "We're confident we have chosen the right person for this job. Security is always important, but even more so as threats and the means by which they are able to be carried out are increasingly varied. The steady advancement of technology, for instance, means that security measures have to keep up with those changes. We always have to be a step ahead. So, we're pleased that someone who brings with him a lot of knowledge and expertise has joined us in getting to the left of things and making USU a safe place for everyone here."

**On the cover**

*Army Capt. (Dr.) Edwin Choi uses music as a form of therapy to entertain and to help relieve anxiety in his patients. Story page 4 (Photo courtesy of Army Medicine)*

# Buller named new USU Brigade Commander

By Sharon Holland

Army Col. (Dr.) Jerome Buller has been named by President Charles L. Rice, M.D., as the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences' (USU) next Brigade Commander, following a recent search.

"I am delighted to welcome an officer of Col. Buller's experience to the University. The position of the Brigade Commander is a very important one at USU, so the selection process is a critical one. My thanks go to Col. Marla DeJong, Maj. Jeanette Skow, Command Master Chief Patrick Hyde, Col. Lisa Moores, Col. Andy Huff, Col. Fred Lough, Capt. James Palma, and Ms. Sharon Holland -- the members of the search committee -- and to those of you [at USU] who participated in the interview process for the Brigade Commander," said Rice.

Buller started his Army career in 1982 as an enlisted Medical Laboratory Specialist. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology in 1990 and entered the Health Professions Scholarship Program to pursue his Doctor of Medicine degree at Louisiana State University School of Medicine in 1991. He graduated in 1994 and subsequently completed his obstetrics and gynecology internship and residency at Madigan Army Medical Center, Tacoma, Washington. He completed a female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery fellowship in 2001 at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and later earned a Master of Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University Carey School of Business, and a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the National Defense Uni-

versity's Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy in Washington, D.C.

Buller has held numerous operational, academic, administrative and clinical leadership positions throughout his career.

He served as the director of the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center; Command Surgeon of Task Force Iron, Multi-National Division-North, 1st Armored Division, in Iraq; Division Surgeon of the 1st Armored Division in Wiesbaden, Germany; director of the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Fellowship program of the National Capital Consortium; assistant chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center; Command Surgeon at the National Defense University; Director of Communications in the Office of the Army Surgeon General and U.S. Army Medical Command; and Deputy Chief of the Army Medical Corps.

"Most recently, his services as Executive Officer to the Army



Army Col. (Dr.) Jerome Buller has been named by President Charles L. Rice, M.D., as USU's next Brigade Commander. (Photo Courtesy of Department of the Army)

Surgeon General have given him a strategic view of military medicine and he will assist the University in educating the next generation and identifying areas where the University can help the military services meet their responsibilities," said Rice.

Buller will succeed Air Force Col. Kevin Glasz, who will be leaving in the spring after nearly 30 years in the Air Force medical department.

# Doctor comforts patients through music

By Suzanne Ovel, Army Medicine

The patient was just too agitated to stay in his bed. A World War II veteran with dementia, he kept changing out of his gown and trying to leave the inpatient floor.

Capt. Edwin Choi, the doctor on call at Madigan Army Medical Center, couldn't give him a sedative - it wouldn't react well with the man's dementia - but what he could do was play the guitar for him. So he spent an hour strumming classical music tunes as well as the songs of John Denver, the Beatles, the Eagles, and the Penguins, until the 82-year-old veteran fell asleep.

"I think music in itself is therapeutic," said Choi, who taught himself to play guitar in medical school at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU).

While he helped calm down the patient and got him to stay in his bed, Choi also helped the nursing staff, since the patient in his agitated state was taking care away from other patients on the floor.

"I personally, along with all our staff, was so incredibly impressed and touched that a physician would take time out of his busy night to help a severely demented and scared gentlemen fall asleep," said 1st Lt. Amy Davis, a clinical staff nurse on 6 North.

That night was not the first time the Family medicine resident paused to bring some compassion to patients through music. During an intensive care unit, or ICU, rotation, one of Choi's patients was taken off of prolonged life support. Although his Family said goodbye to him, the patient was alone during the last few hours of his life. Choi asked if he

would mind if he played guitar for him, so he sat in his ICU room for two hours playing Christian, classical and popular music.

"I just played guitar for him until he fell asleep and passed," Choi said.

He would pick up his ever-ready guitar a few more times during his residency here, including once when in the ICU, he met a young girl with Down syndrome and her parents.

"It's hard, I think, for kids," he said.

Choi actually got his inspiration to go into the field of medicine when in high school he went on a children's ministry trip. He saw doctors giving free aid to people in rural Brazil, and decided being a doctor was a noble profession to help people in need. A turn helping a free clinic in the Republic of Mozambique and several residency rotations later, Choi now takes care of 150 patients in Family medicine, seeing patients of all ages - from

newborns to the elderly.

He also still takes shifts as an on-call doctor with inpatient floors.

Recently, he was able to help one more patient through music. She went through a significant surgery and medical complications, suffering memory loss afterwards. Her husband would visit and just sit by her bedside. When Choi talked to him, he mentioned that his wife liked Christian music, so Choi played for a bit. After a while, the patient perked up and began interacting once again with her husband.

Whether patients are alone or with visitors, Choi feels that being inpatient can be stressful and lonely. When he gets the occasional chance to sit and share music with a patient, it is one more opportunity to provide them with care and comfort.

"I feel like that's why I became a doctor," he said, "to be able to be there for someone when they really need someone to help them."

## ***USU mass transit users to see increase in transit benefits***

The recently passed Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 is set to increase the maximum monthly statutory limit for mass transit benefits to USU and other eligible enrollees from \$130 to \$255.

The DoD NCR Mass Transportation Benefit Program will implement the increase in the maximum allowed subsidy for the February 2016 benefit distribution forward.

Submit your monthly claim for February 2016 benefits up to your actual costs or \$255, whichever is lower.

<https://mtbp.whs.mil/Claim>

There is no need to submit a change application for this unless you are changing your commute or need to update your commuting expenses. Your most recently approved commuting expenses are on file.

If you pay a third-party transit authority or vanpool, you will need to update your allocation amount with your vendor. Any unallocated benefits will remain on your SmarTrip card for Metro Rail or Bus use. The deadline is January 15, 2016.

## Middleton Selected for 2015 Presidential Rank Award

By Sharon Holland

Allen Middleton, special assistant to Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences President Charles L. Rice, M.D., and retired Deputy Director of the Defense Health Agency, was among a handful of top Federal executives to receive this year's Presidential Rank Award.

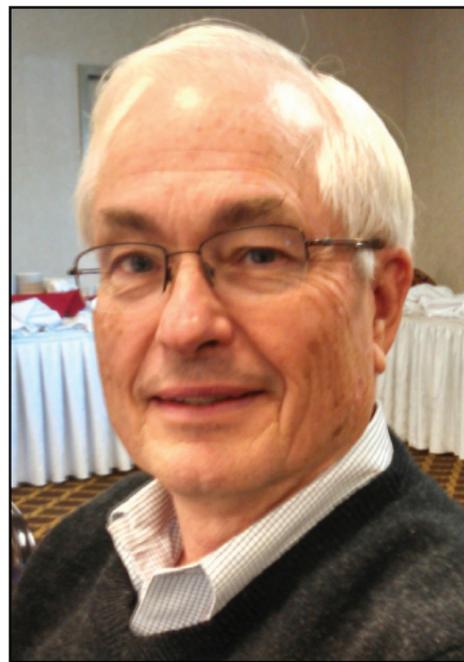
The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 established the Presidential Rank Awards Program to recognize a select group of career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) for exceptional performance over an extended period of time. Later, the Rank Award statute was amended to extend eligibility to senior career employees with a sustained record of exceptional professional, technical, and/or scientific achievement recognized on a national or international level. Two categories of Presidential Rank Award are available, the Distinguished Executive and the Meritorious Executive.

The awards have been given annually by the President of the

United States since the establishment of the Senior Executive Service. Executives from across Government are nominated by their agency heads, evaluated by citizen panels, and designated by the President. Winners of these awards are deemed to be strong leaders, professionals, or scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry, and a relentless commitment to excellence in public service.

Middleton was selected as one of the Department of Defense recipients for the Distinguished Executive Award for leading the evolution of the Defense Health Agency from initial concept to final operating capability and for representing DoD on military medical issues throughout the Government. Only one percent of the career SES employees may receive this rank.

"I am delighted that Mr. Middleton has been recognized with the Presidential Rank Award. His contributions to the Military Health System, the Department of Defense



Allen Middleton was selected for the 2015 President Rank Award. (Photo by Sharon Holland)

and USU are too numerous to count and have had enormous impact in improving each one. His dedication and his intellect are unequalled. I am very grateful that he has chosen to continue to contribute here at the university."

## Rouse Receives 2015 Air Force Achievement Award

By Sharon Holland

Air Force Lt. Col. (Dr.) Christopher A. Rouse, assistant professor of Pediatrics at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, associate program director of the National Capital Consortium Pediatrics residency program, and staff neonatologist at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, was selected to receive the Pacific Air Forces Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Research Award. The announcement was made Dec. 17, 2105.

The award is a multi-corps annual award that recognizes the medical, dental, nurse or biomed-

ical sciences corps officer whose accomplishments in advancing medical research are noteworthy.

Rouse was selected as a finalist for the American Academy of Pediatrics' Ogden Bruton and Andrew Margileth Awards for research he directed on maternal-fetal microglia oxidant response and neonatal tele-echocardiography while serving at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Okinawa, Japan, as head of the Department of Neonatology and medical director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

He also authored two published abstracts and was senior au-

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Air Force Lt. Col. (Dr.) Christopher Rouse, associate program director for the National Capital Consortium's Pediatrics residency, was named PACAF's Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Research Award recipient for 2015. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Air Force.)

# Seyfer Elected State Anatomy Board Chair

by Sharon Holland

The Maryland State Anatomy Board elected its officers for chair and vice-chair for 2016-2017 and Alan Seyfer, M.D., professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), was chosen to serve as chair for his second consecutive term.

“It is an honor to represent USU and our School of Medicine on the Maryland State Anatomy Board along with my colleague, Dr. David Mears, associate professor and director of the Head and Neck/Neurosciences Module, who also represents us. It is a pleasure to work with Mr. Ronn Wade, the Board director, and our colleagues from Johns Hopkins and the University Of Maryland, and the Assistant Attorney General,” said Seyfer.

The Maryland State Anatomy Board is an ex officio body created in 1947 to ensure the proper distribution of cadavers to qualified hospitals, medical schools, and other agencies engaged in medical education and research. The board also carries out the legal provisions

regulating Consent to Post Mortem Examination and the Anatomical Gift Act.

“In addition to evaluating the ethics and legal aspects of each request, the true highlights include the memorial services that we conduct every year at Sykesville [Md.] and here at USU,” Seyfer said. “These services honor those who donated their tissues for the advancement of medical education and medical science. Those are special moments for all of us on the Board and we are extremely grateful to those donors and their families.”

Two representatives from each of the Departments of Anatomy of medical schools in Maryland are appointed by their respective University to serve on the State Anatomy Board, along with one member from the Maryland College of Dentistry at the University of Maryland. Those members then vote for the two board leadership positions.

“Dr. Seyfer’s re-election represents an affirmation by his peers of his dedication to anatomy instruction and his profound respect

for anatomical donors. Moreover, his willingness to donate time and energy to this role personifies the culture of ‘service before self’ that is at the heart of everything we do at the Uniformed Services University,” said Arthur L. Kellermann, M.D., M.P.H., dean of USU’s F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine.



Alan Seyfer, M.D., professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), was chosen to serve as chair for his second consecutive term. (photo by Tom Balfour)

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thor for a published case report, and was selected to present research at the Asian Society of Pediatric Research Annual Conference, Pediatric Academic Societies Annual Conference, American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference and Exhibition, and the Research Society on Alcoholism Annual Meeting. While serving in Japan, Rouse presented Grand Rounds at Nanbu

Children’s Hospital and assisted translation of two abstracts published in the Journal of the Japanese Pediatric Society.

He co-founded and is an associate editor of the American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Neonatal Perinatal Medicine’s Articles of Interest publication and was a committee member for the U.S. Air Force Academy Association of Graduates Graduate Dependent Scholarship Fund. Rouse was also

presented with Officer of the Quarter Awards for the 18th Medical Operations Squadron, 18th Medical Group, and 18th Wing located at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan.

“We are very pleased to have someone with Dr. Rouse’s expertise and experience join the NCC faculty,” said Jerri Curtis, M.D., NCC Director, “and we congratulate him on receiving this recognition of his outstanding research efforts.”

## Ledford selected for STFM Foundation Program Enhancement Award

by Sharon Holland

Christy J.W. Ledford, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine at USU, was selected to receive the Society for Teachers in Family Medicine (STFM) Foundation Program Enhancement Award for 2016.

The Program Enhancement Award was initiated three years ago and provides funding for family medicine programs to implement enhancements at their institutions while developing the leadership skills of family medicine faculty. Preference is given to programs whose project leaders are early in their academic careers. Ledford will use the award, which includes a \$2,000 budget, to promote the Military Primary Care Research Network (MPCRN) through the Department of Family Medicine's faculty development fellowship program for third-year family medicine residents. Partnering with Chris Bunt, M.D., associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine, Ledford will direct a program evaluation and strategic planning

program for integrating family medicine resident scholarship interests into the research network.

The MPCRN, based at USU, promotes physician inquiry, discovery and improvement to enhance patient care, and connects medical professionals at the 15 military family medicine residency training sites, through the Uniformed Services Academy of Family Practice, to promote collaborative scientific inquiry and physician improvement. MPCRN's primary research priorities are Health Transitions, Health Disparities, and Decision Making and Decision Support.

"This award demonstrates that the national leaders of family medicine value our vision for cultivating research interests and skills for learners across the medical education continuum," said Ledford. "We see this as an opportunity to introduce not only our MHS family medicine residents but also USU students to the methods and outcomes of primary care research."

"The dynamic partnership of Dr. Ledford and Dr. Bunt has taken

the MPCRN from a notional concept to an operational reality. We are now networked with multiple training sites across the MHS to engage in meaningful scholarly inquiry aimed to improve patient care and medical education."

The award will be presented at the STFM Annual Spring Conference in Minneapolis.



Dr. Christy Ledford, associate professor in USU's Department of Family Medicine was named a 2016 recipient of the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Foundation Program Award. (Courtesy photo)

## USU leaders hold annual strategic planning offsite



Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences senior leaders met last week for their annual strategic planning offsite in San Diego, California. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Dr. Jonathan Woodson, Defense Health Agency Director, Navy Vice Adm. (Dr.) Raquel Bono, and Medical Enlisted Training Campus Director, Air Force Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Robert Miller, along with San Diego-area Military Health System leadership, also participated. (Photo by Sharon Holland).

# Final Frame



*Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences graduates can be found just about anywhere in the world. Among the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine graduates currently serving together overseas are (left to right): Capt. (Dr.) Colin Linthicum, class of 2010; Maj. (Dr.) Jonathan Claassen, MPH class of 2013; Maj. (Dr.) Michael Donofrio, MPH class of 2013; Maj. (Dr.) Greg Brown, class of 2008; Maj. (Dr.) Ben Jones, class of 2007; Lt. Col. (Dr.) Carl Skinner, class of 2002; and Maj. (Dr.) Alex McKinlay, class of 2004. (Courtesy photo)*