



## Minutes from the D/N PAC Meeting January 26, 2004

### **Welcome to our visiting HRSA Scholars:**

The HRSA Scholars program has been in existence for approximately 2 years. Scholars rotate throughout HRSA each quarter for one year, learning about the organization and operation of different program areas in HRSA. At the end of the year, scholars are usually placed in a position.

Both Heather and Pamella are master's level Registered Dietitians who have extensive, experience in clinical dietetics and are excited about the opportunities available to them in the HRSA Scholars program. Both hope to be assigned to a permanent position at the end of the program, and are very interested in becoming Commissioned Officers.

### **CPO Report**

The transformation of the CC continues to be a major effort at this time. . While the Surgeon General will continue to be charge of the entire Corps, operational responsibilities will be shared between many positions, including the Assistant Secretary of Health.

#### ***Lewin Group Presentation:***

At the January CPO/PAC Chair meeting, the Lewin Group, a consulting firm hired to assist with the transformation process, presented their recommendations on the transformation of the Corps. Important issues identified by this group include:

1. Recruitment will be a priority in coming months and years. It will be important for the Corps to communicate its mission and values to prospective officers. It will also be important to emphasize the importance of flexibility, mobility, and deployability among officers.
2. Training is also important to the changing image of the Corps. It will be important to provide ongoing officership training and training in emergency

- preparedness. In addition, each officer must maintain credentialing in his or her respective fields.
3. The Corps will likely adopt a Force Management Model that will require new billets and implementation of a “One Corps” system. Officers agreed that this presents many challenges, and much work will be needed to achieve this goal.

***Job Placement:***

Forced mobility will not be required, but the Corps will be looking at potential new positions that will help the Corps meet its mission, examine efforts to fill “hard-to-fill” billets, the distribution of junior versus senior officers, which currently is top heavy, and the need to work with agency heads on the importance of PHS CC officers in their organizations.

There is a July 2004 goal for implementing all recommendations. The Lewin Group’s Power Point Presentation will be made available to all officers.

***DCP:***

DCP set a January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for officers to update their OPF and readiness status. On approximately January 15<sup>th</sup>, a letter was distributed to all officers eligible for promotion. This letter outlined the new process and explained the steps that officers should take prior to January 31<sup>st</sup> to make sure that their personnel files meet new standards and recommendations.

DCP has accepted the concept of “Best Qualified Officer”, and each category has developed promotion precepts based on this “best qualified” concept rather than the “average officer”.

## **Subcommittee Reports**

***CCRF:***

Of 82 officers in the D/N category,

27 are active, assigned to a roster and have met all criteria

29 are inactive but have completed some of the requirements to be fully active. These officers may be assigned to a roster but they have not completed all requirements to be fully qualified. For example, their immunizations may not be current.

26 officers are inactive and have not taken any steps toward activation. Of these officers, 8 are captains and may be close to retirement. When broken down by agency, 14 are in the IHS, 3 are with HRSA, 5 are with NIH, 4 are with FDA, and 1 is with CMS.

The CCRF committee plans to send a letter to inactive officers who have not registered with CCRF to begin the process of becoming “fully active”. The CCRF Subcommittee will offer suggestions and assistance to any officer who has questions about this process.

***Recruitment and Mentoring Subcommittee:***

The D/N category now has 83 officers. Our newest officer is Carma Pauli, who is working with FSIS / USDA in Chicago. LT Pauli graciously offered her services to recruitment efforts.

8 RDs have been “boarded” and are looking for a position  
13 RDs are in various stages of application

CDR Celia Hayes stated that she is working on an article for TODAY’s Dietitian about RDs in the Commissioned Corps. This article will discuss the opportunities for dietitians in the Corps, contributions that Corps officers make to their respective agencies and to the Corps and Nation, and encourage (RD) readers of TODAY’s Dietitian to look into joining the Corps.

CAPT Shirley Blakeley shared that she recently lunched with dietetic interns from the Francis Stern Nutrition Center. She shared that these interns were not familiar with the Corps, but were very interested in the opportunities that CAPT Blakely described to them.

***Website Subcommittee:***

CAPT Mary Gessay reviewed the minutes from the last subcommittee meeting. She also shared the permission form that each officer must sign before their picture will be placed on the website. CAPT Gessay also solicited input and new members.

***Professional Advisory Subcommittee:***

CDR Alexandra Cossi reported that the Professional Advisory Subcommittee continues to work on a website document that addresses all issues identified by the PAS survey as being of importance to D/N officers. The PAS has developed a draft of such a document, and it is currently being reviewed by other D/N Pac members. Once it meets all of the goals, it will be added to the website. One of the issues being discussed is the best way to add links to other documents or sites. CDR Cossi received several helpful suggestions the subcommittee will consider, such as creating pdf documents rather than linking to other sites.

**Agency Reports**

IHS: No report

HRSA: On a personal note, officers shared that CAPT Joyanne Murphy’s husband was recently taken ill while vacationing with Joyanne. He was airlifted to a military hospital,

and is now “on the mend”. We all extend our best wishes for a full recovery to Mr. Murphy.

The HRSA Scholars program has 6 RDs. Interested candidates for the next group of scholars should check USAjob.gov, which posts information on this program in May or June of each year. The notice is usually posted for only a few weeks, so those interested must check the site frequently so they do not miss this opportunity. This is a program open to anyone with at least a bachelor’s degree in any health field. The specific degree criteria varies according to the discipline.

CDC: No report

NIH: The Nutrition Dept welcomed a new chief, Mr. David Folio. Mr. Folio comes to the NIH from Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, MD, where he was also Chief of nutrition services.

FDA: FDA is busy responding to questions on ephedra, PCB levels in salmon, and BSE. FDA has posted information on each issue on their website.

### **Announcements:**

CDR David Nelson has been nominated for “Responder of the Year” for his work at hospital following the Rhode Island fire.

CAPT Blakely announced that the Army wants to establish a MS program at USUHS and merge it with the WRAMC dietetic internship.

LT Carma Pauli shared that FSIS has 17 officers who conduct food safety assessment at Food Processing Plants.

Thanks to CDR Nancy Sebring volunteered to write a letter to help officers better understand the promotion process.

CAPT Maureen Leser announced that D/ PAC members have agreed to add a second award for members of our category. The award will be called the “Emerging Dietetic Leader” award. A draft of this award was distributed. CDR Celia Hayes will work with CAPT Leser to finalize the standards for the award and revise the D/N PAC Charter so that it includes reference to two awards.

JOAG: JOAG is trying to develop a budget, obtain more information on TriCare, and is revising their bylaws. Welcome to LT Janis Armendariz, our new JOAG representative.

**The meeting was adjourned at 1600 EST**

