USU participates in Mass Casualty Exercise

A number of centers and institutes of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) participated in a collaborative multi-agency exercise (CMAX) Dec 7.

CMAX, which was held on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), is a mass casualty exercise that evaluates the emergency preparedness of the partnership between NNMC, Suburban Hospital, and the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center.

This year’s exercise took the response model from the local community to the National Capital Region. Leaders from Bethesda Hospitals’ Emergency Preparedness Partnership, said the drill is vital in strengthening the partnership’s resources and strategy.

The exercise included participants from Montgomery County Hospitals, federal institutes, emergency services, and military installations.

Faculty and staff from USU’s Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI), Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM), the National Capital Area Patient Simulation Center, and the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) provided on-site expertise in the treatment of chemical, nuclear, biological and radiological injuries and dealing with the stress associated with a disaster or other catastrophic incident.

A “moulage” team assembled from USU members also participated in the exercise in an effort to bring a sense of reality to the simulated patients.
Letter from the USU President

As 2006 comes to an end I’d like to thank all USU faculty, staff and students for their commitment and hard work over the past year. As I reflect on all we’ve accomplished and look ahead to new challenges and opportunities, I know 2007 is going to be a year filled with great success.

In this last issue of the USU Newsletter for 2006, I want to address some topics that I believe are important to the USU community.

Transfer to TRICARE Management Activity

In recognizing the significant role of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) in educating and training medical leaders to serve the needs of the uniformed services, during both war and peace as well as the importance of fostering increased operational oversight to ensure integration of all USU programs, the Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England directed the transfer of USU from the Department of the Navy to TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) effective as of Nov. 29, 2006.

So what does this mean for the University and its employees? Civilian employees at USU will see some changes as Civilian Human Resources Management shifts from the Department of the Navy to TMA. For example, the common access cards will indicate that USU employees are in DOD. Staff members at USU, TMA, and the Department of the Navy are in the process of taking the necessary steps to implement the transfer. As with any change there is a state of uncertainty, but we will do everything possible to keep you informed as information is provided to the University.

All Hands BRAC/Integration Town Hall Meeting

Recently we held our first BRAC/Integration Town Hall meeting with great community attendance and participation. The questions and ideas that were raised were important and challenging, and demonstrated the deep interest across the University in making sure we are active partners in this integration evolution. As the process moves forward I think it is crucial that we continue to discuss these and other topics that are important to the University. In doing so, I’ve scheduled another town hall meeting for Jan. 23, 2007, and invited Maj. Gen. George Weightman, MC, Army, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center commander, who will provide more insight into the BRAC/Integration process and where we stand as of now. A third Town Hall meeting will be held in March.

It is my intention to continue with regular town hall meetings to discuss topics that are vital to USU. You will receive more detailed information about the town hall meetings after the holidays. I encourage you to visit the USU Integration Web site at: www.usuhs.mil/usuhs/brac/SABl.htm.

Brigade Change in Leadership

By now many of you may be aware of some changes within the Headquarters Company Brigade. The Brigade Commander, Capt. John Rumbaugh, will be reassigned to the Pentagon to continue fulfilling a critical position. Captain Rumbaugh was temporarily assigned to work for Rear Adm. Dennis Woofter, deputy surgeon general to the CNO staff after one of his staff members was involved in a tragic accident. Captain Rumbaugh is one in a small pool of people who hold the skill sets to man that position and Admiral Woofter has requested he remain permanently. We have offered Capt. Rumbaugh the opportunity to return to the University as a follow on assignment in some other capacity if he so chooses to do so.

As for the functions of the Brigade it’s business as usual with Army Lt. Col. John Maurer filling in as the Acting Brigade Commander.

We will begin the process of identifying a new brigade commander in the new year.

These are just a few of several topics that I wanted to address at this time, but you can expect more letters from me in future editions of the USU Newsletter after the new year.

Until then, I wish you all a safe and Happy Holiday Season.

Charles L. Rice, M.D.
USU President
The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) welcomes a new member to its Board of Regents (BOR.) Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., R.N., Nashville, is a professor of nursing and the Dean of the Nancy & Hilliard Travis School of Nursing.

USU Regents are individually appointed by the President of the United States, and have duties which range from ensuring the welfare and conduct of the students to serving as advisors to USU President Dr. Charles Rice and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Dr. William Winkenwerder, Jr. Dr. Conway-Welch was appointed Aug. 3, and will serve a six-year term.

Dr. Conway-Welch graduated George-town University's School of Nursing, earned her Master of Science in Nursing from Catholic University of America, and her Ph.D. in nursing from New York University. She has been awarded honorary doctorates from the University of Colorado, Georgetown University and Cumberland University.

In addition to her membership to the USU BOR and duties as a dean and professor of a prominent nursing school, Dr. Conway-Welch sits on the corporate boards of RehabCare Group Inc., Pinnacle National Bank, Caremark Rx. Inc., and Ardent Health Services. She is also the founder and director of the International Nursing Coalition for Mass Casualty Education, a coalition which promotes mass casualty education for nurses.

Dr. Conway-Welch is a former president and founding member of Friends of the National Institutes of Health, National Institute for Nursing Research. She received the New York University School of Nursing Distinguished Alumni Award in 1999, was awarded the Association of Childbearing Centers Public Advocate Award in 2001, and in 2003 was recognized as Nashvillian of the Year.
USU’s annual Holiday Celebration

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) held its annual holiday celebration, Dec. 6. Attractions included: prize drawings every hour; face painting for the children; and a D.J.; and Santa Claus and his helper, Dingy Candy-Lips, read stories to the children and asked them what they wanted for the holidays. This year’s USU Holiday celebration was filled with laughter, dancing and everyone had a good friend to be with.

Holiday security and safety guidelines

Certain types of crime increase during the holiday season. In the past, there have been reports of on-campus theft during this period. In order to prevent you from falling victim to the crimes that occur during the holiday season, we recommend that you take the following precautions:

ON CAMPUS

(1) Secure all valuables in locked desks or cabinets. (2) During extended absences from the university, secure small items normally left on your desk. (3) Avoid leaving packages overnight in your office. (4) Safeguard your keys (do not leave them lying on desks, hanging in doors, locks etc.). (5) Lock your office when you leave. (6) Report any suspicious activity to security at 295-3033 or after hours to 295-3038.

OFF CAMPUS

(1) Do not display large amounts of money in public. (2) If you have to carry cash, keep the larger amounts separate and not in your wallet or purse. (3) Be mindful of pickpockets on crowded trains, buses and elevators. Keep money and wallets on a secure part of your person and be suspicious of excessive bumping. (4) When making credit card purchases, obtain your receipt and carbon paper. (5) Do not place shopping bags or pocketbooks on the ground and out of your reach while paying for other items. (6) Place packages and merchandise in the trunk of your car and out of view.

The chance of fire also increases with the added use of decorations during the holiday season. In order to minimize the potential fire hazards associated with the holiday decorations, the following safety guidelines should be followed if you plan on decorating your office: (1) Use decorations that are noncombustible and labeled as flame-proof. The use of real evergreen trees, wreaths, garland, cotton and other combustible material is prohibited. (2) Electric decorative lighting should be inspected before use. (3) Dispose of lights that have broken/cracked sockets, exposed wires or lose connections. Electronic items must have an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) approval tag. (4) Electric wires should not be run in such a way that they are wedged or pinched against furniture or doors. (5) Multiplug adapters may not be used. (6) Unplug lights at the end of the day. (7) Burning candles or other types of open flames is prohibited. (8) Decorations should not obstruct exits or exit signs.

Thank you for your cooperation and have a happy and safe holiday. Please call the USU Security Office at 295-3033 if you have any questions or concerns.
In the wide world of sports, there are many coveted awards; the FIFA World Cup in soccer; the Stanley Cup in hockey; baseball’s World Series Trophy; and college football’s Heisman Trophy. In a service member’s eyes, however, none of these hold a candle to the Commander’s Cup.

The 2006 Commander’s Cup, held Dec. 8, was a chance for the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) Brigade to show which service was the most physically fit this year, and the Navy came out on top.

Several events are played throughout the year, including basketball, volleyball, dodge-ball, physical fitness I.Q., and a physical challenge portion which consists of push-ups, crunches, pull-ups and jump-rope. After each event is played, points are awarded to each service by order of place. First place earns three points, second place earns two points and third place earns one point.

The brigade members said they enjoyed this experience because it gave them a chance for some fresh air. “This is fun,” said YNSA Johnny Ford, who played dodge-ball. “We need to do this more often, being in the office all the time isn’t good for morale.”

This year the Air Force placed first in dodge ball and earned commander points for showing the most team spirit. The Army dominated basketball, pull-ups, and earlier this year placed first, in volleyball. The Navy took first in the fitness I.Q. challenge, jump-rope, push-ups and crunches.

The winner of this year’s Commander’s Cup was the mighty Navy, breaking their four-year losing streak. The Commander’s Cup is currently in possession of YN2 Ray Crews, MPO.

Two spirit awards were also presented, the USU Brigade Iron Man and Iron Woman Cup, which were awarded to HM2 Careese Charles, EHS, and HMC (DSW) David Heath, LCPO, MEM. These two awards are presented to the two individuals that demonstrated the most enthusiasm among the USU Brigade members. The Commander’s Cup itself is a plaque with a canteen cup nailed to its center, under the words “Commander’s Cup.” The names of the past winners of the contest are engraved beneath the cup. The USU Brigade is encouraged to start training in January for next year’s events, which are sure to bring more fun and more sports for every participant. Which service will hoist the Commander’s Cup above their heads next? Only time will tell.

MCSN Raul Zamora
Staff Writer, Office of External Affairs

National Pearl Harbor remembrance day

(Left to right) Capt. Timothy Gerlach, USMC, HQ Company commander; Lt. Col. John Mauer, USA, acting brigade commander; and CWO3 Raymond Handel, USCG, MEM, salute as the flag was lowered to half-mast as the USU Brigade recognized National Pearl Harbor Day.

Sixty-five years ago, more than 2,400 Americans lost their lives in a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. On National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we think of those who died Dec. 7, 1941, and honor all those who sacrificed for our liberty during World War II.

On that peaceful Sunday morning, our country suffered a vicious, unprovoked attack that changed the course of history. Though our Pacific Fleet was nearly destroyed, our citizens were inspired by the great acts of heroism from those who survived and from those who did not. In the days that followed, our grief turned to resolution, and America embarked on a mission to defeat two of the most ruthless regimes the world has ever known. We pledge to always remember the character and sacrifice of the brave individuals at Pearl Harbor. Their selfless service helped deliver a great victory for the cause of freedom and, ultimately, transformed adversaries into the closest of friends.

After the devastating attacks on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared, “We are going to win the war and we are going to win the peace that follows.” In the 21st century, freedom is again under attack, and young Americans have stepped forward to serve in a Global War on Terror that will secure our liberty and determine the destiny of millions around the world. Like generations before, we will answer history’s call with confidence, confront threats to our way of life, and build a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, has designated Dec. 7 of each year as “National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.”

Photo by MCSN Raul Zamora
A Different Christmas Poem

By LCDR Jeff Giles, SC, USN
30th Naval Construction Regiment
OIC, Logistics Cell One
Al Taqqadum, Iraq

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light, I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight. My wife was asleep, her head on my chest, My daughter beside me, angelic in rest. Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white, Transforming the yard to a winter delight. The sparkling lights in the tree, I believe, Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve. My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep, Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep. In perfect contentment, or so it would seem, So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn’t loud, and it wasn’t too near, But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear. Perhaps just a cough, I didn’t quite know, Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow. My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear, and I crept to the door just to see who was near. Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night, a lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old, Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold. Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled, Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child. “What are you doing?” I asked without fear, “Come in this moment, it’s freezing out here! Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve, You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!”

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift, Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts. To the window that danced with a warm fire’s light. Then he sighed and he said, “Its really all right, I’m out here by choice. I’m here every night.” “It’s my duty to stand at the front of the line, That separates you from the darkest of times. No one had to ask or beg or implore me, I’m proud to stand here like my fathers before me. My Gramps died at Pearl on a day in December,” then he sighed, “That’s a Christmas ‘Gram always remembers.” My dad stood his watch in the jungles of ‘Nam’, and now it is my turn and so, here I am. I’ve not seen my own son in more than a while, but my wife sends me pictures, he’s sure got her smile.

Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag, the red, white, and blue... an American flag. I can live through the cold and the being alone, away from my family, my house and my home. I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet, I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat. I can carry the weight of killing another, or lay down my life with my sister and brother. Who stand at the front against any and all, To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall.

“So go back inside,” he said, “harbor no fright, Your family is waiting and I’ll be all right.” “But isn’t there something I can do, at the least, give you money,” I asked, “or prepare you a feast?” It seems all too little for all that you’ve done, for being away from your wife and your son.” Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret.

“Just tell us you love us, and never forget. To fight for our rights back at home while we’re gone, To stand your own watch, no matter how long. For when we come home, either standing or dead, to know you remember we fought and we bled. It is payment enough, and with that we will trust, that we mattered to you as you mattered to us.

Today in History: December 18, 1865
The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery, was adopted by the US Congress.
USU In The News

USU Professor named in Top 100 Cited Scientists

Christopher Broder, Ph.D., professor and director, Emerging Infectious Diseases Graduate Program, Department of Microbiology and Immunology has been recognized as one of the 100 most cited scientists in microbiology by incites.com, which provides a behind-the-scenes look at the scientists, journals, institutions, nations, and papers selected by Essential Science Indicators over a 10 year period. Look for more on this story in the next edition of the USU Newsletter.

USU News Briefs

CFC Update from the USU President

As of Dec. 13 USU has collected approximately 69% of our assigned goal with an employee participation rate of 29%. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have contributed to this year’s CFC Campaign. The charities that you chose greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness. The CFC mission, of ‘providing all Federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all’, is one that passionately resonates with me and I am sure with many of you.

Because of its importance, the USU 2006 CFC campaign deadline has been extended from Dec. 15, 2006 to Jan. 15, 2007. I am asking those of you who have not yet contributed, or are still undecided, to set aside a few minutes and look at the CFC Catalog of Caring. This catalog lists over 3,400 not-for-profit charities that benefit people in need everywhere: here in the National Capitol area, across the country and even around the world. These charities and the people they serve depend upon the generosity of individuals like you and me.

Equal Opportunity Survey:

The Brigade Equal Opportunity Office would like to hear your input on 10 new questions for the annual Command Climate Equal Opportunity (EO) survey. The next Command Climate survey will be distributed in February 2007. Remember that the question format must be answered on the five point scale. For example, “Have sexually harassing or discriminating actions taken place in the unit in the last 30 days?” The answers could be, “[1] there is a VERY HIGH chance that the action occurred; [2] there is a REASONABLY HIGH chance that the action occurred; [3] there is a MODERATE chance that the action occurred; [4] there is a SMALL chance that the action occurred; or [5] there is ALMOST no chance that the action occurred. Please send any ideas by Dec. 31 to ccarrier@usuhs.mil.

Influenza Immunizations

Reminder to all active-duty service members that if you have not had either the Flu Mist or Flu shot, you are required to get the vaccine prior to Jan. 7. POC for this is the Brigade Surgeon, CDR Yew, USN (FAP) at kyew@usuhs.mil or the clinic NCOIC, MSgt McCreary, USAF (FAP) at rmccreary@usuhs.mil or 295-3786.

Ethical Standards of Conduct

On Nov. 19, 2001, President Bush issued a memorandum to members of the Senior Executive Service. In it, he outlined two themes: [1] that everyone maintain the highest level of ethical standards and [2] in addition to asking “Is it legal?” that they also ask, “Is it [the proposed act] the right thing to do?” In the world of ethics, counselors speak in general terms about concepts that are all too often highly dependent upon a very specific set of facts. As such, this is not the arena to challenge conventional rules of logic or to blindly pursue options that could reasonably be viewed as suspect or motivated from a biased interpretation. It takes everyone to ensure the existence of a highly ethical organizational climate.

New Brigade Uniform Policy for January 2007

As a result of weather conditions, the USU Brigade will shift into wearing BDU’s / ACU’s / Cammies as the uniform of the day for the month of January. There will be no transitioning period. This policy will be in effect for all uniformed individuals assigned to the USU Brigade. The BDU/ACU/Cammies guidelines are [A] Army - BDU’s/ACU’s with sleeves down [B] USMC - Woodland digital Cammies with sleeves down [C] Navy - BDU’s with sleeves down [D] Air Force - BDU’s with sleeves down [E] Public Health Service - BDU’s sleeves down. All I.D. badges will be worn clipped to the right breast pocket, on the left collar, or on a chain or lanyard around the neck.

Deans, Director of AFRRI and department chairs may modify a uniform of the day standard that differs from these guidelines as required by the mission. The uniform of the day for individuals with appointments or meetings away from their normal duty station shall be at the discretion of the individual, and as protocol dictates. During formations all sleeves will be worn down.

Military personnel will not be able to wear civilian attire during normal duty hours (7:30a.m - 4:45p.m., Monday –Friday). Also the wear of civilian clothes or PT attire in the dinning hall is not authorized during normal duty hours. Exceptions to these guidelines will only be granted through your official chain of command.

The only standing exception to this policy is Naval officers who have not had a BDU issue. The wear of khakis in lieu of BDU’s is acceptable.

Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Any questions concerning this policy should be directed to Captain Gerlach, CMD, USMC at tgerlach@usuhs.mil or 295-4317.

Hail and Farewell

HM2 Redfield, USN (LAM) reported from NAVHOSP, Naples, Italy, and LTC Kenny, USA (FAC) reported from WRAMC. Please make them feel welcome. SGT Thompson, USA (AFRRI) detached to LEDward Barracks, Germany. Capt. Jane Meade, USN, CHE, detached to Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), Washington D.C. MC2 Kory Kepner, USN, VPE, detached to Apra Harbor, Guam.

License to Brag

Graphics by Wayne Crawford

There are many different ways to show your school spirit: painted faces at sports events, t-shirts and sweaters, stickers, ornaments, and coins. Now it may be possible to have Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) car license plates. The images on the right are not the final design, but they represent what the license plates might look like. We are currently seeking to determine if there would be sufficient interest in having a USU organizational license plate. If you would like to register your interest, take the survey at: http://www.usuhs.mil/vpe/orgplates.html
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| 19   | USU Toastmasters Meeting  
Noon - 1p.m  
USU Room A 2011 |
| 20   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
7a.m. – 3:30p.m. |
| 21   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
7a.m. – 3:30p.m. |
| 22   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
8a.m. - 4:45p.m. |
| 23   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
Closed |
| 24   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
Closed |
| 25   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
Closed |
| 26   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
8a.m. - 4:45p.m.  
AFRRI Small Conference Room |
| 27   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
8a.m. - 4:45p.m.  
USU Toastmasters Meeting  
Noon - 1p.m  
AFRRI Small Conference Room |
| 28   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
8a.m. - 4:45p.m. |
| 29   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
8a.m. - 4:45p.m. |
| 30   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
Closed |
| 31   | LRC Special Holiday Hours:  
Closed |
| 1    | LRC Regular Hours Resume |
| 2    | LRC Regular Hours Resume |
| 3    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
Noon-1p.m.  
LRC |
| 4    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
6p.m.-7p.m.  
LRC |
| 5    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
6p.m.-7p.m.  
LRC |
| 6    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
6p.m.-7p.m.  
LRC |
| 7    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
Noon-1p.m.  
LRC |
| 8    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
PubMed Basics  
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| 9    | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
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| 10   | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
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| 12   | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
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| 13   | Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.  
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LRC |