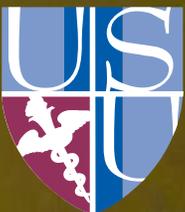


The Official USU Newsletter

# the pulse

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

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## First EMDP2 Cohort Commissioned



*Four Soldiers and five Airmen were commissioned after successfully completing the Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program (EMDP2). (Courtesy Photo)*

*By Staff Sgt. Stephanie Morris*

Nine enlisted service members in the Air Force and Army were recently commissioned after successfully completing the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program.

The Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program, or EMDP2, is a 24-month program for highly qualified enlisted service members interested in a career as a military physician. The program's components include full-time coursework in a traditional classroom setting at George Mason University's Prince William Campus in northern Virginia, structured pre-health advising, formal Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) preparation, dedicated faculty and peer mentoring at USU, and integrated clinical exposure.

Four EMDP2 graduates – Joshua Richter, Steve Capen, Alex Blereau, and Steve Radloff – were all commissioned as Army second lieutenants in a small ceremony in San Antonio, Texas. The com-

missioning of the five Air Force graduates to second lieutenants – Matthew Little, Kenneth Johnson, Joseph Merfeld, Lindsay Slimski, and Jeremy Mears – was conducted during a ceremony at USU on June 23, led by retired Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Thomas Travis, former Air Force Surgeon General and current USU Senior Vice President for University Programs.

“This is personal and important to me because, as the son of an enlisted Airman, I took advantage of every opportunity I could to go to school and obtain the right prerequisites to eventually successfully compete and attend USU as part of the class of 1986,” Travis said. “This will be a way they can serve their classmates, who would do well to learn from these experienced airmen. I look forward to attending their graduation in May 2020, when they take two oaths – the Hippocratic Oath, as they become physicians, and the oath of office, as they are promoted to captain.”

The nine officers will report to the University at the beginning of August to start their medical studies.

**On the cover**

*A zombie scenario is used as part of an online population health course at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU). The course is part of degree requirements in USU's family nurse practitioner Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. See story, Pg. 3. (Animation by USU's Education & Technology Innovation Support Office)*

# Students Learn Public Health, Zombie Style

By Sarah Marshall

A course at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is teaching students global health care delivery in a unique way that's sure to be a "thriller."

Students in USU's Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) program must take a population health course as part of their degree requirements. This online class outlines key principles in responding to and understanding population health – the overall health of a group, be it a group of employees, a community, or entire nation. Students must apply what they learn about theories and models of public health care through debate, small group work, and a series of creative scenarios – including a zombie pandemic.

"We use the narrative device of a zombie pandemic in animations and assignment to help engage students in content," explained Catherine Ling, assistant professor and Family Nurse Practitioner for the DNP and Ph.D. programs, in USU's Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing.

The students watch video clips of scenarios, including a scene where the nation's "President" delivers a brief "State of the Zombie Pandemic" address. Students see the impact that a fictitious zombie virus has made on a population, the fear it's created – along with "anti-zombie" posters strewn all over cities. These scenarios reinforce teaching materials regarding various tools that shape population health planning and interventions.



A "zombie" is used as part of a scenario in an online population health course in the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) Graduate School of Nursing (GSN). (Animation by ETI)

The online course, as well as its animations and conceptual framework, were created with help from a team of instructional designers and graphic artists from USU's Education & Technology Innovation (ETI) Support Office.

Ling said the zombie coursework keeps the material interesting, and the underlying zombie "theme," throughout each lesson in the module makes it more cohesive. In turn, narrative cohesion makes it easier to remember the material and therefore easier to apply should there ever be a real-life population health emergency.

As part of a fictitious Department of Defense division, "HHIT," the students draw on what they've learned throughout the course to enact a quarantine, administer widespread vaccines, and obtain international resources, Ling explained. Meanwhile, she added, they must remember to follow actual DoD guidelines, when responding to the "growing

zombie pandemic."

The course provides a working understanding of essential competencies in population health. This skill set is critical in an era of increasing antibiotic resistance, emerging infectious diseases and pandemics like Ebola and Zika.

Ling said she's always looking for ways to keep students engaged by keeping the material relevant and interesting. Adult learning can be enjoyable as well. Those who aren't into zombies don't have to watch the videos – they can read the storyline instead. Students have consistently had positive feedback, Ling said, commenting this is "the best online class" they've taken.

A student in the DNP/FNP who has taken the course, Air Force Capt. Marcie Hart, echoed those sentiments. As a big fan of the TV show "The Walking Dead," Hart said she was very excited when Dr. Ling

*continued on pg.5*

# School of Medicine to Begin New Wellness Program

By Christopher Austin

The F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine's (SoM) Office of Student Affairs will introduce the Hébert School of Medicine Wellbeing Program this fall to provide students with support as they pursue their military medical careers.

The program splits students into four groups referred to as "homes." Students will remain in the "fire teams" they entered the university with and will be paired with a "fire team" from another SoM class; first-year students will be paired with second-year students, and third-year students with fourth-year students. These paired groups make up what are being referred to as a "family." Sixteen families make up a "home," and each "home" will be led by a faculty member.

"[This program] will allow us to have more meaningful relationships between the faculty and the students, to advance career advice, mentoring, social connections and utilize the senior students and their experience to mentor the first year students," said Army Col. (Dr.) Lisa Moores, associate dean for Student Affairs at SoM.

The ultimate goal is to improve the resiliency of students, reduce stress and burnout, and better cope when these occur, she said, and to provide students with strategies and networks to support themselves when dealing with school and military life.

"Most interesting to me are the prospects of having a dedicated senior faculty mentor throughout all four years of the SoM curriculum," Army 2nd Lt. Trey Colantonio, a

student representative on the planning committee for the wellness program said. "Another aspect that I find appealing is the increased exposure students from different years will have with each other, since there are very few times where we are all on campus at the same time."

The initiative to create the program was organized by Moores, who sought to improve student experiences on campus and help them in mentoring for their careers after school. A similar program at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine was a major influence on the structure of the SoM's program.

"The Vanderbilt University School of Medicine has a very robust program and has published the outcomes. They've looked not only at student satisfaction but actual measurements of student burnout and stress and how that has gone down since they instituted the program," Moores said.

Each home will be encouraged to come up with a name and a crest to represent themselves. These will be carried on by the houses in subsequent years. Moores has said that the setup of using homes has reminded people of Hogwarts, the school in the fictional Harry Potter series.



Third year students at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) take part in a wellness day put on by the Office of Student Affairs in March 2016. Student Affairs hopes to have similar events in the future after it begins the Hébert School of Medicine Wellbeing Program this fall. (Photo by Tom Balfour)

One of the proposed projects during the school year is to have community service challenges.

"Community service is important to [the students]. They are very busy here because of the military curriculum that goes into our students' schedules. Unless you're involved with a special interest group that has a lot of strong community outreach, it's hard for them to get involved like they would like to," Moores said.

In addition, the Office of Student Affairs is looking to hold wellness days for students so they might have a chance to take their minds off academics and have fun, Moores said.

This past March, the Office of Student Affairs had an impromptu wellness day for third-year medical students. The event had performances by students, food, and track and field events.

# Zombies, Continued From Pg. 3

mentioned the course would involve a “zombie apocalypse-type scenario.”

“The videos are very tastefully done,” Hart said. “The ‘infected’ can be cured later in the scenario, so the characters are not using deadly force, and it is not overtly violent.” Hart added the videos are suspenseful, and exciting. They take somewhat bland, abstract information and make it interesting and concrete. “I thought it was a wonderful, fun twist to this course,” Hart said.

While the course is interesting, it also allows the students to use “the other side of their brain,” Ling noted. It gives them a chance to think creatively – and that certainly enhances their problem-solving and critical thinking skills, she said. The online course is also necessary, as a third of the students travel on a temporary duty assignment during the semester.



*As members of the fictitious Department of Defense (DoD) division, “HHIT,” students are tasked with using their course knowledge to enact a plan to deal with the outbreak while following real-world DoD guidelines. (Courtesy Photo)*

Ling continues focusing on student engagement, looking for ways to make course work interesting and thought provoking. So far, her imaginative efforts have earned her the Teaching with Sakai Innovation Award (TWSIA) for 2015. The

award recognizes educators from institutions around the world for their excellence in teaching and learning.

For more information about USU’s ETI Support Office and its services, please visit: [www.usuhs.edu/ETI](http://www.usuhs.edu/ETI).

## Clinical Psychology Students Ace Licensing Exams

*By Sharon Holland*

The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards recently released their “Psychology Licensing Exam Scores by Doctoral Program” report, and the clinical psychology program in USU’s Department of Medical and Clinical Psychology was among the top in the nation.

The report summarizes how graduates of clinical psychology programs perform on the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP). Clinical psychologists must pass the EPPP to become licensed practitioners. Six USU clinical psychology program students took the exam between February 2015 and March 2016

and 100 percent of those students passed, compared to an overall pass rate of 82.2 percent for all accredited doctoral programs.

“Our students exceeded the national average performance across all domains of the exam. The greatest discrepancies between our scores and the national average were in Assessment and Diagnosis, Treatment and Intervention, and Research Methods and Statistics – a wonderful illustration of the strength of our Scientist-Practitioner training,” said U.S. Public Health Service Cmdr. Jeffrey Goodie, director of the Clinical Psychology program at USU.

According to Goodie, the outcomes are particularly remarkable

as these data are for those candidates who took the exam for the first time, which means that within this time frame 100 percent of USU students passed the exam the first time they took it.

“At USU we strive to give all of our students a solid foundation in the core skills that they need to be successful as early psychologists. The accomplishment of these students, not only passing the licensing exam but surpassing the national average scores in all areas, is a testament to their hard work and the commitment of our faculty,” said David Riggs, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Medical and Clinical Psychology.

# In Memoriam: Founding USU OB/GYN Chair Douglas R. Knab, M.D.

By William Haffner, M.D.

Retired Navy Capt. (Dr.) Douglas R. Knab, founding chair and professor emeritus of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), passed away on June 24, 2016.

Knab's vision, leadership style, and commitment to excellence in scholarship were recognized locally and nationally, having a highly significant impact in all areas with which he actively engaged.

Already stationed at the former National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda as a gynecologic oncologist and the obstetrics and gynecology service chief, in 1976 he was appointed the founding chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at USU. He recruited nationally known faculty including Navy Capt. (Dr.) Robert Cephalo as vice chair at NNMC and Army Col. (Dr.) Robert Park as vice chair at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Under his leadership, the department flourished with the development of subspecialty fellowship programs in maternal-fetal medicine, gynecologic oncology, and reproductive endocrinology and infertility in his early years as well as continuing to support the two residency training programs at Bethesda and NNMC. Upon his retirement from the Navy in 1983, Knab successfully competed for his position as civilian chair at USU, a role which he continued until 1992. When the need was identified, he

stepped forward to assume the duties as the first associate dean for graduate medical education at USU in addition to his duties as department chair.

Knab's additional roles in the National Capital Area included serving as the consultant physician to the President for obstetrics and gynecology and consultant to the Office of the Attending Physician for obstetrics and gynecology at the U.S. Capitol. He served actively in a number of leadership roles at the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). Already chair of the Armed Forces district of ACOG, he became chair of the ACOG council of district chairs representing all districts of the college.

Following his retirement from USU in 1992, he and his wife Dorothy moved to the St. Petersburg, Fla., area where he maintained a teaching



*Retired Navy Capt. (Dr.) Douglas Knab was appointed the founding chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at USU in 1976. He served as the consultant to the President for obstetrics and gynecology. He retired from USU in 1992. (Courtesy Photo)*

role at the University of South Florida as a clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Tampa Bay Research Institute, and a member of the Academy of Senior Professionals at the Eckerd College. The funeral service for Knab was held on July 1, 2016, in Virginia.

# Sim Center Staff Receive Simulation Award



Val G. Hemming Simulation Center staff members were recently presented the Simulation in Healthcare Award for their contributions to the development of standardized patient simulations. (Courtesy Photo)

By Staff Sgt. Stephanie Morris

The award for the Society for Simulation in Healthcare was recently bestowed on retired Navy Capt. (Dr.) Joseph Lopreiato, director of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) Val G. Hemming Simulation Center (SimCen), and professor of pediatrics and medicine, at the 15th annual meeting of the Association of Standardized Patients in Tampa, Fla. on June 26.

The award recognizes individuals in medical education who have made significant contributions to simulation, specifically the practice

of standardized patients (SPs).

“Our SP group at USU has been delivering quality instruction using SPs for 17 years now,” Lopreiato said. “We have made innovations in the use of SPs to teach, give feedback and act as teaching assistants for students. We have recently begun working on a virtual SP avatar that can interact with students.”

Simulation and SP methodology are established ways to introduce a new skill, refresh an old skill or assess skills competency in students, he said.

The average student comes to the SimCen 34 times during their course of study.

Lopreiato said that he and his team are very proud of the role they play in teaching and reinforcing the clinical skills students need to become successful clinicians.

He accepted the award on behalf of the SP training staff at the SimCen who he described as the “secret sauce of success.” The SP educators at USU simulation center include Dr. Lou Clark, Patty

Bell, Michael Montgomery, Andrea Creel, Vanessa Strickland, Grant Cloyd and Renee Dorsey.

“I was honored for the recognition of our team and glad that we were able to be good representatives of USU on a national stage,” Lopreiato stated. “I wish to thank the deans of the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine School of Medicine, Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing and the office of the president of USU for all their support for our simulation center. We are leaders in the field because of the support we get from this University.”

# Final Frame



*Five faculty members in USU's Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing were among a dozen service members who were invited on stage at a concert by the rock band, Journey, July 2, 2016, at Jiffy Lube Live amphitheater in Bristow, Va. Army Lt.Col. Danette Cruthirds, Navy Cmdr. Justice Parrott, ret. Army Lt.Col. Matthew Welder, Navy Lt.Cmdr. Eric Pauli, and Army Lt.Col. Andrea Fuller stood at attention in front of more than 20,000 concertgoers while Journey lead guitarist, Neal Schon, played a Star Spangled Banner guitar solo. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Welder)*