

The Official USU Newsletter

# the pulse

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**A Day in the Life of USU**

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

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**On the cover**

*Marvin Jones, a Henry M. Jackson Foundation contract employee in USU's Administrative Support Division, provides shuttle service to USU employees and students as part of his duties as a motor vehicle operator for the university. Jones is featured as part of the "Day in the Life of USU" photo project. See story on pg. 6. (Photo by Sharon Holland)*

# USU team wins DC Public Health Case Challenge Practicality Prize

*By Sharon Holland*

A team of five students from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) recently participated in the fourth annual D.C. Public Health Case Challenge, bringing home the Practicality Prize, one of four prizes awarded for the event.

The D.C. Public Health Case Challenge is co-sponsored by the National Academy of Medicine's Kellogg Health of the Public Fund and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Roundtable on Population Health Improvement, with support from the Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education.

Air Force 2nd Lt. Evan Gregg, Army 2nd Lts. Horace Hayes, Alexander Leeds, and Lt. Emad Madha, all second-year medical students, and William Valiant, a Ph.D. student in USU's Emerging Infectious Diseases graduate program, comprised USU's team, coached by Dr. Diana Luan, acting scientific director for the Health Service Research Program. Their team was one of seven competing in the challenge, which promotes interdisciplinary, problem-based learning around a public health issue of importance to the local Washington, D.C., community.

This year's Case Challenge topic was "The Changing American City and Implications for Health and Well-being of Vulnerable Populations." Each team was given two weeks to develop a solution to the public health problem using a hypothetical \$2 million budget.



*Members of USU's D.C. Public Health Case Challenge team took home the Practicality Prize at this year's event. Pictured (left to right) are: Air Force 2nd Lt. Evan Gregg, William Valiant, and Army 2nd Lts. Alexander Leeds, Horace Hayes and Emad Madha. (Courtesy photo)*

USU's team proposed the Innovative School Program for Resiliency and Engagement, or inSPIRE, an intervention to address the mental health needs of, and develop coping skills in, D.C. elementary school children effected by homelessness. As Practicality Prize winners, the team was also selected to present at the Leadership Across Generations Luncheon at the National Academy of Medicine annual meeting.

"We're very proud of our team and the faculty who helped the team move forward, especially Dr. Diana Luan," said Dr. Boris Lushniak, chair of USU's Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics. "The team members were especially impressive in their initiative in achieving the mission of this exercise after visiting with, and understanding the needs of, the community that they were serving. Well done students!"

# Preventive Medicine Residency brings focus on women's health

By Christopher Austin

Air Force Col. (Dr.) Catherine Witkop, program director for the preventive medicine residency, is making strides in improving preventive care for women through the education provided to graduate students and residents in the USU General Preventive Medicine residency program.

Witkop is taking cues from the public health approach to preventive medicine and applying this model to women's health, which has traditionally been focused more on the one-on-one clinical experience between a woman and her provider.

The public health approach follows four steps, Witkop said. The first is identifying the public health issue and gathering data to measure the magnitude of the problem; second is identifying risk factors or determinants that could impact the issue; third is identifying or developing interventions or programs that effectively address the problem; and fourth is disseminating this information widely.

"In the public health approach to women's health, data are used to define and quantify the problem. For example, gaps in clinical preventive services for women," Witkop said. "Studying the obstacles and risk factors at a population level allows implementation of programs that increase access to those services that have been shown to improve health and reduce disease."

One desired change in women's health is to facilitate and encourage

women to be more active partners in their health care, both at home and the deployed setting, Witkop continued. Educating women and providers in that partnership will result in better care for women from the preventive and traditional care side, alike.

Residents in general preventive medicine at USU are looking into military women's issues through their individual projects; Navy Lt. (Dr.) Amy Rogers and Cmdr. (Dr.) Elizabeth Reeves both have based their Master of Public Health degree projects on how pregnancy may impact women's military careers and what providers can do to improve care for women in the military.

Rogers' project focused on Navy women and how pregnancies impact their career paths, particularly how Service members can be better prepared for their physical readiness test once they return to active duty.

"The Navy currently doesn't have a program to help women stay in shape while they're pregnant or in the post-partum," Rogers said. "The Army does have a program in place, but as a preventive strategy, we should help women make sure they're in shape prior to pregnancy. Helping them know how to stay in shape while pregnant and providing them the tools post-partum to maintain that healthy and fit status is important."

There are several conditions that women about to be deployed may be concerned with that preventive medicine can address. In addition to

traditional screenings, another issue is the use of contraceptives, both to prevent unintended pregnancy and to treat gynecologic conditions.

Reeves' research focused on factors associated with pregnancy among active duty military women between the ages of 17 and 25. The data this study provided suggested that military women might benefit from improved individual counseling in medical exams regarding what kind of contraceptive they should choose, particularly between long-acting reversible contraceptives like intrauterine devices or implants under the skin, or short term contraceptives like medications.

"Women in the military are challenged by a few different things that civilian women aren't. They have shift work, for instance. If they're in a flying status, hospital employees, or working in the field, it might be difficult for them to take something on a daily basis," Reeves said. "Frequently, they're moving or getting deployed and they want something that's consistent."

The main way to ensure women are properly assessed before deployment is through pre-deployment and periodic health assessments that each branch of the military conducts for its members.

As of Sept. 8, a DoD instruction came into effect that put all the services under a joint Periodic Health Assessment Program that regularly assesses the medical readiness of Service members. This includes a web tool that is consistent among all

*Continued on pg. 5*

# Operation Bushmaster challenges students, enhances readiness



*During Operation Bushmaster, fourth-year medical students from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences were constantly faced with unfolding scenarios. While triaging the wounded, they prepared for their evacuation and care in flight. The exercise took place Oct. 8-21 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)*

*By Sarah Marshall*

With helicopter evacuations, mock explosions, reality-based missions – even canine casualties – medical students from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) experienced the challenges of caring for patients in a simulated combat environment.

The fourth-year medical students participated in a field exercise known as Operation Bushmaster, or Medical Field Practicum 202, which took place Oct. 8-21 at Fort Indiantown Gap, an Army National Guard post nestled in the mountains just north of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The exercise aims to teach future military medical officers the skills they need to perform their duties in operational assignments after medical school, while preparing them

to become leaders in the military health care system, explained Army Col. Francis O'Connor, professor and chair of Military and Emergency Medicine (MEM) at USU.

Bushmaster is the capstone event of the students' military medical education, challenging their knowledge of military medical practice, tactical combat casualty care, and leadership. The exercise involves nearly 500 personnel and puts into play more than 2,000 patient scenarios.

Before heading up to Bushmaster, the students went through a two-week intensive military contingency medicine course. During which they were presented with operational problems and were given pre-deployment training, just as they

would have prior to a real deployment, O'Connor said. This classroom phase included lectures, small group sessions, tactical combat casualty care training, and practical exercises focusing on needed skillsets and team building. As they became a cohesive unit, they prepared to deploy to the fictional country of Pandakar, where they would face challenges from rebel forces, he said.

The students were then sent sequentially, in two groups, to spend five days on the Army post. Once there, they were assigned to one of four platoons – each undergoing the same scenarios, planning and executing missions while simultaneously caring for casualties. The students were constantly faced with unfolding conditions round-the-clock, with scenarios involving improvised explosive devices, widespread disease outbreaks, simulated injured working dogs, and triaging the wounded while arranging for their evacuation and caring for them in flight.

“While patient care is a large part of their training, communication skills and logistics are just as important – it's essential to obtain the necessary supplies and manage logistics,” O'Connor said. However, according to O'Connor, the exercise is first and foremost a test of leadership.

Throughout the exercise, the students were assigned various roles, such as triage officer, medical logistics, litter bearers transporting patients, or patient administrators. They frequently rotated positions,

*Continued on pg. 5*

## Operation Bushmaster, continued from pg. 4.

allowing each student to practice different roles. A Pandakar “day” was four hours in duration real-time; with each day change came a new job and responsibility.

Meanwhile, the students were observed by faculty and graded on how well they performed in key positions, such as platoon leader, ambulance team leader, combat stress control officer, preventive medicine officer, or ambulance team leader. Grades were based on a number of factors including communication and leadership skills.

On the final day, the platoons – with about 25 students each – responded to a mock mass casualty with more than 30 wounded. Simulated gunfire and explosions resonated through the air and smoke billowed through the woods as casualties rapidly came from left and right.

“They might have thought they knew what they were going to walk into, but when they see the sheer magnitude and the sights – it’s a shock to the senses,” O’Connor said.

“They have to take a step back, reach back to lessons learned over the prior four days, and within the chaos of the environment, come up with a plan and attempt to create order and balance, and most importantly, move the casualties. It’s very difficult and very realistic.”

Overall though, the students’ experience was both challenging and rewarding, he said. As they were constantly being thrown problems, they had to adapt in that environment and work as a team. Everyone looked out for one another, making sure they all stayed hydrated, had adequate rest, and did not overexert themselves – an important aspect of combat stress.

“It’s an extremely important exercise, and it definitely tests the students in ways that cannot be accomplished in a classroom,” he said.

O’Connor credits the leadership of Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Kevin Semelrath, the exercise director, and his non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Army Sgt. 1st Class Alex Menchaca, as well as all sup-



*Medical students are prepared to face any scenario, including the emergency care of a military working dog. This year, for the first time, they practiced their skills using a K9 simulator. (Photo by Sharon Holland)*

porting members in MEM, for Bushmaster’s success.

A number of volunteer faculty members supported the exercise alongside colleagues within the Military Health System, including Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Active duty and reserve units throughout the mid-Atlantic also assisted, including Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

## Women’s health, continued from pg. 3

DoD components and which will allow health care providers to review Service members’ self-evaluations and take action as necessary.

Witkop started her career as an Obstetrics and Gynecology physician (OBGYN). She is still active and sees outpatients.

“As an OBGYN, I was often discouraged by the number of conditions I saw that could have been prevented,” Witkop said. “I saw in the military an opportunity to address

these concerns because the military has a long history providing preventive care to reach optimal performance and health for all military members and beneficiaries.”

This led Witkop to pursue preventive medicine as a second career. She hopes to use her skills in these two fields to help improve preventive care for women.

“I care deeply about ensuring the health of our women and families because it helps all of the military in

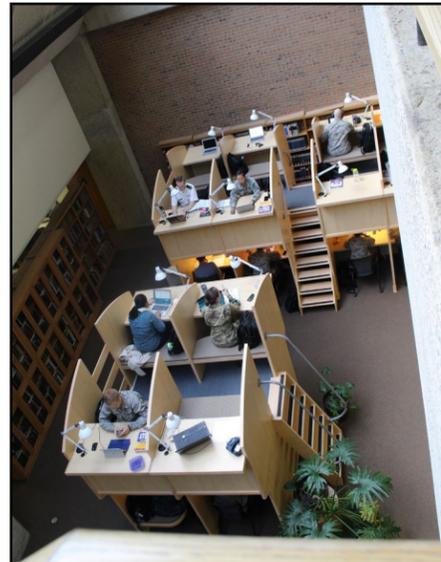
the long run,” Witkop said. “Women are serving in increasing numbers and in expanded roles, therefore attention to their health needs is critical. Furthermore, if spouses or daughters are not receiving the best care and aren’t healthy, it impacts men in the military as well. We already provide high-quality women’s health care in the military but continuing to improve that over time is what I really care about.”

# A Day in the Life at USU

USU photographers fanned out across the university on Oct. 4 to capture life on the campus as part of the annual "Day in the Life of USU" photo project.



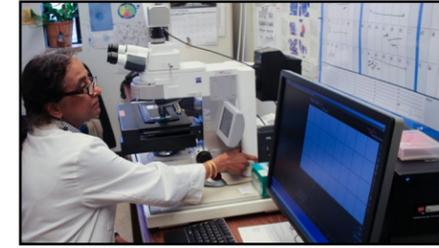
Navy Capt. (Dr.) Dale Szpisjak, chairman of the Anesthesia department, preps a patient simulator for tracheal intubation practice. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Morris, U.S. Air Force)



Students take advantage of the study area in the USU Learning Resource Center. (Photo by Christopher Austin)



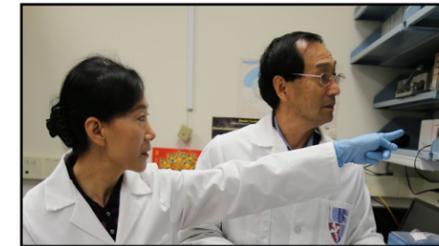
Air Force Col. (Dr.) Jessica Servey does a well-baby check-up in the USU Family Health Center. (Photo by Tom Balfour)



Uma Subramanian, a research assistant at AFRRI, goes over samples. (Photo by Christopher Austin)



Kevin Oakley, a microbiology lab technician in the Department of Pediatrics, removes samples from liquid nitrogen. (Photo by Kyle Skerbe)



Xiaoxia Li, a research associate, and Dr. Lei Zhang, from USU's Department of Psychiatry, review samples for their PTSD biomarker research. (Photo by Sharon Holland)



Obet Salvador mans the grill at the USU cafeteria, keeping students, faculty and staff fed. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)



Faculty observe students interact with simulated patients in the Val G. Hemming Simulation Center. (Photo by Tom Balfour)



Dr. Dennis McDaniel uses an electron microscope in the Biomedical Instrumentation Center. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)



Nathan Lott, a research associate at The American Genome Center, closely monitors a genetic sequencer. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)

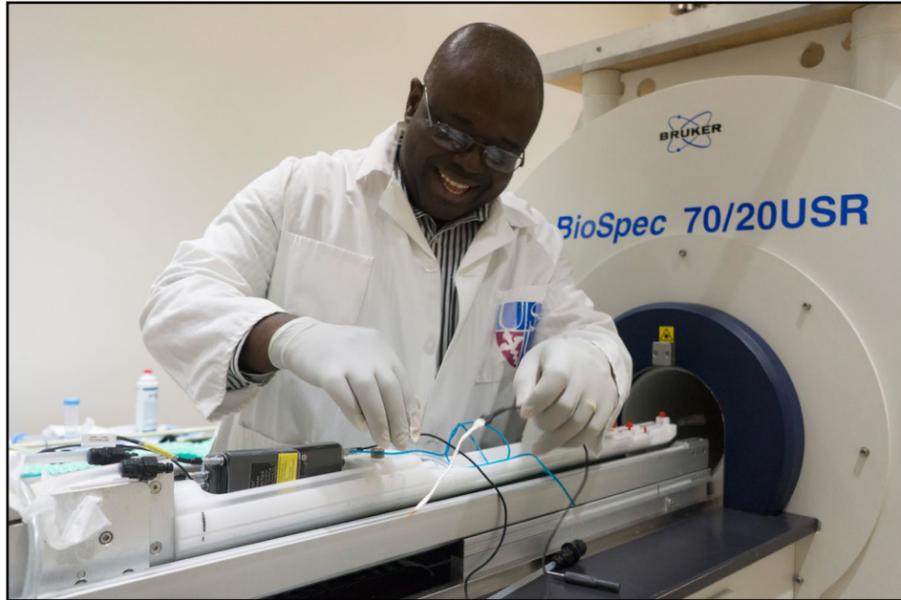


Jose Romero, one of USU's contract janitorial staff members, helps keep the University clean. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dillon, U.S. Army)



Medical Assistant Jinkle Mody gives a vaccination to Air Force 2nd Lt. Bryan Stevens at the USU Family Health Center. (Photo by Tom Balfour)

# A Day in the Life, continued



Asasmoah Bosomtwi, a contract senior research associate in USU's Department of Radiology, sets up an MRI machine. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dillon, U.S. Army)



Dr. Kristbjorn Gudmundsson, a scientist in USU's Department of Pediatrics, sets up a laminar flow head. (Photo by Kyle Skerbe)



Air Force Maj. (Dr.) John Lichtenberger, USU Department of Radiology, demonstrates the incredible capabilities of the department's 3-D printer. (Photo by Sharon Holland)



F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine students hold an impromptu small group discussion in the USU courtyard. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)



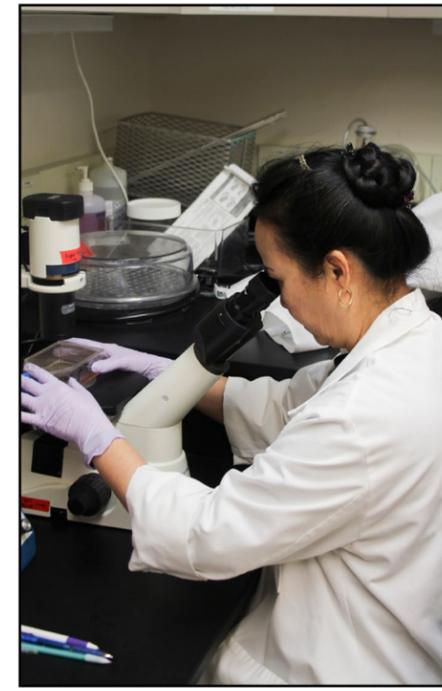
Navy Capt. (Dr.) Timothy Burgess, director of USU's Infectious Diseases Clinical Research Program holds a meeting with IDCPR staff. (Photo by Cathy Hemelt)



Army Col. (Dr.) Anne Warwick serves as the program director for USU's Pediatric Hematology/Oncology fellowship program. (Photo by Sharon Holland)



Shailini Jaiswal, Translational Research Core manager, and Catherine Meyer, research assistant, in USU's Department of Radiology, working on an MRI machine. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dillon, U.S. Army)



Dr. Juliann Kiang, a research biologist, examines a batch of bone marrow-derived stem cells at the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute. (Photo by Christopher Austin)



Louis Campbell, in USU's Logistics Division, demonstrates his expertise as a medical equipment repair technician. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dillon, U.S. Army)



Sarah Bagamboula, cashier in the USU cafeteria, greets a customer with a smile. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)

# USU Genome Center to make a difference in health care

By Sarah Marshall

Researchers from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) are on target to provide scalable molecular knowledge to researchers and physicians, both military and civilian, across the country that will help them treat the 1.6 million patients diagnosed with cancer each year, thanks to the university's new genome center.

Equipped with state-of-the-art robotics and innovative technology, The American Genome Center (TAGC) at USU aims to study large military populations by quickly sequencing thousands of genomes. This research, looking at patients' genes, will help providers rapidly identify unique targets and pathways of cancer and military-relevant diseases, for better detection and intervention.

The center is a precision medicine facility that performs whole genome sequencing and advanced data analytics to support research on health problems of importance to the DoD, the National Institutes of Health, and other federal partners. It was born out of the Collaborative Health Initiative Research Program (CHIRP), a recently-formed partnership with the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), directed by Harvey B. Pollard, M.D., Ph.D., chair of USU's Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics and David Scott, Ph.D., vice chair for Research in USU's Department of Medicine, who serves as deputy director. CHIRP is dedicated to research on the causes, prevention, mitigation, and treatment of dis-

eases and disorders of the heart, lungs, blood and sleep that affect the readiness of the uniformed services, the health of military family members, and retirees. USU established TAGC to advance the work of CHIRP and the Murtha Cancer Center, and is now the only genome center in the federal system. It's also one of about two dozen such sites in the world and one of four academic genome centers in the U.S.

The center began operating in March, and its first study involved sequencing the genomes from a set of Vietnam War Veteran twins, who developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and cardiovascular disease. The researchers found that some of the same genes responsible for PTSD, might also be associated with a risk for cardiovascular disease. Researchers in TAGC hope to continue making such discoveries, now that they have the capability to sequence tens of thousands of genomes per year, explained Clifton Dalgard, Ph.D., associate professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics and the TAGC Laboratory Core director. The center is currently sequencing about 50 genomes per day, or around 1,000 per month, Dalgard said, and in its full capacity can sequence 18,000 per year.

"We're in an era of precision medicine, and genome sequencing is a significant component of precise medicine," Dalgard said.



*Heng-Cheng Hu, and Dagmar Bacikova, researchers at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) monitor data on a next-generation sequencer in The American Genome Center (TAGC). (Photo by Sarah Marshall)*

"Every disease and health condition has a unique molecular basis, and impacts each person differently, so it's important to analyze genomes in high volumes – this increases the odds of identifying recurrent genetic mutations common in the disease," explained Matthew Wilkerson, Ph.D., TAGC Bioinformatics Core director. "This helps pinpoint genetic mutations that could serve as biomarkers, which can better predict disease risks and outcomes. Also, knowing which genetic variants associate with treatment response can then lead to more precise, customized treatment plans, Wilkerson said.

The process of genome sequencing is complex, involving high throughput robotics and high-performance computers, Dalgard said. The center has four labs, working in sequence with one another, processing and preparing blood and tissue

*Continued on pg. 12*

# GSN students attend Unique Austere Environment Readiness Training



*Navy Lt. Sharrod Green, a student in USU's Nurse Anesthesia program, descends with a "victim" during patient movement training. (Courtesy Photo)*

*By Cmdr. Justice Parrott, U.S. Navy*

Students and faculty from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences' Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing (GNS) had a unique opportunity for readiness training this past summer.

In August, four graduate nursing students from GSN's Nurse Anesthesia, Family Nurse Practitioner, and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner programs and two GSN faculty members attended the Military Mountain Medicine Course (M3C) at the Army Mountain Warfare School in Jericho, Vermont.

The two-week program, conducted by the Army Austere and Wilderness Medicine Fellowship Program, provided training aimed at health-

care delivery in austere environments to include various deployment platforms and battlefield care. The curriculum encompassed advanced skills and knowledge on topics pertinent to operational readiness, including the scientific underpinnings for practice, organizational and systems leadership, clinical scholarship and analytical methods, policy for advocacy in healthcare, and intra-professional collaboration. The students participated in classroom sessions that included physiology, pathophysiology, diagnosis and treatment of conditions commonly seen in austere environments, and were followed by simulation events based on current evidence.

Coordination of appropriate care for medical evacuation was presented and discussed, while search and rescue operations for various austere environment situations helped students gain understanding of the interconnected systems that permit successful victim treatment and recovery. Tactical Combat Casualty Care methods were reinforced and attendees were introduced to professional Wilderness Medicine Society guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of certified wilderness medical aid for austere and high altitude activities.

Perhaps the most important component of the course, according to attendees, was daily inter-professional collaboration. The class



*Army Lt. Col. Brad Franklin, a faculty member in USU's Family Nurse Practitioner program, and Navy Lt. Robert Girolamo, a student in USU's Nurse Anesthesia program, learn rope work from Mountain Warfare cadre. (Courtesy Photo)*

was composed of international and tri-service active duty and reserve component military medical personnel including nurses, physicians, physician assistants, special operations medics and corpsmen. This professional diversity provided a backdrop that broadened discussions and training evolutions while encouraging an environment that supported strong working relationships and small-team cohesiveness. This milieu not only offered useful information that prepares the advance practice nurse to function in the operational setting, but also a deeper understanding of the abilities and functions within other Armed Services medical communities. This type of collaboration is the cornerstone for future deployment success when varying teams come together for one common mission.

# Genome Center, continued from pg. 10

samples before they make their way through next-generation sequencers. Several specialized computers output data from the billions of base pairs, which is then analyzed by the team of scientists.

Dalgard explained that having our own genome center is not only cost-efficient, but also allows for patient privacy by keeping data within the military health system, rather than sending it to an external source for analysis. It also adds to the university's prestige, he said.

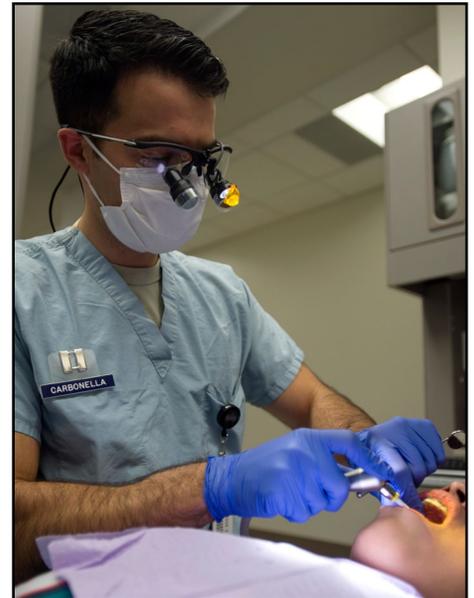
"We aim to be the DoD's flagship center, capable of supporting all DoD programs and military treatment centers," Dalgard added.

One such DoD program is the Study to Assess Risk and Resilience

in Service members – Longitudinal Study (STARRS-LS). This five-year study is investigating risk factors and protective factors for suicide, suicide-related behavior, and other mental/behavioral health issues in Army Soldiers. The program will be collaborating with TAGC on whole genome sequencing and other tests to identify biomarkers on suicide, mental health, and other health disorders. The program will provide DNA samples to TAGC – samples which are a subset of the more than 100,000 Soldiers who participated in the Army cohort. The data generated will be used to create a database, which TAGC and STARRS-LS will use to help understand the health and resilience in Soldiers and

other Service members.

TAGC will also be supporting the Applied Proteogenomics Organizational Learning and Outcomes (APOLLO) consortium, a collaboration that's part of White House Cancer Moonshot initiative to accelerate cancer research. The initiative, which is being led by Vice President Joe Biden, is intended to make more therapies available to an increased number of patients, while also improving the ability to prevent cancer and detect it at an early stage. In particular, TAGC scientists will be looking at the expression of genes in a cohort of 8,000 patients with lung cancer.



*Navy Lt. Christina Lilli (left), Air Force Maj. Paul Smith (center), and Air Force Capt. Anthony Carbonella (right), all Master of Science in Oral Biology degree students in USU's Postgraduate Dental College, work with patients' braces Oct. 14 at the U.S. Air Force Postgraduate Dental School, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. The three students are completing their USU degree as part of their orthodontics residency program. (U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Kevin Inuma)*

# Health Professions Education Degree Program provides academic leaders for MHS

By Sarah Marshall

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is seeking health care professionals who would like to gain expertise in leadership, research and theories in one of the university's new innovative and dynamic graduate programs.

Last year, USU's F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine launched the Master of Health Professions Education (HPE) and the Doctor of Philosophy in HPE, to address a need for health care leaders with academic skills throughout the Services. Many senior-ranking physician-educators and program leaders had retired, separated from the military, or had changed their career path. These new degree programs offer a chance for uniformed health care providers to fulfill that need in the Military Health System (MHS), and become educational leaders and scholars.

"Those who complete these programs will be very well prepared to serve as academic leaders such as program directors, clerkship directors, service chiefs, chairs, or educational deans," explained Dr. Steven Durning, director of Graduate Programs in HPE. "They'll also contribute to the continuous advancement of health professions education and research in the MHS as well as in the civilian community."

The programs are geared toward active duty military personnel who are health professionals, including physicians, nurses, dentists, and DoD civilian health professionals



*Dr. Alexis Battista, second from right, teaches a recent seminar at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), that's part of the university's new Health Professions Education (HPE) program. Last year, USU's F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine launched the Master of Health Professions Education and the Doctor of Philosophy in Health Professions Education (Ph.D. in HPE). These new degree programs offer a chance for military providers to become educational leaders and scholars. (Photo by Sarah Marshall)*

working in the MHS or the Public Health Service. The programs can be completed on a part-time or full-time basis, and blend face-to-face coursework and practicum opportunities with a robust online learning community. The programs focus on a number of competencies including leadership, scholarship and research, teaching, learning and assessment, and communication.

"Our HPE programs are staffed by a world-class faculty who have published more than 500 peer-reviewed journal articles and have won more than \$30 million in grant funding for educational research," said Dr. Louis Pangaro, chair of USU's Department of Medicine, which oversees the degree program.

"They're highly regarded, exceptional leaders who are committed to intellectual development and professional growth," Durning said of military health care professionals.

Advanced degrees in HPE are also increasingly emphasized as a requirement for academic leadership positions throughout the nation's medical educational system, he added, so these programs are expected to have a lasting impact on both the MHS and the civilian community.

The first student to enroll in the Ph.D. program, Dr. Matthew D'Angelo, agreed with these sentiments. He is an assistant professor and interim associate dean for Faculty Affairs in the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing, and has been teaching graduate level nursing for the last decade.

"The HPE program has offered countless experiences where I'm given the opportunity to reflect on how I, and the programs within the GSN, deliver curriculum and how it is evaluated," D'Angelo said.

# First Lutz Bushmaster Award recipients announced

By Sharon Holland

The recipients of the first Col. Clifford C. Lutz, Jr., Operation Bushmaster Honor Platoon Award were announced by the Department of Military and Emergency Medicine (MEM) on Oct. 31.

The award was named for the former MEM vice chair, Army Col. (Dr.) Clifford Lutz, who was a graduate of USU's F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine and a long-time director of Operation Bushmaster, the department's educational capstone field practicum. Lutz passed away unexpectedly in August and to honor his memory, MEM established the honor that is awarded to the Bushmaster student platoon with the highest overall score based on the exercise evaluations.

"Cliff made an impact on Operation Bushmaster that is truly immeasurable. He helped forge it into the experience that so many of our students remember years after they graduate from this institution," said Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Kevin Semelrath, assistant professor of MEM and course director for Operation Bushmaster. "I am very proud to present this award in his name."

The winning platoon's picture, along with an engraved plate with their platoon name and the year, is affixed to the memorial plaque, which is located in the MEM hallway. This year's recipients of the Lutz Award were the members of Alpha Company, 4th Platoon. They include:



The recipients of the 2016, and first ever, Col. Clifford C. Lutz, Jr., Operation Bushmaster Honor Platoon Award. (Photo by Tom Balfour)

### Medical students:

- Air Force 2nd Lt. Armando Aguilera
- Army 2nd Lt. David Ahn
- Army 2nd Lt. Jack Ayres
- Air Force 2nd Lt. Max Barnes
- Air Force 2nd Lt. Bradley Brown
- Navy Ensign Matthew Christian
- Air Force 2nd Lt. Logan Clemons
- Army 2nd Lt. Laura Dutkiewicz
- Army 2nd Lt. Michael Eckhoff
- Navy Ensign Maunoo Lee
- Army 2nd Lt. Ryan Mann
- Army 2nd Lt. Brian Merrigan
- Army 2nd Lt. Aimee Moores
- Air Force 2nd Lt. Douglas Morte
- Army 2nd Lt. John Neighbors
- Navy Ensign Angela Pronger
- Navy Ensign Jessica Saeger
- Air Force 2nd Lt. Chloe Shea
- Navy Ensign Brandon Shumway
- Navy Ensign Serena Zhang

### Graduate School of Nursing Students:

- Air Force Maj. Marcie Hart
- Air Force Maj. Susan Joseph
- Navy Lt. Ashley Robertson
- Air Force Capt. Heidi Wilson



The plaque for the Col. Clifford C. Lutz, Jr., Operation Bushmaster Honor Platoon Award can be viewed in the MEM hallway at USU. (Photo by Sharon Holland)

### Foreign Medical Students:

- Mexican Armed Forces 2nd Lt. Jesus Alamos Ramos
- Mexican Armed Forces 2nd Lt. Juan Carlos Castillo del Toro

# Final Frame



*Army Maj. Young Yauger, a nurse anesthetist in the Neuroscience Ph.D. program at USU, examines a cell sample. This photo was taken as part of the Day in the Life of USU photo project. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Morris)*