



Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service
Scientist Professional Advisory Committee

From the 2019–2020 SciPAC Chair



Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC)

Annual Report September 2019 – August 2020

Prepared by:
CAPT Loren Rodgers
SciPAC Chair, 2019–2020

and

CDR Lauren Zapata
Rules and Membership Subcommittee
Annual Report Team Lead

A. SCIPAC EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTIVITY

The SciPAC Executive Board for the period September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020 was:

CAPT Loren Rodgers

Chair

National Syndromic Surveillance Program Manager (Acting),
Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

LRodgers@cdc.gov

LCDR Jason Wilken

Vice Chair

Career Epidemiology Field Officer, State of California
Center for Preparedness and Response,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

jason.wilken@cdph.ca.gov; vxj9@cdc.gov

CDR Alice Shumate

Executive Secretary

Researcher, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH),
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Co-Director of the NIOSH Center for Maritime
Safety and Health Studies

AShumate@cdc.gov

CDR Kamil Barbour

Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Liaison

Team Lead, State Chronic Disease Epidemiology Assignee Program, Division of Population
Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

iykl@cdc.gov

CAPT Jennifer D. Thomas

Immediate Past Chair

Team Lead, Biological Rapid Response and Advanced Technology Laboratory,
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

fsu8@cdc.gov

Mission:

The duties of the Executive Board (EB) shall be to provide leadership that ensures timely completion of responsibilities listed in the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Charter and to recommend to the SciPAC strategies/actions that address issues that affect the professional careers of Scientist Officers. In cases where no established policies exist and immediate action is necessary, the EB is authorized to act but shall immediately notify the membership of its action.

Chair: CAPT Loren Rodgers

The 2019–2020 SciPAC term was nothing short of unprecedented, with substantial emergency responses during 2019 (e.g., the response to “E-Cigarette, or Vaping, Product Use-Associated Lung Injury” or EVALI), only to be eclipsed by subsequent all-consuming efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In the midst of these global efforts, SciPAC restructured activities and roles in order to better align with priorities articulated by the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG). Throughout all this, SciPAC EB members provided advice and consultation to leadership and to the members of the 11 subcommittees (SCs) of the Scientist PAC. The EB met approximately monthly during 2020 and conversed by e-mail and phone between meetings. The EB provided comments on policies/documents from Commissioned Corps leadership as well as feedback on documents from the SCs (e.g., standard operating procedures, SciPAC policies, curriculum vitae, surveys).

In addition to the daily functions, the EB went above and beyond to accomplish new initiatives that substantially benefited the Scientist PAC. This year, the EB:

- Raised visibility of unique Scientist leadership efforts during EVALI. Contributions were noted by the Assistant Secretary for health and exemplified strengths of our category for protecting the nation’s health.
- Created of a new Executive Board position entitled the “Executive Liaison” to replace the COF Liaison. The Executive Liaison position expands the duties and responsibilities of the COF Liaison, adding in new project management functions to coordinate activities across all SCs.
- Updated the SciPAC SOP to better reflect best practices for activities, standards, and process for SciPAC operations. Revisions also clarified eligibility requirements for key leadership roles and offered greater transparency for the Voting member selection process.
- All SCs with SOP revisions scheduled during OY 2019–2020 were given six-month extensions due to the unprecedented number of officers deployed for the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with this grace period, the EB approved major SOP updates for the following SCs: Career Development, Website, and Recruitment & Retention.
- Conducted quarterly telephone communication with the OSG.
- Expertly and rapidly responded to data calls by the Chief Scientist Officer for the OSG, highlighting response efforts of Scientist Officers to senior leadership.
- Represented SciPAC monthly at teleconferences of the Combined PAC Chairs Group.
- Reviewed, edited, and posted 183 messages to the 427-subscriber SciPAC listserv.
- Established and documented procedures to include presentations as part of monthly SciPAC meetings and scheduled and managed that presentation series.
- Created best practices information for SC Chairs, Co-Chairs, and Liaisons, covering Listserv policy and reminders, monthly meeting reports and minutes, and meeting presentation scheduling.
- Implemented updates to the meeting attendance tracking spreadsheet, simplifying tracking for officers who report more than once.

Additionally, our SCs achieved many great accomplishments this year, which include:

- Increased mentor match agreements by 14% during September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020, (from 102 to 116). Additionally, matched 11 new officers with peer mentors
- Developed a plan for an Advance Readiness Initiative.
- Finalized a report titled, “Scientist Category Career Development Profile: Promotion Year 2018.” The analysis provided Scientists with insight into the perceived strengths of promoted officers’ promotion packages, inform mentors and mentees about characteristics of promoted officers, and serves as a mechanism for long-term trending. Was shared with other PACs as a model.
- Held two Response Preparedness Seminars.
- Coordinated the awards process the Scientist the Responder of the Year, Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards.
- Led a presentation highlighting important changes in the June 25, 2020 Awards Personnel Operations Memorandum.
- Fifty-nine Scientist Officers received feedback on promotion documents from 66 volunteer senior officer reviewers.
- Completed and distributed new Scientist-specific Officer Statement (OS) guidance. The guidance document included a non-descript OS example, that was developed with the review and analysis of recently promoted senior officer OS documents.
- Updated the Scientist Officer Handbook.
- Provided Scientist Officers with three career development trainings.
- Coordinated and hosted a book discussion, in which five Scientist Officer speakers recommended books to officers during different phases of their career.
- Updated the Scientist Officer Benchmarks.
- Hosted four sessions for new officers. The topics included COERs, promotion, CV writing, awards, and finding a job after LLS and EIS fellowships. Held scientific webinars on the Healthy Mind Initiative, and the emergence of EVALI.
- Collected officers’ publications, books, reports, and presentations for 2019. Finalized 2019 Bibliography Report.
- Revised the 2019 SoS Survey for use in early 2021.
- Drafted a vision for a new Community of practice: Surgeon General’s Priority Engagement for Evaluation & Research Support (SG-PEERS).
- Published three newsletter editions.
- Held six in-person socials and two virtual social events.
- Posted 93 Tweets/Retweets, generating 44,887 impressions.
- Finalized a Facebook Communication SOP.
- Created analyses that highlighted the contributions of Scientist Officers to the 2019 response to EVALI
- Created a summary of SciPAC history based on thorough review of historic artifacts and in-person interviews.
- Reviewed and updated all content on SciPAC website, fulfilling 72 “website change requests.” A “SciPAC Website 101” training was shared with all Website SC members and website Liaisons to provide a refresher to returning members and an introduction to new members. The training included an overview of website policy including 508 compliance and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) requirements and general procedures for updating the website.

Vice Chairperson: LCDR Jason Wilken – See Section B, Rules and Membership Report

Executive Secretary: CDR Alice Shumate

- Reviewed, edited, and posted 183 messages to the listserv (427 listserv subscribers). Aided new officers in subscribing. SciPAC listserv functions as main point of contact for Scientist Officers.
- Regularly review SciPAC listserv subscribers and ensure all subscribers in compliance with USPHS policies regarding professional email use.
- Prepared and distributed all SciPAC monthly meeting agendas and minutes; ensured minutes were compliant with website requirements for posting.
- Organized, scheduled, and managed the SciPAC monthly meeting presentation series.
- Maintained SciPAC monthly meeting attendance roster.
- Worked with SC Chairs and Co-Chairs to ease reporting of meeting oral reports and minutes and adjust monthly meeting presentation plans during extensive absences due to the COVID-19 response.
- Created a template for reporting of monthly minutes to better standardize minutes.
- Created best practices information for SC Chairs, Co-Chairs, and Liaisons, covering Listserv policy and reminders, monthly meeting reports and minutes, and meeting presentation scheduling.
- Updated monthly SciPAC meeting presentation procedures.
- Implemented updates to the meeting attendance tracking spreadsheet, simplifying tracking for officers who report more than once.
- Recommendations:
 - Explore potential for a different meeting platform; while WebEx meets many of our needs, we have some officers who consistently have trouble connecting to the meeting, even via telephone dial-in (especially internationally).
 - Explore potential to record monthly meetings and make them available for officers who cannot attend.

COF Liaison/Executive Liaison: CDR Kamil Barbour

- Led and oversaw the creation of a new Executive Board position entitled the “Executive Liaison” to replace the COF Liaison.
- The Executive Liaison position expands the duties and responsibilities of the COF Liaison to now also include:
 - Serving as the project manager ensuring timely review of SciPAC documents.
 - Communicating regularly with SC Chairs and Co-Chairs.
 - Administering Max.gov.
 - Serving as the EB’s liaison to the Website SC.
 - Maintaining a roster of non-voting Scientist Liaison Officers.
 - Maintaining an organization chart of SciPAC leadership.
- New Commissioned Corps policy prohibited SciPAC from selling merchandise and organizing events to raise funds.
- End of year SciPAC balance was \$1,989.36.
- Total expenditures were \$550.13 and included:

- \$124 for Survey Monkey costs for State of the Science (SOS) Survey (to be used next year).
- \$69.13 for Mardi Gras party DC expenses.
- \$75 for Mardi Gras party Atlanta expenses.
- \$282 for SciPAC award plaques: Senior, Junior, Responder, and Mentor of the Year.
- Led the coordination between the EB and Science SC to review and approve the annual SOS Survey.
 - Worked with the Policy SC to develop questions specific to this SC.
- Worked with the Science and Readiness SCs to disseminate the COVID-19 resources for Scientist Officers, which included COVID-19 related information on epidemiology and surveillance, occupational safety and health, infection control, and deployments.
- Worked closely with the EB and Rules and Membership SC to review and approve the SciPAC SOP.
- Reviewed and approved the following SC SOPs: Career Development, Website, and Recruitment & Retention. Reviewed other SC SOPs (not yet approved): Mentoring, Rules and Membership, and Visibility.

Summary

The 2019–2020 OY was important for the Scientist Category as evidenced by increased involvement in SciPAC activities across all 11 SCs and strong monthly meeting attendance. While diverse, the Category has strengthened in unity and esprit de corps as a direct result of the dedicated Scientist Officers serving on active duty.

B. SC REPORTS

The SCs within SciPAC focused on maintaining excellence while beginning new initiatives and tasks. The following section describes the major duties, accomplishments, impacts, and recommendations of each SC. The reports below were developed and submitted by each SC Chair(s).

AWARDS

Chair: CDR James L. Kenney

Co-Chair: CDR Zewditu Demissie

Team Leadership:

Shalon Irving Memorial Junior Officer Award:	LCDR Rashid Njai; LCDR Iman Martin
Derek Dunn Memorial Senior Officer Award:	LCDR Nancy Tian; LCDR Jaymin Patel
Responder of the Year Award:	LT Jessica Dunn; LT Shannon York
Mentor of the Year Award:	LCDR Julia Zucco; LCDR Nazia Rahman
Retirement Awards:	LCDR Matthew Steele; LT Nicholas Wiese
SciPAC Awards Tracker:	CDR Sanny C. Northbrook; LT Ana Lauer
Secretary/SOP Review/Annual Report Team:	LCDR Mary Puckett
Letter of Appreciation/Roster Team:	LCDR Mary Puckett
Symposium Category Day Liaison:	LCDR Iman Martin
Website Liaison:	LCDR Tyson Volkmann

Major Duties:

- Prepare and solicit nominations for SciPAC awards.
- Obtain award reviewers for award nomination review boards.
- Provide guidance on award review process.
- Select award recipients and forward for approval.
- Submit Scientist nominee for the USPHS Responder of the Year Award.
- Provide plaques to award recipients.
- Advise on how to encourage supervisors to nominate Scientist Officers for awards.
- Ensure recognition of each award recipient on SciPAC's website and newsletter.
- Update the Awards SC's Standard Operating Procedures.
- Update the Awards SC's webpage on the SciPAC website.
- Track SciPAC-related awards.
- Identify and award retiring Scientists.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Coordinated the SciPAC awards process.
 - Created eight teams with team leaders and co-leaders and two liaison positions to coordinate the nomination for the SciPAC awards and other related items.
 - Ensured timely development and dissemination of calls for nominations for each of the four SciPAC awards.
 - Selected SC members to comprise the nomination review boards for the four SciPAC awards.
 - Verified basic readiness of nominees for all four SciPAC awards. Requested a screenshot of nominees' basic readiness status for inclusion in the nomination packet.
 - Coordinated the review and selection process for all four SciPAC awards.
 - Ensured recognition of Scientist Officers for the exceptional service through the Scientist the Responder of the Year, Junior and Senior Scientist of the Year, and Mentor of the Year Awards.
- Submission of awardees' pictures and brief biographies to the SciPAC Category Day SC and the Website SC for posting to the SciPAC website is pending, awaiting approval of Junior Scientist, Senior Scientist, and Mentor of the Year winners.
- Obtained a price quote for award plaques for all four SciPAC awards.
- Continuously updated the SAA, UC, and individual awards status. Ensured officers are recognized for their PAC-related contributions with a tracking system for award continuity.
- Updated the Awards SC SOP (internally until the next formal SciPAC review and approval period) to address typos and clarify and better reflect the current processes used by the SC.
- Provided a presentation to the PAC on the new June 25, 2020 Personnel Operations Memorandum on Awards Processing, ensuring that Scientist Officers have the latest information related to Commissioned Corps awards and are more prepared for nomination submission.

- Submitted the *Honor Awards Policy for SciPAC Activities* to Website SC for posting on the website, ensuring that all Scientists have access to guidance regarding eligibility and process for honor awards related to SciPAC work.

Changes:

- The SC will now provide award winners with award memorandum signed by the CPO that they can submit to their eOPF. This was added as awardees were previously unable to provide any documentation of such awards in their eOPF. The SC provided all previous award winners with an award memorandum. This task was assigned to the Letter of Appreciation/Roster Team.

Recommendations:

- Continue to update the Awards SC SOP as needed (internally until the next formal SciPAC review and approval period).
- Ensure the Awards SC SOP remains consistent with the SciPAC Charter and other governing documents.
- Ensure the award submission is well aligned with the award board meeting time.
- Ensure the award submission process is posted to the SciPAC website.
- Continuously communicate with the OSG and CPO award boards to track the status of the individual and group awards.
- Work with the Mentoring SC to encourage Mentor of the Year nominees.
- Develop a better system to identify retiring Scientists.
- Develop a tracking list indicating award reviewers serving on nomination review boards by year, allowing for rotation of officers.
- Developed a document to include templates of common emails distributed to awards teams, used to solicitate board reviewers and other common communications used by the SC during the operational year, to ensure consistency and aid in transition across operational years.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Chair: LCDR Tyann Blessington

Co-Chairs: CDR Eric Zhou and LCDR Rory Geyer

Major Duties:

- Provide Scientist Officers with guidance in preparing promotion materials.
- Coordinate the SciPAC CV & Officer's Statement (OS) review service.
- Review, update, and maintain the Scientist Officer Handbook.
- Provide data-driven insight into factors that may relate to promotion success.
- Provide Scientist Officers with job/position announcements to aid billet mobility.
- Provide professional training related to the career development of Scientist Officers.
- Provide career development information and resources to Scientist Officers.
- Update and maintain the Career Development SC Standard Operating Procedures.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

Promotion Document Review Team

- Fifty-nine Scientist Officers participated in the Promotion Document Review service and received feedback and recommendations from 66 volunteer senior officer reviewers. Many of the reviewers met with their mentees during individual meetings to discuss opportunities to strengthen their promotion documents and provide advice, thereby, increasing the officer's chances of promotion. The Promotion Materials Review Team coordinated the volunteer reviewers, the collection of promotion materials, and the matching of reviewers with mentees.
- Fourteen Scientist Officers (24%) requesting this service were successfully promoted.
 - Of those that were eligible for TO-4 promotion, 39% (7/18) were successful.
 - Of those that were eligible for TO-5 promotion, 20% (5/25) were successful.
 - Of those that were eligible for T O-6 promotion, 12.5% (2/16) were successful.
- The Promotion Document Review Team provided Letters of Appreciation to Scientist Officers serving as promotion document reviewers.

Promotion Panel Initiative Team

- The Promotion Panel Initiative team continues to generate data-driven insight into factors that may relate to success or non-success of promotion-eligible Scientist Officers. A report titled, "Scientist Category Career Development Profile: Promotion Year 2018" was finalized and disseminated to all Scientist Officers during the operational year. The guidance is available on the [SciPAC Career Development webpage](#).
- The team's findings were also presented to Scientist Officers in February 2020 following the SciPAC monthly meeting.
- The analysis provided Scientists with insight into the perceived strengths of promoted officers' promotion packages, inform mentors and mentees about characteristics of promoted officers, and serves as a mechanism for long-term trending. The data was collected during an anonymous survey and included Scientists who were selected for TO-4, TO-5, and TO-6 promotion in Promotion Year 2018. Topics covered in this survey included: demographics, career progression and potential, performance rating and reviewing officer's statements, mentoring, deployments, professional contributions, and service to the USPHS.
- The team has developed survey questions that will specifically target those officers who were promoted during the 2019 and 2020 promotion cycles and will help to identify factors that correlate with promotion success. This new survey is anticipated to be released in August 2020 and will be available to qualifying officers.

Promotion Guidance Team

- The team completed and distributed new Scientist-specific Officer Statement (OS) guidance. The guidance document included a discipline-neutral OS example, that was developed with the review and analysis of recently promoted senior officer OS documents. The OS guidance provided Scientists with further clarity on the format and content of a high-quality OS specific to Scientist Officers.
- The new OS guidance was distributed, and in partnership with the Training Team, a training seminar was held for all Scientists in October 2019. The guidance is available on the [SciPAC Career Development webpage](#).

Jobs List Team

- During the OY, members of the team conducted extensive USAJobs.gov searches for compilation of a list of openings for distribution to all SciPAC officers. Additional applicable opportunities not found on USAJobs.gov were also compiled from a variety of sources. Each list contained an average of twenty job postings from seven different fields including: 1) epidemiology, 2) laboratory science, 3) regulatory affairs, 4) program management, 5) research, 6) policy development, and 7) clinical psychology. A total of over six hundred openings were circulated to SciPAC officers during this period and provided career opportunities to both current officers and new call to active duty officers.
- The team received job postings from officers looking to recruit highly talented Scientist Officers. The team received announcements from officers and agency representatives wanting to expand their position announcement's reach. Hiring officials have become aware of this service and its ability to target highly qualified Scientist Officers, postings routinely included several positions outside of USAJobs.gov that were sent directly to the team.
- The team responded to individual requests from active duty applicants and provided position listings to aid their job search and transition to commissioning.

Scientist Officer Handbook Team

- The Scientist Officer Handbook Team continues to review and update sections of Handbook on a rotating basis. This operational year, six sections covering 1) Basic Readiness, 2) Commissioned Corps Awards, 3) Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report (COER), 4) Mentoring Commissioned Officers, 5) Promotion, and 6) Uniform Wear, were updated and are pending final EB approval. These updates provide guidance to newly commissioned Scientists and those who seek additional information on critical topics of the commissioned corps and how they relate to Scientist Officers.

Training Team

- The team reviews and updates sections of the Handbook on a rotational basis. The Handbook provides guidance to newly commissioned Scientists and those that seek information on critical topics of the commissioned corps and how they relate to Scientist Officers. The Handbook is available on the [SciPAC Scientist Officer Handbook website](#). During the operational year the following five sections were updated: 1) Honor and Integrity, 2) Training, 3) Awards Write-up Training, 4) Mobility, and 5) Commissioned Officers Association (COA) Involvement. These updates have been approved by the Career Development SC and are under review by SciPAC leadership.
 - The COA Involvement section of the SciPAC Handbook was updated to reflect an increase in the number of active local COA branches, new achievements in legislative advocacy, new online university degree programs offering scholarships to COA members.
 - The Awards and Training sections of the SciPAC Handbook was updated to correlate with the current Commissioned Corps guidance.
 - The Mobility section of the SciPAC Handbook was updated to reflect the new benchmarks for mobility and included related guidance and/or resources.
 - Hyperlinks were included throughout the documents to enhance user ease and direct readers to additional resources.

Training Team

- The team provided Scientist Officers with 3 trainings:
 - In October 2019, the team partnered with the Promotion Guidance Team to present on the newly developed Scientist-specific OS guidance.
 - In February 2020, the team partnered with the Promotion Panel Initiative Team to present findings from the analysis, “Scientist Category Career Development Profile: Promotion Year 2018”, on the factors that may relate to success or non-success of promotion-eligible Scientist Officers.
 - In June 2020, the team coordinated and hosted a book discussion, in which five Scientist Officer speakers recommended books to officers during different phases of their career.
- More than 150 Scientist Officers were documented in attendance for each training. Additionally, the team received positive comments.
- The presentations and resources were distributed with the meeting invite to all Scientist Officers on the SciPAC listserv.

SOP Team

- The Career Development SC SOP was revised during the 2019–2020 operational year. The SOP was finalized, approved and posted on the [Career Development SC website](#) in December 2019. The changes supported current and future Career Development SC teams with updated standard operating procedures to guide and standardize processes.

Administration & Communication Team

- Many of the established website links managed by the Career Development SC were inactivated in the fall of 2018 due to personally identifiable information (PII) concerns across all official Commissioned Corps websites. Pertinent links to promotion-specific information and guidance were re-established and additional resources were added.
- The Career Development SC website was updated to reflect accurate and updated information on the roles, responsibility, and tasks of the SC.
- The SC Secretary collected monthly updates and accomplishments from all the Team Leads and assisted with streamlining communications and documentation for the SC.

Scientist Officer Benchmark Review & Analysis

- In November 2019, the Career Development SC provided Scientist Officers information on the 2020 changes of the Scientist Category Promotion Benchmarks when compared to those developed for the previous 2019 promotion year. The SC developed resources highlighting the major changes and documenting wording differences between the two benchmark versions.
- In July 2019, the Career Development SC collaborated with the Policy SC to provided Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) leadership with a review and recommendations of two components of the Scientist Category Promotion Benchmarks (Education, Training & Professional Development and Career Progression and Potential).

Changes:

- In December 2019, the Career Development SC SOP was approved and the structure, team names, roles, and responsibilities were slightly modified. The new SOP also included more information on the purpose, objectives, and operational specifics for each team. Changes were made to reflect the broadening responsibilities of the SC. Many of the SC team roles continue to provide guidance and support for officers as they prepare PHS promotion, as well as provide support to officers in other aspects of career development, such as obtaining new billets, training to support upward mobility, and enhancing officership.
- Due to the high level of effort needed to identify, compile, organize, and sort position announcements, the Jobs Team welcomed additional members during the operation year.
- Since many Scientist Officers are deployed and are taking on additional duties due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some Career Development SC activities and operational schedules were modified. Some SC activities that were modified are listed below.
 - The Promotion Panel Initiative team’s assessment of factors that may relate to success or non-success of promotion-eligible Scientist Officers with officers promoted during 2019 was delayed. The team is planning on surveying officers promoted during 2019 and 2020 currently in one assessment. The assessment is expected to be released to qualifying officers in August 2020. The team continues to optimize their online survey by modifying their questions to ensure meaningful data is collected.
 - The Jobs List team modified distribution of job listed from being published weekly to being published every two weeks.
 - The Promotion Guidance team placed the development of new guidance documents on a temporary hold.

Recommendations:

- Continue to broaden the work of the Career Development SC and explore avenues that emphasize a wide and holistic view of career development, beyond that of promotion success. Special emphasis on elements of career progression that demonstrates Scientist Officers’ multi-faceted skill set, flexibility, and resilience, as well their ability to excel in changing environments, should be considered.
- The Career Development SC purpose statement, as documented in the SC SOP and website, includes the following language, “to advise the SciPAC on issues affecting Commissioned Corps Scientists’ career progression, assignments, evaluations, promotions, and job satisfaction”. We recommend that assessing “job satisfaction” be removed as a listed purpose item in future documents. This is not an activity the Career Development SC routinely performs, and it may be more effectively assessed in other SC activities, such as the State of the Scientist survey.
- Early in the 2020–2021 Operational Year, the SC Chair/Co-Chairs should issue a notice for additional Scientist Officer volunteers to staff the vacancies and additional roles needed to accomplish the Career Development SC activities.
 - Due to deployment schedules and COVID-19 response efforts, additional volunteers may be needed to assist teams that have time sensitive tasks.
 - Some activities for the 2020–2021 Operational Year, including recruiting and training additional team members and volunteer reviewers and for the Promotion Document Review service.

- The SC adapted communication and utilized Email communication, rather than conference calls, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This modification did not compromise the quality of the SC's performance. The use of flexible communication should be considered for the new operational year and during other scenarios when many officers are deployed and are unavailable.
- The Career Development SC should continue to foster opportunities that support Scientist Officers in obtaining new billets, including further promotion of the Jobs List as an opportunity for to Commissioned Corps Agency Liaisons and agency hiring officials to recruit highly skilled Scientist Officers.
- Currently, a single point of contact (Team Lead) is used to direct postings for consideration for future Jobs List postings. The Jobs List team is interested in identifying alternative methods for submissions, that would allow additional members to receive and review postings.
 - The team will explore the possibility of using a centralized email inbox to receive and track position suggestions for the Jobs List.
- Comments on the 2018 CV guidance and 2019 OS guidance format and use should be considered and pursued from Promotion Document Review service volunteers.
- The Promotion Panel Initiative team will be seeking collaboration opportunities with other SCs to explore the use of data, processes, and resources developed for other projects, that can benefit the Promotion Panel Initiative team enhance their collection and analysis of factors that may relate to promotion success.
- Historically, the Promotion Panel Initiative team has sought data from Scientist Officers who successfully promoted. The Team will seek opportunities to enhance the data collection scope, including to include those officers who were denied promotion. One potential avenue is to expand the data collection survey to include officers who have not been successful at promotion.
- Once the updated sections of the Scientist Officer Handbook are approved by PAC leadership, they will be uploaded to the SciPAC Handbook webpage. The Career Development SC is seeking additional avenues for distribution and outreach to enhance awareness of the Scientist Officer Handbook.
 - Avenues for advertisement, including a flier or bulleted summary of the content and use should be considered. The advertisement could be shared with the Recruitment and Retention and Mentoring SCs, as an onboarding and mentoring resource.
- Avenues to collect requests for Career Development SC trainings and seminars from Scientist Officers should be considered. Opportunities to record future trainings and seminars should be explored.

CATEGORY DAY

Chair: CDR Deborah Dee

Co-Chair: LCDR Oliver Ou

Note: the 2020 USPHS 2020 USPHS Symposium, was scheduled to be held in Glendale/Phoenix, AZ, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Substantial planning went into symposium preparation prior top postponement and is noted below.

Major Duties:

- Solicit team leaders and prepare the agenda for the Scientist Category Day.
- Ensure Category Day activities/topics are of current scientific or professional interest.
- Solicit abstracts from Scientists Officers and systematically review each to select the highest quality abstracts for presentation during Category Day.
- Recruit a keynote speaker to support the theme of the Symposium.
- Coordinate with symposium planners throughout the year to ensure logistical support for Category Day and to inform officers about symposium-wide events.
- Provide detailed information regarding relevant USPHS Symposium events.
- Organize and advertise a Scientist Officer social event that coincides with Category Day.
- Provide networking opportunities that focus on meeting officers throughout the category.
- Engage in mentorship through a session dedicated to key topics on mentoring.
- Provide recognition to winners of yearly Category awards through the presentation of plaques and holding a ceremony.
- Provide the CPO with an opportunity to address the category to discuss current topics that are of significance to officers and to accept questions from the category.
- Conduct a post-Category Day survey to inform future Category Day planning.
- Review and update the SOP annually (internally until the next formal SciPAC review and approval date).

Accomplishments:

- Successfully developed and planned a diverse and scientifically relevant agenda for Scientist Category Day originally planned for June at the 2020 USPHS Symposium, which was scheduled to be held in Glendale/Phoenix, AZ.
- Despite multiple deployments and increased demands on Scientist officers related to the COVID-19 pandemic, arranged for 3 Scientist officers to present their planned 2020 Category Day talks following the March 2021 SciPAC monthly call.

Executive Members (SC Chair, Co-Chair, and Executive Secretary)

- Solicited and appointed the leadership within the SC, including the Executive Board, 12 Teams, and 20 Team Leads or Co-leads, and 4 Senior Advisors to the Leads.
- Attended the All Categories Representatives meetings to represent SciPAC.
- Hosted the SciPAC Category SC meetings.
- Reviewed and obtained approval from SciPAC leadership (including CPO and SciPAC Chair and Vice Chair) on the proposed Category Day agenda.

Abstract Team

- Planned to solicit abstracts for Category Day presentations in three tracks: Science/Epidemiology, Program/Policy, and Deployment/Leadership.
- Developed a procedure to review the abstracts and follow up with selected presenters.
 - Review abstracts for any red flags and issues that will require more scrutiny:
 - Federal policy/legislation
 - Emergency response that includes mention of PHS response
 - Chartered groups (e.g., PACE)
 - Corps activities/policy

- Follow-up with currently selected presenters:
 - Find out if the abstracts were cleared according to agency requirements
 - Determine potential readiness issues (e.g., ask if presenters are basic ready and if they have had readiness issues in the past) and inform presenters that basic readiness will be reviewed in advance of the conference.
- Planned to have a poster session.

Keynote Team

- Developed a list of potential keynote speakers from the private sector and academia; Dr. Scott Leischow from Arizona State University was selected and an invitation was sent.
- Dr. Leischow planned to give a keynote address on “Update on Vaping: The State of Public Health and Regulatory Science.” Unfortunately, the Symposium was cancelled.

Agency Networking Team

- Planned to execute one networking session to facilitate networking and professional development among Scientist Officers.

State of the Category Team

- Planned to have our CPO, CAPT Eckert, provide the State of the Category address, which is typically developed based on questions submitted in advance by Scientist Officers.

Onsite Team

- Planned to be onsite and coordinate all activities during the 2020 SciPAC Category Day.
- Planned to maintain a consist pace throughout the day to ensure all presentations and activities were completed within the allowed time.

Mentoring Team

- Planned to develop and facilitate an interactive workshop to problem solve case studies on mentioning junior and senior Scientist Officers.

Panel Team

- The team suggested three different topics for panel discussion. The approved proposed topic was entitled “How Scientist Officers distinguish themselves as leaders domestically and globally.” Five final panelists from different agencies were selected and awaiting CCHQ clearance before the symposium was cancelled.

Social Team

- Planned a Scientist Category Day Social to be held following the completion of the Category Day program. The social was expected to be held at a local restaurant and attended by ~30 Scientist Officers. We intended to sponsor approximately \$200 worth of hors d'oeuvres for the attendees.

Evaluation Team

- Planned to collect and analyze the post-Category Day evaluations completed by Category Day attendees and non-attendees.

SOP Team

- Reviewed and updated the Category Day SC SOP (internally until the next formal SciPAC review and approval period) to ensure documentation, continuity, and sharing historical knowledge of typical procedures.

Appreciation Team

- Developed 32 personalized letters of appreciation (LOA) signed by SciPAC leadership and sent them out individually.

Awards Team

- Planned to coordinate the awards portion of Category Day by creating the Award presentation slides and awards script for use by the CPO.
- Planned to contact officers involved in SciPAC Category Day to compile the Unit Commendation Award Roster and submit the roster by June 30, 2020.

Website Liaison

- Maintained updated information about the 2020 Category Day on the SciPAC website.

Other

- *Icebreaker Activities.* Brainstormed fun icebreaker activities to welcome SciPAC Category Day attendees and initiate conversations among participants.
- *Photographs/Article.* Planned to take photographs during the 2020 SciPAC Category Day and submit an article on Category Day to submit to the SciPAC Newsletter.
- *New Event – SciPAC Involvement Resource Event.* Planned to create an event to highlight opportunities for Officers to get involved in SciPAC SC events, teams, and projects.
 - The proposed event could have been either a live-event or a stand-alone resource booth.
 - Prior to the conference, SC leads would be contacted and requested to provide a listing of events, teams, and projects with available volunteer slots. Information about existing SC projects were to be compiled to facilitate Officer awareness of SciPAC resources and activities.
 - Further communication or interviews could be arranged between SC leads and interested volunteers.

Impact:

- Developed a stronger, more resilient team.
 - This operational year presented unprecedented challenges, but team members provided steadfast leadership through the term.
 - At the beginning of the term, communications restrictions required alternate means of sharing information and discussing plans for Category Day.
 - Officers had to overcome numerous logistic challenges to accomplish planning tasks for the SciPAC Category Day but were successful in doing so.

- The team had to compete with a barrage of COVID deployments yet collaborated and managed to move all planning activities forward.
- The team eventually learned of the cancellation of the Symposium.
- Team leadership worked with SciPAC leadership to arrange for at least 3 officers to present their talks to Scientist Officers after the March 2021 SciPAC monthly meeting.
- Many team members expressed interest in continuing to serve on the 2020-2021 SciPAC Category Day SC or other SciPAC SCs and their experiences gained during this challenging term will be valuable to their new teams.
- The groundwork laid by this SC will be put to good use for upcoming symposia or related events, whether virtual or in person.

Recommendations:

- *New Event – SciPAC Involvement Resource Event.* The event organizers request feedback on whether this would be a valuable addition to Category Day events. Comments and questions are welcome. Additional comments and questions could be posed to the SC Leads (CDR Alice Shumate and LCDR Rebecca Levine for operational year 2020-2021).

MENTORING

Chair: CDR Lana Rossiter

Co-Chairs: LCDR Ginny Bowen and LCDR Shayne Gallaway

Team Leadership:

Mentor Matching:	LCDR Shayne Gallaway, LCDR Patrick High
Agency-Focused Mentoring:	LCDR Debra Chen, LCDR Lara Misegades
Mentor Outreach:	LCDR Elizabeth Edwards, LCDR Patrick High
SOP:	CDR Alfredo Sancho, LT Jason Caballero
Category Day:	CDR Matt Newland
Guidebook:	LCDR Keisha Houston

Major Duties:

- Manage SciPAC formal mentorship program; facilitate matching of Scientist mentors and mentees, including application, match, renewal, and tracking processes.
- Improve mentorship capacity of Scientist mentors through development and dissemination of resources (e.g., outreach publications & mentoring guidebook).
- Host annual mentoring event as part of Category Day at the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium.
- Maintain accurate SOPs of SC procedures; update triennially according to SciPAC calendar.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

Manage formal mentorship program:

- Increased mentor match agreements by 14% during September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020, (from 102 to 116) through a combination of new (35) and renewed (75) mentor-mentee relationships, thus enhancing awareness of the benefits of mentoring which include career

progression, personal wellness, and overall guidance, and recognizing all mentors for their contributions during this operational year in meeting the mentorship benchmark.

- Increased quarterly mentor matching renewals by 21% during September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020 (from 62 to 75) using an email renewal that ensured an efficient process (timely responses), while also providing an immediate opportunity for officers to identify the need for a new mentor.
- Communicated with all newly promoted O-5/O-6 officers to assess both willingness to serve as a mentor and *need* for a mentor (as part of the CDR/CAPT initiative). Recruited mentors using agency-specific emails. Both initiatives contributed to the recruitment of 15 additional mentors and a total of 169 Scientist Officers (~52% of Scientist Officers) being actively involved in a formal mentoring relationship as mentor or mentee.

Improve mentorship capacity:

- Created and disseminated three publications (General Facts, Career Facts, and COVID-19 Well-being Check-ins) to 127 Scientist mentors to enhance mentorship capacity.

Maintain accurate SOP:

- Initiated triennial review of Mentoring SC SOP by gathering and synthesizing Team feedback; submitted revised SOP to Rules & Membership SC and EB for feedback.

Changes:

- Established a new Mentor Matching Team position to identify newly commissioned officers (at OBC) through coordination with the Peer Support Network; established a process to follow-up with each officer 6 months post-OBC to assess the need for a SciPAC mentor.
- Supported new CDR/CAPT initiative to increase mentoring among senior officers by facilitating matches using agency representatives.
- Revised Letters of Appreciation (LOAs) for mentors to include additional verbiage about the number of total mentees; this effort recognizes mentors who are going above-and-beyond by mentoring multiple Scientist Officers (i.e., 1 mentee (58% of mentors), 2-3 mentees (33% of mentors), or 4–6 mentees (9% of mentors)).
- Added the mentor list to max.gov to facilitate team lead access, as needed.
- Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the annual Scientific Training & Symposium was cancelled along with the SciPAC Category Day and our annual mentoring event.
- Collected team-level protocols and added as appendices to the draft Mentoring SC SOP as part of the triennial review process.

Recommendations:

Mentor matching:

- Continue to engage current and new mentors by monitoring attendance at SciPAC monthly meetings (to look for active officers), by collaborating with other SCs, and by emailing or calling previously active mentors/mentees who do not have an active relationship on file.
- Confirm with mentors (annually) the names and contact info for all mentees of record.
- Improve and operationalize the new CDR/CAPT initiative and the use of senior O-4 officers as mentors for O-3 officers.

Agency-Focused Mentoring:

- Send out monthly emails to remind SciPAC of the purpose and availability of the program.
- Evaluate how agency-focused mentoring has been beneficial to Scientists who have participated.

Mentor Outreach:

- Explore new topics for future Mentor Outreach Publications.

SOP:

- Implement routine internal requests for SOP updates/review every 6–12 months.
- Consider uploading SC SOP to max.gov along with all team protocols.
- Work with teams who do not yet have protocols.

Category Day:

- Consider developing virtual events in Fall 2020 to provide additional mentorship opportunities to make up for the cancellation of 2020 Category Day mentoring activities.

Guidebook:

- Update policies section (including web link) in the Mentoring Guidebook and share with SC chairs for review and approval.

POLICY

Chair: CDR Adam Bjork

Co-Chair: LCDR Matthew Steele

Major Duties:

- Policy review
- Policy development
- Policy monitoring
- Policy SC SOP triennial review

Accomplishments & Impact:

Policy Review

- Reviewed and gave feedback on the new draft of Scientist Promotion Benchmarks. Keeping these benchmarks current is a critical SciPAC activity that helps impacts all Scientist Officers up for promotion.
- Gained final approval for Website and Facebook Communication SOPs.
- Assisted the Website, and R&R SCs in a comprehensive review of the “Scientist Category” section of the redesigned USPHS.gov site. Accurate information on the new site will help recruit new Scientist Officers.

Policy Development

- Reviewed and gave feedback on the new draft of Scientist Promotion Benchmarks. Keeping these benchmarks current is a critical SciPAC activity that helps impacts all Scientist Officers up for promotion.

Policy Monitoring

- Identified a list of sources to monitor for policies which may impact PHS and the Scientist Category. This will help Scientist Officers stay current on PHS policy.
- Provided situational awareness to the Policy SC on monthly calls about policies which may impact PHS and the Scientist Category.

Policy SC SOP Triennial Review

- Not applicable for OY 2019–2020 (next triennial review is scheduled for OY 2020–21).

Other Accomplishments

- The update of the SC roster early in the year to ensure that existing members were still available to participate on the SC in the new operational year.
- The recruitment of new SC members to contribute to the mission of the Policy SC.

Recommendations:

- Continue to monitor CCMIS and other sources for new or revised PHS policies.
- Review and disseminate information to SciPAC as appropriate.
- Seek clarification from CCHQ and the CPO on how to best to relay advise and information on new policies.
- Continue to provide support to other SCs as they conduct their Triennial SOP reviews and as they draft any other SOPs.
- Complete the triennial review of the Policy SC SOP.
 - Update, if appropriate, the responsibilities of each SC team and leadership position.
 - Submit revised SC SOP to the Rules & Membership SC for review.
- Recommend expansion of the duties of the Policy SC’s Secretary role to include serving as Liaison to the Website SC.

READINESS

Chair: LCDR Elizabeth Irvin-Barnwell

Co-Chairs: LCDR Angela Thompson-Paul and LCDR Rebecca Levine

Team Leadership:

Ready Responder Bulletin: LT Michelle Hughes
 Readiness Mentoring: LCDR Hilda Razzaghi, LCDR Mary Puckett
 Readiness Resources: LCDR Jonathan Burgos, LT Andrew Brown
 Response Narratives: LT Alesha Harris
 Fitness Achievement: CDR Alison Sheehan-Laufer Halpin
 Health Optimization: LCDR Jessica Tomov
 Response Preparedness: LCDR Rebecca Levine

Major Duties:

- Identify emergency response training opportunities and deployment processes.
- Assist and promote the effective use of scientists in response to emergencies affecting public health.
- Assist Scientist Officers in maintaining basic readiness.

Accomplishments:

- Supported Scientist Officer readiness continuing to provide assistance to officers who requested information/assistance with completing necessary items for maintaining their basic readiness status.
- Developed an Advance Readiness Initiative which has been approved by SciPAC Leadership and is awaiting OSG approval.
- Produced two documents to assist Scientists preparing for deployments, specifically the SciPAC Basic Readiness Checklist and Deployment Packing Guidance.
- Held two Response Preparedness Seminars; the third seminar was cancelled shortly before presentation due to changes in response team rules: November 2019 (cancelled), “Opioid Rapid Response Teams”; March 2020, “An Overview of the HHS/ASPR Incident Response Framework”; June 2020, “Resiliency for Responders”.
- Received and processed 2 deployment response narratives detailing a Remote Area Medical Mission and a Customs and Border Patrol Mission; two additional response narratives were received but are currently under review due to the response mission (COVID-19). As a result, a total of 31 deployment posts are now available on the deployment narratives website.
- Revamped and rebranded updates to be more focused on readiness and published in a quarterly format as the “SciPAC Ready Responder”; topics covered included response team organizational changes, COVID-19 response contributions, APFT training, PHS Athletic events, the Excellence in Fitness Program, and Readiness SC workgroup highlights.
- Quarterly SciPAC Ready Responder updates reached all SciPAC officers and increased readiness knowledge among Scientist Officers.
- Reviewed results and awarded achievement certificates, including two Excellence in Endurance certificates.
- Met with CDC’s lifestyle fitness center to identify at home workouts including workouts to improve overall form and reduce injury.
- Reached out to Science Officers to identify success stories either meeting weight standards or improving fitness level.
- Began planning a 12-week challenge with TPAC to promote healthy competition and improve fitness among officers; currently on hold due to COVID-19.

Impact:

- Assistance provided to non-basic ready and other Scientist Officers has led to a decrease in the number of officers deemed not basic ready.
- The resources provided to officers allowed for officers to be better prepared for deployments.
- SciPAC Ready Responder, which details fitness and nutrition information, increases knowledge among Scientist Officers on nutrition, exercise, and health. The bulletin also

provides important information on readiness tips and monthly deployment resources, such as on-call information.

- The Response Narratives serve as a method to highlight officers who have participated in Agency and Corps deployments. Additionally, the narratives serve as a learning experience for officers who have not yet deployed and for those preparing to deploy.
- Due to the new format of incorporating seminars into the time of the SciPAC call, we believe we reached a broad cross-section of USPHS Scientist Officers who now have additional information and knowledge to better understand readiness and the deployment process. Additionally, officers are better prepared to deploy and are more resilient during deployment and post-deployments.

Recommendations:

- With the multiple COVID and other emergency responses, consider administering the Deployment Skills Inventory Survey in OY2021.
 - Discuss the need for additional workgroups as identified by senior SciPAC leadership (e.g. Deployment Skills Inventory Survey Workgroup).
- Recommend soliciting for narratives after a large-scale deployment.
- Make revisions to the SciPAC SOP at the beginning of the operational year; revisions should incorporate all workgroup changes and new initiatives.
- Recommend building up the position of Secretary for the SC, whose duties should include Website SC Liaison, assisting with scheduling quarterly SC All Hands Meetings, drafting updates for the monthly SciPAC call, and drafting the EOY report and letters of appreciation.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Chair: LCDR Jonathan Leshin

Co-Chairs: LCDR Debra Chen and LCDR Alaine Knipes

Major Duties:

- Create, review and revise resources for Recruitment and Retention (R&R).
- Enhance efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified Scientist Officers.
- Provide guidance for recruitment of Scientist Officer applicants through available mechanisms, including the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) and Laboratory Leadership Service (LLS).
- Develop and facilitate support activities for new call to active duty officers.
- Develop and administer surveys or interviews to retiring and/or decommissioning officers.
- Generate the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the SC.

Accomplishments & Impact

Resources Team

- Revised the “Top Tips for Scientist Officers” and posted it to the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) website.
- Created a standardized PowerPoint presentation for use by Scientist Officers at recruitment or alumni events to provide visibility to Scientist Officers serving in the

United States Public Health Service including a specialized presentation for psychologists.

- Revised an “OBC Handout” document to share with Scientist Officers at Officer Basic Course (OBC) that highlights leaders in SciPAC and provides helpful tips and points of contact (POC) for new Call to Active Duty officers (CADs) to immediately get involved in mentoring, the Peer Support Network (PSN), and attend SciPAC calls.
 - This “OBC Handout”, along with the “Top Tips for Scientist Officers”, are distributed to all Scientist Officers attending OBC.

Interested Applicant Team

- Drafted language to be sent out through the Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG) listserv to request volunteers to give recruitment presentations to clinical psychologists at associated schools, hospitals, etc. on 10/25/2020. Awaiting feedback and approval from the OSG.
- Followed up with 3 interested applicants for possible entrance into the USPHS. General information provided based on USPHS website.

OBC Engagement Team

- Welcomed 2 new Scientist Officer CADs attending 2 OBCs.
- Served as POC for two virtual OBCs
- Collated the names, duty stations, and email addresses of new Scientist Officers to share with the PSN Team for retention activities.
- Shared photos of OBC events with SciPAC website and Facebook representatives for visibility.
- Assisted SciPAC leadership and Chief Professional Officer (CPO) during OBC event activities when necessary.

Peer Support Network Team:

- The PSN Team connected incoming officers with PSN mentors. The PSN Team matched 11 new officers with peer mentors. There are now approximately 50 officers involved in the Peer Support Network.
- PSN Team provided guidance on multiple issues to new officers. Issues included awards, which chartered groups to become involved with, Commissioned Officers’ Effectiveness Reports (COERs), and promotion guidance.
- Conducted outreach to new officers in the PSN to ensure that they were coping with the unexpected stresses of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and frequent deployments. Officers who were reached were grateful for the support. Unsolicited comments included “My peer mentor is fantastic and has been endlessly helpful navigating my first year,” and “I’ve been able to regularly meet with my peer-mentees. They’ve both been great to work with and look forward to supporting them in the future!”
- Coordinated with Mentorship SC to ensure that all new CAD were connected with a senior scientist mentor. Of the 16 officers sent from PSN to the Mentoring SC, two have senior mentors and three have submitted applications with a match pending.

New CAD Seminars Team

- In the 2019–2020 operational year, the new CAD seminar team hosted 4 sessions for new officers. The topics included COERs, promotion, CV writing, awards, and finding a job after LLS and EIS fellowships. Each session was attended by 20–25 Scientist Officers called to active duty in the previous two years. In total, 9 scientists participated as speakers or panelists.
- There was continued requests for in person groups in addition to the virtual component of the seminar. In response, rooms were reserved at Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) campuses so that Scientist Officers distributed widely across the country could attend in person.
- Seminars were available for in-person attendance and via Business Skype to increase participation.
- One seminar added this year was a panel discussion in January tailored for LLS and EIS officers finding a job after EIS or LLS. It included practical advice for networking, how to find and apply for open positions, and navigating the Commissioned Corps transfer process. The panel included four CC officers who had successfully transitioned from fellowships to federal positions in the previous year. The panel generated high interest from officers in EIS and LLS, several of whom reached out to thank us for the session.
- Junior officers paired with senior officers to present information on topics related to USPHS from a junior officer’s perspective, including:
 - CV writing
 - Promotions
 - Awards
 - COERs
 - Finding a position following EIS/LLS
- Documents and past slides can be found at max.gov.
- Seminars were suspended starting in February due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CDC New Officers Monthly Meeting Team

- New team for the 2019–2020 OY. Team leads took exceptional initiative in the development of team.
- 32 officers, including the 4 Co-Leads, subscribe to the [CDC New Officers Monthly Meeting email list](#), where 2 to 10 officers attended each of the 9 Lunch sessions from October 2019 to July 2020. Team emails and monthly meetings provide the opportunity to support and inform more than 30 new CDC USPHS officers. There were 55 attendees across all events.
- 3 senior officers participated as speakers covering the following topics: Awards Guidance for CDC; Roles as a CDC Commissioned Corps Activity (CCA) Liaison; and USPHS CDC Perspective as a Senior Officer in September, March, and July, respectively. Team provides a forum for more senior officers to provide mentorship, guidance, and knowledge to new officers.
- Monthly meetings were available for in-person attendance for the October 2019 to March 2020 sessions and shifted to virtual sessions from April 2020 forward due to COVID-19. Team adapted to the pandemic for continued support to new officers and indirectly created a sustainable model to reach more officers during deployments, teleworking, and leave scenarios.

- Main topics discussed included, but were not limited to: COERs, retirement credit, deployments, Thrift Savings Plans (TSPs), OBC experiences, promotions, basic readiness requirements and paperwork, Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) waivers, COVID-19 experiences, and awards. A team led by new officers provided an open, safe forum for topics of interest for any new CDC officer.
- Broader Impacts
 - Officers that have interacted with the team during a lunch or via e-mail are using the group outside of the lunches as a way to leverage other officer's experiences to diminish their own confusion. For example, the group allows officers to ask for COER examples at the same level as them and in the same job series which can be more beneficial than a COER from a senior officer in a leadership position.
 - Officers that have interacted with the team during the lunch have formed collaborations to work on projects. For example, one officer on a monthly call suggested that we collaborate to draft an article for publication in a newsletter describing our deployment experiences from the perspective of fairly new LTs. This article was published in the June/July 2020 COA Frontline Newsletter.
 - Increased networking circle and knowledge of Commissioned Corps policies

Epidemic Intelligence Service/Laboratory Leadership Service (EIS/LLS) Team

- Maintained communication with the CDC Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services (CSELS), Division of Scientific Education and Professional Development (DSEPD) to stay abreast of the onboarding process.
- Responded to requests and met with applicants seeking information or guidance on EIS and LLS fellowship programs.
- Approximately 9 individuals in either EIS or LLS became Scientist Officers in 2020.
- Hosted virtual Q&A for incoming EIS and LLS Officers on May 22, 2020; provided resources and offered guidance to approximately 10 interested USPHS applicants in the 2020 EIS/LLS class; participants represented Scientist, Veterinary, and Medical categories.

Separation Survey Team

- Met with Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) separations to understand how to incorporate their separations education tools into the team's efforts
- Conducted a web survey and optional extended interview to collect information about officers separating or retiring.
- One individual who retired completed both the web survey and the extended interviews have been recorded. Common issues included difficulty with promotion, difficulty obtaining awards and inadequate professional development or career progression support resources. A total of six officers have had interviews over the life of this program.
- Data have been collected and organized in preparation for further analysis.

Recommendations:

- Continue rotation of informal meetings featuring guest speakers, as both forums were well received
 - Expand New Officer Monthly Lunches to other agencies

- “Virtual lunches” worked well for CDC Officers during the COVID-19 pandemic, so this may represent a viable option for expanding lunch meetings to new Officers stationed in remote locations
- Continue to create, review, and revise R&R resources. These include the “Top Tips for Scientist Officers”, the new recruitment presentation, and the OBC handout.
- Once the new recruitment presentation is available (and COVID-19 is over), coordinate official recruitment tips for interested officers. Business cards have been purchased to assist with this effort.
- The OBC Engagement Team needs continual support in recruiting officers to attend the OBC open house and graduation.
- Make sure the OBC Open House team at CCHQ knows the name of the new OBC Engagement team lead.
- Develop an SOP for the OBC Engagement Team that will describe the process of attending, interacting, and follow-up actions related to OBC.
- Create a poster (easy to be displayed) that describes some of the contributions (work and deployment) made by Scientist Officers and present this during OBC Open House. Consider reusing the SciPAC poster from the COF Symposium, An alternative would be to create a SciPAC Banner.
- For virtual OBC open houses, suggest to OBC coordinators to have virtual meetings between candidate Scientist Officers and OBC Engagement Team representative.
- Continue to coordinate new Scientist Officer CAD names and emails between OBC Engagement team and PSN Team.
- PSN will continue to need additional officers with 4-8 years of experience to provide junior level mentorship.
- Continue to coordinate new officer names and emails between PSN and the SciPAC Mentoring SC’s Mentor Match Team.
- New Call to Active Seminars should continue. They are massively successful and extremely well attended.
- EIS/LLS still requires close management. The information we can get on this program in terms of who is joining, and total number of interested officers is limited. We have the potential to be a great resource for incoming officers, however it remains important to stay connected with the EIS/LLS office and the CDC CCA office to stay on top of deadlines and other information concerning prospective officers. The timing of our contact is very important. We should work to establish our team as a resource for EIS/LLS fellows before they make the decision to apply to USPHS and maintain contact as a resource throughout their commissioning process. This is one of only a handful of mechanisms to onboard new officers and we want to keep this pipeline as wide open as possible.
- Ensure that there is a Scientist presence at the EIS conference and that we meet with potential candidates. Do the same for LLS fellows.
 - Allow for flexibility in the meeting platform and need for virtual meetings when in-person meetings are not possible. This year we did a virtual Q&A session that worked out very well.
- Continue to work with a contact on the EIS team at CDC. The EIS team is likely to be a good point of contact for gaining information on commissioned USPHS applicants.
- Establish and maintain contact with the CDC CCCA office. This will allow us to gain

information on EIS/LLS fellows at the beginning of their commissioning process.

- Separation Survey Team should continue to collaborate with other PACs
- The incoming R&R SC chair should work with Executive Board leadership to convey the following concerns up the leadership chain:
 - The time from open recruitment to onboarding can take more than a year. Some applicants cannot or choose not to wait.
 - The application review process is not transparent to the applicants and they feel disenfranchised with the organization/leadership because of this. They often send repeated inquiries to Commissioned Corps Headquarters without receiving an answer about the status of their application. A process to handle this should be developed.
 - Medical boarding is not transparent, and the applicants are often evaluated many months to more than a year after they submit their application and AFTER they have been boarded and (sometimes) found a position.

RULES AND MEMBERSHIP

Chair: LCDR Jason Wilken

Co-Chair: CDR Dan-My Chu

Major Duties:

- SciPAC Charter triennial review.
- SciPAC SOP annual review.
- SciPAC SC SOP triennial review.
- SciPAC new voting member selection.
- Support SciPAC Immediate Past Chair in developing the Annual Report.

Accomplishments & Impact:

SciPAC Charter

- The SciPAC Charter was revised during the 2016-2017 operational year and approved by the voting membership on August 31, 2017. The OSG subsequently approved the Charter on October 18, 2017. The Charter was scheduled to be revised by April 2020. However, the Rules and Membership SC was informed by the CPO that the OSG is in the process of completing a model Charter template to be used by all USPHS PACs. Therefore, revision of the SciPAC Charter was deferred, pending guidance from the OSG. The impact of adopting the new Charter template will be assessed once the new template is available.

SciPAC SOP Review

- The SciPAC SOP is critical for communicating the key objectives, functions, and roles of each voting member including the EB members, SC Chairs/Co-Chairs, and Liaisons to all Scientist Officers. CDR Dan-My Chu and CDR Lauren Zapata led a review and revision of the SciPAC SOP to ensure the document accurately reflected SciPAC's current mission and activities.
- The SciPAC SOP was reviewed, reformatted, and updated to better reflect current activities, standards, and needs, and to incorporate major updates and EB comments.

- The new SciPAC SOP was approved by the EB and presented to the Voting Membership with the option to vote to approve, to approve with additional edits (provided by the Voting Members), or to not approve. A majority of Voting Members voted to approve or approve with edits (edits were incorporated into the new SciPAC SOP). The new SciPAC SOP was approved by the EB on July 18, 2020.
- Major changes included:
 - Replaced the EB COF Liaison with a new Executive Liaison position. The Executive Liaison duties include, for example, serving as the project manager to ensure timely review of SciPAC documents by the EB; serving as the liaison between SciPAC and COF; and serving as the SciPAC max.gov administrator.
 - Clarified the eligibility requirements for Voting Members to serve as SciPAC Vice Chair.
 - Detailed the circumstances under which a SciPAC Chair's term as a Voting Member can be extended and the terms under which an Immediate Past Chair can serve as a non-voting ex officio member.
 - Explained that the CPO is not a member of the EB.
 - Removed all sections pertaining to fundraising and spending PAC funds, in line with guidance from the OSG that PACs should not raise funds.
 - Eliminated the Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) Liaison position as MOLC no longer uses liaisons to PACs.
 - Deleted sections and appendices redundant with SC SOPs (e.g., the approval process for SC SOP revisions, and the Voting Membership call for applications template, which are described in the Rules & Membership SOP).

SciPAC New Voting Member Nomination Process

- The Rules and Membership Chair reviewed the current membership and identified seven vacancies. The formal call for Voting Member nominations was submitted via the SciPAC listserv. The process was started in late March 2020 with applications due early April 2020. The deadline was extended until late April 2020 to account for officers that might be on deployment and therefore needed additional time to complete their application.
- The Rules and Membership Chair received and compiled 28 potential applicants' self-nomination packets; requested supporting data from the SciPAC Executive Secretary (SciPAC call attendance); recruited 7 senior officers (all previous EB members) to serve on the Voting Member Selection Team; scheduled a Voting Membership Selection Team SC meeting; and distributed the self-nomination packets to the SC members for rankings.
- The Voting Member Selection Team met by teleconference to (1) discuss each of the applicants; (2) review the diversity, distribution, and qualifications of each of the applicants; and (3) select seven officers and two alternates to recommend for voting membership. A nomination package was subsequently prepared and submitted to CPO for consideration.
- The OSG approved the seven officers for SciPAC Voting Membership, and the Rules and Membership Chair notified each officer individually by phone to inform them of their selection and welcome them to the PAC. Officers who were not selected were also notified of the decision by the Rules and Membership Chair via email. If requested,

feedback from the Rules and Membership Chair was provided to officers that were not selected regarding areas where the officer could increase their support of the PAC.

- Members of the Voting Member Selection Team noted opportunities for improving the transparency of the Voting Member selection process, such as listing the criteria by which Voting Members are selected. The Rules and Membership Chair, with input from the current and two previous SciPAC Chairs, drafted revisions to the Rules and Membership SC SOP aimed at better improving transparency (see “Rules and Membership SC SOP Update” below).

Rules and Membership SC SOP Update

- The Rules and Membership SOP Team completed an update to the Rules and Membership SC SOP. Changes included:
 - Appointed the SciPAC Executive Liaison as the SC SOP Review Team Lead.
 - Added greater transparency about the Voting Member Selection Process, including: defining the size and qualifications of the Voting Member Selection Team; establishing that no officer can serve on the Voting Member Selection Team for more than 5 consecutive years; and defining criteria by which the Voting Member Selection Team can use to score applicants.
 - Refined the criteria that the Chair can use when selecting SC members for Letters of Appreciation.

SciPAC SC SOP annual updates

- All SCs with SOP revisions scheduled during OY 2019–2020 were given six-month extensions due to the unprecedented number of officers deployed for the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Rules and Membership SC ensured EB review of the following SC SOPs (with current status noted):
 - Career Development (approved by EB 12/31/2019)
 - Recruitment & Retention (approved by EB 01/24/2020)
 - Website (approved by EB 09/01/2020)
 - Mentoring (returned to Mentoring with EB edits, 07/13/2020)
 - Visibility (returned to Visibility SC with EB edits, 8/26/2020)
 - Rules & Membership (pending revision of Attachment A SC SOP approval matrix, which is dependent on EB final approval of Visibility SC SOP)

Recommendations:

- Revisions to the SciPAC Charter should continue to be deferred until a new Charter template is provided by the OSG.
- Ensure the SciPAC SOP and Charter are sent to all voting members at the start of the operational year.
- Update the responsibilities of each SC in the SciPAC SOP annually to reflect the SCs’ SOPs as approved by EB to ensure consistency between the SciPAC SOP and the SCs’ SOPs.
- Continue to offer a six-month extension to SC SOP revision deadlines until the current public health emergency declaration is lifted.

- Evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of the Executive Liaison as the SC SOP Review Team lead. If necessary, revise the Rules and Membership SC SOP accordingly.
- Inform the PAC about changes to the Rules and Membership SC SOP pertaining to Voting Member selection to better inform prospective Voting Member candidates on the criteria used by the team.
- Use both email and max.gov for relaying Voting Member self-nomination packages to the Voting Member Selection Team.

SCIENCE

Chair: LCDR Eric Jamoom

Co-Chair: CDR David Huang and LCDR Teresa Wang

Major Duties:

- Compile and maintain an active list of Scientist Officers’ scholarly works.
- Demonstrate how Scientist Officers directly contribute to the priorities of the OSG and World Health Organization (WHO)’s Global Health Threats.
- Coordinate a teleconference seminar series focused on practical science skills as well as relevant science activities within the priority areas of the OSG and WHO Global Health Threats.
- Revise, administer, analyze, and present data from the annual State of the Scientists (SoS) Survey.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Bibliography & Publications Team (Lead: LCDR Folasade Kembu)

- Collaborated with Visibility SC’s Manuscript Highlights Team to collect officers’ publications, books, reports, and presentations for 2019.
- Finalized 2019 Bibliography Report, published on [SciPAC website](#).
- Finalized 2018 Bibliography Report, published on [SciPAC website](#).
- Processed, organized, and updated previous submissions for the SciPAC bibliography (summarized in **Table 1**).
- These planned reports and summaries provide individuals, including USPHS leadership, insight to the scientific productivity of Scientist Officers. For example, the 2018 Bibliography Report was provided at the request of the OSG in November 2019 to further highlight the work of Scientist Officers.

Table 1. Summary of productivity of Scientist Officers (2010–2019)

Year	Publications	Books	Reports	Presentations	Total
2019	458	12	9	241	720
2018	463	9	13	102	587
2017	504	4	11	105	624
2016	440	3	1	89	533
2015	150	7	6	96	259
2014	205	9	49	121	384

2013	319	15	66	277	677
2012	296	16	44	264	620
2011	256	8	24	309	597
2010	207	14	35	262	518
Total	3,298	97	258	1,866	5,519

Research and Practice Team: (Lead: LT Suresh Jayasekara; Co-Lead: LT Marsha Samson)

- Provided a venue for facilitating discussions and highlighting contributions of Scientists related to departmental priorities, and real-world issues critical to officer practice.
- Scheduled 4 webinars on various topics (**Table 2**) and successfully executed 2 Science & Practice webinars. Note: *Due to COVID-19, two webinars were cancelled; one from Science & Practice format and one Journal Club format.*

Table 2. Summary of webinars

Date	Speaker	Type of Presentation	Presentation Title
December 17, 2019	CDR Karen Chaves, LT Tiffany Pham and LT Suresh Jayasekara The Asian Pacific American Officers Committee (APAOC), Community Engagement Work Group	Science & Practice	How to Cherish Your Children — Healthy Mind Initiative Approach
February 18, 2020	Drs. Anne Kimball and Mark Tenforde (EISO fellows, CDC)	Science & Practice	The Emergence of E- Cigarette, or Vaping, Associated Lung Injury — An Overview of the Preliminary Report and Current Knowledge
April 15, 2020 (scheduled but cancelled due to COVID-19)	CAPT Peter Hartsock, NIH	Science & Practice	Screening for Hepatitis C Virus Infection
May 21, 2020 (scheduled but cancelled due to COVID-19)	LT Kathleen Hartnett, CDC	Journal Club	Syndromic Surveillance for E- Cigarette, or Vaping, Product Use— Associated Lung Injury

State of the Scientists Survey Team (Lead and Operation Unit Lead: LT Bradley Goodwin;
Analytic Unit Lead: LCDR Ginny Bowen)

- Revised the 2019 SoS Survey for use in 2020, including additional information on the Scientist Category related to Surgeon General Priorities and World Health Organization’s Top Global Health Threats.
- Processed, edited, and cleaned data from 2019 survey in preparation for analysis.

- Analytic Unit presented “The State of the Scientists: Results from the Annual Category Survey” to the SciPAC Monthly Meeting–December 3, 2019.
- Published “How long must we wait?” an analysis of time to promotion in the [Winter 2020 Edition](#) of the Scientist Newsletter (Volume 13, Issue 2).
- Submitted additional content for poster presentation at 2020 USPHS Symposium, which was canceled due to COVID-19.
- Submitted the 2020 SoS Survey for OSG approval in November 2019 and obtained approval in July 2020. Note: *Due to COVID-19 and delayed approval process, the 2019 SoS survey was not conducted in 2020. The team plans to field the currently approved SoS survey in January 2021, to capture the extraordinary officer experiences in 2020.*

Surgeon General’s Priority Engagement for Evaluation & Research Support (Community of Practice Coordination Unit Co-Leads: CDR Deborah Dee, LT Lindsay Womack; Dissemination Unit Co-Leads: LCDR Israel Cross, LCDR Shondelle Wilson-Frederick)

- Re-branded the Surgeon General’s Priorities Team as the Surgeon General’s Priority Engagement for Evaluation and Research Support (SG-PEERS), which consists of USPHS Commissioned Corps officers SMEs who are tasked with cultivating communities of practice that support priorities identified by the OSG.
- Specified five core objectives for SG-PEERS, including:
 - Objective 1: *Identify subject matter experts.*
 - Objective 2: *Form, support and maintain communities of practice.*
 - Objective 3: *Develop communities of practice resources.*
 - Objective 4: *Deliverables.*
 - Objective 5: *Act as a force multiplier.*
- Established two primary units to support the SG-PEERS program:
 - Community of Practice Coordination Unit assists in coordinating and facilitating each community of practice
 - Dissemination Unit assists in developing templates and outputs for each community of practice.
- Developed and submitted proposal for the SG-PEERS program, which is currently pending final approval for implementation.
- Identified need to have test-case for rolling out the SG-PEERS community of practice and identified additional needs from COVID-19 including leading a COVID-19 resource sheet collaboration with Readiness SC.

SciPAC Liaison to Health Information Technology Advisory Group (CDR Wei Guo):

- Newly established position helps Scientists connect with officers of different categories but those who may work in similar contexts.
- Participated in HITPG regular monthly calls and relayed the information regarding the need for officers with full knowledge of Health IT in USPHS Deployment.
- Expressed value of Scientist Officers participation in HIT training and specialized deployment roles, emphasizing that several Scientist Officers are also trained in Health IT and are working in Health IT environments such as health informatics, data science, statistics, and epidemiology.

Other SC Accomplishments & Impacts

- Led and collaborated with Readiness SC to develop the *SciPAC COVID-19 and COVID-19 Resources for Officer Support* document to assist officers either preparing for or returning from COVID-19 deployments. This document received approval from OSG on August 3, 2020, and an overview was on the August SciPAC monthly teleconference.
 - Included topics of epidemiology, data sources for multiple metrics, scientific literature, emerging information, laboratory and testing guidance, deployment training and resilience resources, among others.
- Led the compilation of publications and other examples of Scientist Officer contributions to the e-cigarette, or vaping, product-related lung injury (EVALI) Response, a subset of which was featured during the January 2020 SciPAC meeting.

Recommendations:

Bibliography and Publications Team:

- Continue to collaborate with Visibility SC's Manuscript Highlights Team to streamline collection and summarizing of officers' publications and presentations.
- Explore ways to further enhance the utility of the published annual Bibliography Report through trend reporting and presenting high level insight into a decade of reports.

Research and Practice Team:

- Aim to schedule presentations for every other month (minimum 4/year).
- Continue to develop methods for increasing attendance and presentations for webinars that are more interactive and applied to the information that would be useful to Scientist Officers.
- Consider inviting officers from other PACs or groups as attendees or speakers to enhance networking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing.
- Discuss mechanism to regularly promote and highlight findings from the State of the Scientist Survey, contributions of Scientists related to HHS and SG priorities, and real-world issues critical to officer practice (e.g., collaboration with Visibility, Readiness, and other SCs).
- Provide an SOP tailored for team members to better orient them.

State of the Scientists Survey Team:

- Identify ways to streamline future approval processes (e.g., batch requests) to mitigate future delays in survey fielding.
- Work with SciPAC leadership early in the operational year to identify any time-sensitive data elements that may need to be added to the survey, whether new or one-time-only questions.
- Secure SciPAC buy-in on survey administration and engage in larger conversation about consolidating all PAC data collection efforts throughout the year.
- Discuss ways to ensure an 80% response rate and maintain respondent anonymity where possible; some officers were vocal about feeling like their 'right to decline participation' was violated.
- Analytic Unit to aim producing 4-5 data briefs per year, continuing to conduct new analyses throughout the year, and submit for USPHS symposium presentation.

- Budget for poster printing costs in addition to Survey Monkey fees and incentives.

Surgeon General’s Priority Engagement for Evaluation and Research Support (SG-PEERS):

- SG-PEERS should be tested by identifying a test case to leverage the Community of Practice concept for OSG. Ensure success to identify a lower priority topic to demonstrate concept, rather than use for a high-profile topic like e-cigarettes, COVID-19 pandemic, etc. Team should arise in response to a specific OSG need.
- While awaiting OSG approval, continue to identify opportunities to support the 5 core SG-PEERS objectives and related preparations for implementation.
- Ensure recruitment for officers to promote and support the community of practice formation in SG-PEERS.

VISIBILITY

Chair: LCDR Iram Hassan

Co-Chairs: LCDRs Colleen Scott and Ruth Link-Gelles

Major Duties:

- Publish *The Scientist Officer* (SciPAC Newsletter).
- Increase Esprit de Corps through diverse initiatives, including local social events and meet-and-greet events.
- Highlight high-level scientific publications led by Scientist Officers.
- Increase networking and information sharing at scientific conferences among Scientist Officers.
- Increase membership of and moderate the SciPAC Facebook group to help promote awareness and camaraderie within SciPAC by promoting accomplishments of individual Scientist Officers and frequent updates during the PHS Symposium.
- Manage official SciPAC Twitter Handle promoting visibility of Scientist Officers and the USPHS Commissioned Corps by establishing an outward-facing, timely platform for sharing news and accomplishments.
- Document the history of SciPAC.
- Highlight major life events of Scientist Officers.
- Create and present a poster at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- Capture the diverse activities in which Scientist Officers are involved.

Accomplishments and Impacts:

Newsletter Workgroup (Leads: LCDR Hilda Razzaghi and CDR Seth Green)

- Published 3 newsletter editions (4th is currently under editorial review for publication in August). The newsletters were shared with officers via the Scientist listserv and the Scientist website.
- Implemented a new Newsletter template to improve the look and feel of the newsletter.
- Published timely newsletter editions every season including a Spring edition which included submissions related to COVID-19.
- Pending publication of the Summer edition, this operational year will be the first during which there were four editions published.

- Created a CDC mailbox for the newsletter team.
- Developed an internal newsletter SOP for clear communication of newsletter team operations and expectations.

Socials Team (ATL Lead: LCDR Natasha Hollis; DC Lead: LCDR Alesha Harris)

- Held 6 in-person socials and 2 virtual social events.
 - Atlanta events:
 - 2nd Annual Atlanta Halloween Party held at one officer's home; 17 adults (14 Scientist Officers) and 6 children.
 - 3rd Annual Atlanta Mardi Gras bash held at one officer's home; 8 adults (7 Scientist Officers).
 - Trivia night was held at a restaurant, December 2019; 2 Scientist Officers.
 - EIS Officer happy hour, 2019 EIS Fall Course; 7 Scientist Officers.
 - DC events:
 - 3rd Annual DC Halloween Party at a restaurant, October 2019; 2 Scientist Officers.
 - 2nd Annual DC Mardi Gras Party at a restaurant, February 2020; 6 Scientist Officers, 1 HSO Officer.
- Virtual socials:
 - Game Night, May 2020; 4 Scientist Officers (2 cities represented).
 - Zoom Social, July 2020; 8 Scientist Officers (3 cities represented).
- The Atlanta and DC events served to increase camaraderie within the PAC and gave junior officers a less formal atmosphere to ask questions and receive advice from senior officers.
- The new virtual platform implemented as a result of social distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic had positive feedback since it allowed officers from all areas to connect. Participants in the zoom socials were located in DC, New York, and Atlanta.

Publications Team (Lead: LT Francis Annor)

- Successfully collaborated with Science SC's Bibliography Team to send out a single request to officers and jointly perform searches for 2019 officer publications.
- In collaboration with Science SC's Bibliography Team, searched across 342 Scientist Officers and identified 556 publications by 143 Scientist Officers.
- Drafted an article, "Spotlight on Scientist Officer Publications from 2019" submitted for publication in The Scientist Newsletter Summer issue; featuring key findings from 10 high impact articles.
- Shared a comprehensive summary of findings with the Science SC's Bibliography Team; this will enable the Bibliography Team to concentrate on collating other information regarding conferences, presentations, and abstracts.
- Collaborated with the Twitter Team to highlight the 10 selected Scientist Officers' publications via the official SciPAC Twitter account.

Scientist Twitter Team (Lead: LCDR Elaine Knipes)

- Continued to manage the official @PHS_Scientist Twitter handle.
- From August 2019 to July 2020, the SciPAC Twitter handle has:

- Gained 29 new followers for a total of 61 current followers.
- Posted 93 Tweets/Retweets, compared with 25 Tweets/Retweets in 2018-2019.
- Attracted 507 individual profile visits, compared with 441 visits in 2018-2019.
- Generated 44,887 impressions (= views by users on Twitter), compared with 7,676 impressions in 2018-2019.
- Received 904 engagements (= clicks, retweets, replies, follows, likes), compared with 231 engagements in 2018–2019.
- Our all-time top Tweet based on number of impressions was a retweet from @HHSgov re-tweet on December 18, 2019 which received 3,589 impressions!
 - “Brrr... it’s not even winter yet?! Be healthy and watch for helpful tips from @HHSGov. twitter.com/HHSGov/status/....”

Facebook Team (Lead: LCDR Ruth Link-Gelles)

- Used the SciPAC Facebook page to encourage engagement and camaraderie during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Grew the page by 10% over last operational year (now 159 active members).
- Posts have accrued 76 comments and 552 reactions, showing active engagement.
- The SciPAC FB page has been used to promote the work of Scientist Officers, congratulate officers on personal achievements (e.g., welcoming new babies), advertise SciPAC socials in DC and Atlanta, as well as promote new Zoom socials during the pandemic, and welcome newly commissioned Scientists to the Corps.

Symposium Poster Team (Leads: LT Marisa Hast and LT Kerui Xu)

- Worked to highlight the accomplishments and contributions of Scientist Officers to the 2019 response to e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury (EVALI).
- Submitted an article to SciPAC summer newsletter to highlight the contributions of two CEFO officers (from the North Carolina Department of Public Health and the California Department of Public Health) serving in leadership positions in the EVALI response.
- In light of the cancellation of the USPHS Symposium, the SciPAC poster abstract was submitted to the 2020 AMSUS Annual Meeting. Pending acceptance and presentation, this will be the first time the SciPAC poster will be presented outside of the USPHS Training Symposium.

Conferences Team (Lead: LCDR Jessica Tomov)

- Connected 7 Scientist Officers at two meetings: the American Public Health Association meeting in Philadelphia, PA (November 2–6, 2019) and the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene meeting in National Harbor, MD (November 20-24, 2019).
- Created conference agendas highlighting Scientist Officer presentations.
- Established networking opportunities for Scientist Officer attending these 2 conferences.
- Allowed Scientist Officers from across different agencies to meet, share work, and trade advice, increasing cohesion within the PAC.

Fist Bump Team (Lead: LCDR Asha Ivy Stephenson)

- Released a total of 9 Fist Bumps, published in the SciPAC Newsletter Fall, Winter, and Summer editions.
- Disseminated personal and professional accomplishments within the PAC.

History Team (Lead: LCDR Michael Shayne Gallaway)

- Finalized a summary of SciPAC history based on thorough review of historic artifacts and in-person interviews with the intent of disseminating this information widely to Commissioned Corps Scientists.
- Coordinated extensively with the SciPAC webpage development team to update the SciPAC history page with the intent of moving all summarized information, stories, and artifacts online.
- Efforts were initially delayed by the impending transition to a new webpage platform. Efforts were further delayed by the deployment of several team members for COVID-19.
- A simple pdf of the summarized interactive presentation was developed as a potential working solution, but we did not feel this was the optimal outcome to convey all the information captured to highlight SciPAC history.

Visibility Website Liaison (Liaison: LCDR Colleen Scott)

- Participated in the SciPAC website review process, verifying the Visibility SC's webpages, content, and links.
- Reviewed and processed website change requests for the Visibility SC; uploading new content and modifying/cleaning older content.
- Continued supporting 508 compliance for Newsletter Team website content.

Recommendations:

General:

- Develop team pages on max.gov and store internal SOPs, letter of appreciation templates, listserv announcement templates, and other SC-specific documents on team-specific child pages.
- Update the Visibility SC website content.
 - Reference to "happy hour" under social teams needs to be removed.
 - Include descriptions for all team activities (not all teams are currently mentioned).

Newsletter Team:

- Continue to streamline the publication process for continued timely quarterly publications.
 - Utilize a simplified standard template.
 - Incorporate 508 compliance review early in the publication process.
 - Ensure articles are cleared by the appropriate responsible parties/OPDIVs.
- Reevaluate team roles and reduce number of team members. Editorial board members who has served over three years are asked to rotate off.
 - Team members should be required to play active roles such as contribution of articles, management of columns, article tracking.

Socials Team:

- Teams should not feel obligated to repeat past events or host multiple large parties in one operational year.
- Given new restrictions on sharing Officer home addresses, socials may be better attended

in public places.

- Photos with captions or short articles should be prepared and submitted to the newsletter inbox for all events.
- Virtual platforms for social events can continue for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond as it encourages connection of officers from multiple geographic locations.

Publications Team:

- Lessons learned from the collaboration with the Science SC Bibliography Team will enhance future search efforts across the two teams.
- Collaborate with the Science SC Bibliography Team to identify additional methods to showcase high impact publications identified (e.g., SciPAC presentations, analyses to group related publications by topic, impact factor metrics, etc.)
- Organize and/or update documentation (SOP) for new OY Team members.

Twitter Team:

- Team should follow-up regularly on Tweets in queue for approvals with chain of command to ensure readily available content for Tweeting.
- Team should aim for producing 10 original Tweets with photos per month (minimum).
- Team should aim to increase number of followers on Twitter and recruit Scientist Officers to follow the handle.

Facebook Team:

- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Facebook appears to be an excellent and viable platform that can be used to connect officers from all regions.
- Continue to build the SciPAC Facebook presence and engagement with officers.
 - Can post probing questions on a regular basis to trigger conversation threads.
 - Encourage engagement of OBC participants.

Fist Bump Team:

- This OY, fist bump announcements were not shared on social media. We need to implement internal procedures to share fist bump announcements outside of the newsletter (e.g., Facebook).

History Team:

- Disseminate summary information on the SciPAC History page during the next OY.
- Afterwards, the team's activities will be suspended until further notice.

Conferences Team:

- Next OY will be a challenge due to conferences going virtual. The team will need to adjust activities accordingly.

WEBSITE

Chair: CDR Adrienne Goodrich-Doctor

Co-Chair: LCDR Xinzhi Zhang

Executive Secretary: LCDR Elizabeth Edwards

Major Duties:

- Ensure that a useful format and structure to the website content is established and maintained.
- Work in conjunction with EB and SC Liaisons in the development and updating of website content.
- Maintain a secured shared website for the EB and each SC that is accessible by members designated by the Chair of each SC to maintain archived documents.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

Review and update all content on SciPAC website

- Website SC Liaisons and other responsible parties were asked to review content and documents on their associated SC pages and provide updates. In response, 11 website change requests were submitted, 10 requests were completed, and one request (fixing the back button on the site) could not be completed (after consulting ICAC it was determined that the request was out of scope due to system technical issues that are outside of SC control).
- The Special Projects Team conducted a proactive review of content and documents shared through the listserv and reported in SciPAC meeting minutes to determine if there was information missing from the website.
 - The Team found several items but confirmed that all relevant items were posted on the site. This exercise confirmed that the website is currently up to date as of July 26, 2020.

Revise and update the Website SC SOP

- Continued updates to the Website SC SOP at the request of the EB.
 - Updates were made to the Editor Team designations, Editor Team roles and responsibilities were clarified, and the SC membership requirements were updated.
 - New content was added to include responsibilities for the Co-Chair, Executive Secretary (new position), Website SMEs, Website Liaisons, and procedures were added to ensure all web content and documents are reviewed for Personally Identifiable Information (PII) prior to submission to the Website SC and prior to posting.
- The updated SOP was submitted to the EB on October 31, 2019 for review and approval. The final version was approved and posted on September 1, 2020.

Revamp history page on SciPAC website

- Received content from the Visibility SC on August 26, 2019; Website SC leadership and Website Editor Team evaluated the content and provided comments and suggestions.
- A proposed webpage development timeline was established, and the Website Editor team began drafting changes to the site.
- This project was first put on hold due to pending changes to the website platform; however, the Editor Team established a workaround to continue development of the site.

- Development continued until the project put on hold until next operational year given the COVID-19 response.

Increase visibility of the SciPAC website (in response to results from the Annual Survey)

- To ensure Scientist Officers are aware of the resources available on the website, the following information and links were shared through the SciPAC listserv:
 - September 2019 – Shared website updates regarding the website redesign; updated National Prevention Strategy page; updated voting members, SC leadership, and liaisons; new 2019–2020 Executive Board; recent edition of the Scientist Newsletter and posting of the 2017-2018 SciPAC Annual Report.
 - October 2019 – Shared current and new content on the website to assist officers preparing for promotion (i.e., 2020 benchmarks, Officer Statement (OS) guidance, Reviewing Official Statement (ROS) instructions, Commissioned Officer Effectiveness Report (COER) Instructions and Scientist Officer CV Formatting Guidelines).
- In addition, shared updated pages within the meeting minutes, during SciPAC meetings, and shared links to newly posted content with those who made the request, so that the link could be shared in the meeting minutes and through the SciPAC listserv, when applicable.

Updated and finalized written procedures for Editor Teams

- Revised to include additional sources to assist with checking accessibility and 508 compliance.
- Added instructions for adding new pages specifically for deployment narratives and SciPAC awards.

Provide website training to SC members and Website SC liaisons

- “SciPAC Website 101” training was shared with all Website SC members and website Liaisons to provide a refresher to returning members and an introduction to new members. The training included an overview of website policy including 508 compliance and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) requirements and general procedures for updating the website. LCDR Xinzhi Zhang led two sessions (12/11/2019 and 12/18/2019) to provide additional information and to answer questions regarding the content of the training.
 - Additionally, LCDR Zhang joined a Visibility SC call to address Website related questions (January 21, 2020).

Archival of information

- Proactively developed a plan to archive website documents and pages.
- Developed procedures for removing and archiving outdated materials from the website.
- Archived current SciPAC website documents/webpages.
 - All active pages and documents (240 files/website pages in 32 folders) were archived on max.gov.
 - Responded to three requests from the EB to archive documents.

Implemented changes based on the revamp of the Website Analytics Report

- Used analytic software to analyze the SciPAC Website function and utility over the past year compared with previous year's performance. Completed draft reports in December 2019 and in August 2020.
- Determined the impact of COVID-19 on website use using analysis of overall summary statistics, audience information, acquisition information, and behavior.
- Developed an SOP for use of analytic software by the SciPAC Website Committee members to analyze function and utility. Presented to Website Committee on August 13, 2020.

Additional Accomplishments

- Completion of 72 total website change requests (some including changes to multiple pages and development of new webpages) as of - 20% increase over last year although work was reduced due to pending updates to the website platform.
- Served as lead for SciPAC review of the new USPHS.gov site – established the review template and solicited consolidated comments/suggestions for SciPAC leadership.
- Per request from OSG and SciPAC leadership, Website SC accompanied the SciPAC Chair in a meeting with the OSG Communications Team to discuss use of the website, recent website changes and lessons learned from maintenance of the website to inform decisions and the development of the new USPHS website design.
- Developed a prototype for a SciPAC events calendar on max.gov; continued development was put on hold due to the COVID-19 response.

Changes:

- Removed the max.gov Lead.
- Established an Archives Team.
- Piloted a process to perform a proactive review of the listserv and meeting minutes to identify information and documents that may be beneficial for addition to the website and to ensure that the website is up to date.

Recommendations:

- Phase 1 of the Website Homepage Revamp is complete. Movement to Phase 2 was placed on hold due to pending changes to the website platform. When approved to move forward with Phase 2 it should include addition of a slideshow that captures the PAC in action. It may also include a list of upcoming events and an option for website users to provide confidential comments to the PAC.
- Coordinate with SC to determine other options for sharing presentations with Scientist Officers – currently considering sharing presentations via the newsletter and max.gov.
- Continue working with the Visibility SC to revamp the History page.
- Work with the Policy SC and EB as needed to finalize the SciPAC Website Information Update Standard Operating Procedures.
- Continue development of a SciPAC Calendar on the max.gov to ensure Scientist Officers are aware of events and important deadlines. Test mechanism that may allow officers to subscribe, so that they are notified by e-mail of events and deadlines. Develop written procedures and a mechanism to track team activities.
- Develop written procedures for the duties of the Archives Team.

- Determine how to increase awareness and use of max.gov.
- Finalize organization and structure of archived content on max.gov.
- Develop a written process and plan for proactively review of content and documents shared with the SC through the listserv and received by other channels to determine if the information should be shared on the website. Work with the appropriate Website SC Liaison to prepare website change request.
- Coordinate with the Awards SC, Visibility SC, and other SCs through the Website Liaisons as needed to increase visibility of Scientist Officers that receive awards (other than SciPAC annual awards) – include picture and/or award information on the SciPAC website.
- Present the website (highlighting major changes) during SciPAC meeting to help ensure Scientist Officers are aware of the resources available on the website.

C. LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioned Corps Women’s Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB) LIAISON

Liaison: LCDR Marissa Zwald

The CCWIAB Liaison is a Scientist Officer who is appointed by the Scientist CPO to serve as the Scientist Officer voting member on the CCWIAB and a liaison to the Scientist PAC. The Scientist Officer CCWIAB voting member term is 3 years, where LCDR Zwald’s term spans January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022.

Major Duties:

- Represent the interests of women Scientist Officers to the CCWIAB, attending both CCWIAB and SciPAC meetings, and reporting back to each respective group.
- Chair or Co-Chair a committee or ad hoc initiative during their term on the Board. LCDR Zwald currently chairs the CCWIAB Anti-Harassment Committee.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Provided our category with monthly updates on relevant CCWIAB activities to ensure our category is well-informed.
- Offered information and opportunities for Scientists to become more actively involved in CCWIAB.
- Increased Scientist Officer participation in CCWIAB committees.
- Kept the SciPAC informed about the publication of updated resource guides on the CCWIAB Resource Website (<https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/ccwiab/ccwiabresources.aspx>).
- Helped communicate women officers’ concerns between SciPAC and CCWIAB, particularly surrounding: pregnancy-related issues; weight loss for postpartum officers; maintaining special pay clinical hours while on maternity leave; harassment and discrimination in the workplace; COVID-19 deployment challenges unique to female officers; and mental health issues.
- The Pregnancy Committee within CCWIAB partnered with the Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG) to develop recommendations to better align current PHS sick leave and leave of absence policies with recent changes to the Department of Defense’s parental leave program; consider changes to the paid parental

leave policy for federal employees outlined in the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act; and reflect the diverse demographics of PHS families. This document is currently under OSG review.

- The Health and Wellness Committee within CCWIAB partnered with the PHS Women’s Leadership Support Group to develop a resource guide for female officers diagnosed with breast cancer to help navigate and understand the various policies and resources relevant to a breast cancer diagnosis. This document is currently under OSG review.
- The Anti-Harassment and Pregnancy Committees within CCWIAB partnered to develop a memo upon the request of OSG to describe potential benefits of mental health care and treatment and share PHS mental health-related policies and resources to officers. This document is currently under OSG review.
- The Anti-Harassment and Pregnancy Committees within CCWIAB partnered to develop recommendations to better support female officers deployed for COVID-19, including addressing challenges related to safety while deployed and returning home from a deployment, improving supports for female officers with unique dependent care responsibilities, and supporting female officers on pregnancy or breastfeeding waivers navigate deployment requests. This document is currently under full CCWIAB review.

Recommendations:

- In addition to the resource guides, policy recommendations, and white papers developed in the 2019–2020 operational year that are currently under review by OSG, the following CCWIAB products developed in 2018–2019 remain under review by OSG. These documents require follow-up, and each should be published on the CCWIAB Resource Website once approved.
 - Developed by the Pregnancy Committee within CCWIAB, a resource guide for pregnancy loss, providing one document that consolidates a great deal of information for officers and their dependents on the subject.
 - Developed by the Pregnancy Committee within CCWIAB, policy recommendations for OSG to consider for female officers to achieve optimal breastfeeding practices.
 - Developed by the Health and Wellness Committee within CCWIAB, policy recommendations for OSG to consider expanding the current female hair grooming standards to align with recent updates to Naval Grooming Standards.
 - Developed by the Health and Wellness Committee within CCWIAB, policy recommendations for OSG to consider expanding female uniform shoe options to reduce heel height, forefoot width, and heel shape.
- Under new leadership, the Anti-Harassment Committee within CCWIAB reprioritized their activities this operational year to include the following, which will require increased participation and support from female officers in the next operational year to implement.
 - Develop resources and training materials about harassment and discrimination for officers attending Officer Basic Course.
 - Compile PHS and agency-specific policies and trainings on harassment and discrimination.
 - Partner with SOAGDAG to host a webinar on workplace harassment and discrimination.

COA LIAISON

Liaison: LCDR Folasade Kembi

Major Duties:

- Serve as a member of the Board of Directors of National COA and attend all meetings.
- Provide updates to the Scientists at SciPAC meetings or as needed to ensure our category is informed of critical issues that impact the Corps and COA activities in responding to the issues.
- Foster communications between SciPAC members and the COA Board of Directors.
- Encourage Scientists to participate as a committee member on one of the National COA committees.

Accomplishments & Impact:

- Provided monthly updates on critical issues that the COA has been addressing at the national level.
- Offered information and opportunities for Scientists to become more actively involved in the COA at the local and national level.
- Kept Scientists informed of relevant issues on which COA is engaged.
- Ensured that Scientists are represented in the COA Board of Directors.

Recommendations:

- Encourage SciPAC members to contact the COA liaison about changes they wish to see in COA.

JOAG LIAISON

Liaison: LCDR Gwendolyn Hudson

Major Duties:

The duties of the JOAG Liaison include representing the interests of Scientist Officers to JOAG, regularly attending both JOAG and SciPAC general body meetings, and reporting back to each respective group.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Provided the Scientist Category with monthly updates on relevant JOAG activities to ensure our category is well informed. Provided information and opportunities for our Scientists to become more actively involved in JOAG.
 - Informed SciPAC of the release of two Junior Officer Chronicle publications.
 - Announced call-in information for all Journeyman Speaker Series and JOAG General Meetings at every SciPAC meeting.
 - Provided information about JOAG award deadline and the self-nomination process during two SciPAC meetings.
- Provided highlights of junior Scientist Officers' contributions to JOAG projects and events.
- Provided status of JOAG-activities for COF Symposium (postponed until 2021), which helped officers keep Symposium costs down and maximize their time at Symposium.

- SciPAC was informed of the closure of JOAG Merchandise Store and ceasing of JOAG planning activities for 2020 COF Symposium.
- Actively recruited junior Scientist Officers to participate in JOAG and consider applying for Voting Membership by providing information on JOAG Meet and Greets and Voting Membership eligibility and application materials.
 - Announced meeting information for at least six JOAG-organized Meet and Greets occurring across the Nation.
 - Informed junior Scientist Officers of JOAG Voting Membership application processes and deadlines during two SciPAC meetings.
 - At least one junior Scientist Officer applied and was competitively selected for JOAG At-Large Voting Membership for the 2020–2022 term years.

Recommendations:

- Continue to allow time for Liaison reports.
- At the beginning of the year, allow Liaisons to give a brief overview of the mission and purpose of their organization or group.

PREVENTION THROUGH ACTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PACE)

Liaison: CDR Erika C. Odom

Major Duties:

- Attend PACE meetings as SciPAC Liaison.
- Create reports for SciPAC about PACE activities and PACE leadership updates.
- Update PACE section of SciPAC website.
- Present on PACE to SciPAC general membership.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Attended bi-monthly PACE leadership meetings to capture updates on the evolving structure of PACE, opportunities for leadership within the PACE and SGETs (Surgeon General’s Education Team), requests for participation in community activities, and calls for award self-nominations.
- Provided 12 monthly updates and reports from PACE leadership meetings to the SciPAC general body.
- Updated the SciPAC National Prevention Strategies website to include information on PACE providing visibility to the PACE program and indicating its origin in SciPAC.
- Utilized SciPAC listserv to post five notices about PACE activities and calls for award self-nominations.

Recommendations:

- Determine a mechanism to account for Scientist Officer participation in PACE activities.

PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (PSYPAG) LIAISON

Liaison: LCDR Debra Chen

Major Duties:

- Identify important PsyPAG information that should be shared with SciPAC members (e.g., information about awards, membership, training, and mentorship programs).
- Forward important information to the SciPAC Secretary to be sent to the SciPAC listserv.
- Respond to questions regarding PsyPAG concerns from SciPAC members.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Advised SciPAC members of the Junior and Senior Psychologist Award application process.
- Advised SciPAC members of trainings available to psychologists.
- Advised SciPAC members of the restart of the PsyPAG mentorship program.

Recommendations:

- Create a timeline of when to send announcements to SciPAC members as many are annual and occur at similar times each year. This will increase the incoming Liaison’s awareness of the type and timing of announcements that are appropriate for sharing with the SciPAC listserv.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER DIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP (SOAGDAG) LIAISON

Liaison: LCDR Luis Iturriaga

Major Duties:

- Provide information to SciPAC members on SOAGDAG activities.
- Collaborate with SciPAC members on SOAGDAG projects.
- Training and education.

Accomplishments & Impacts:

- Educational Seminar Series engaged speakers around the theme of HIV eradication.
- First edition of the SOAGDAG Yearbook is being finalized and will include all Voting Members and the Executive Committee.
- OSG requested SOAGDAG to assist with being a force multiplier for public health priorities; smoking cessation is the initial priority topic.
- The policy workgroup conducted a literature review examining prevalence of tobacco use among the LGBT community.
- The SOAGDAG Pride Virtually Together Pool Party was successful, allowing members to socialize, tell stories, and laugh virtually poolside.
- Junior officers in Tuba City, AZ hosted a Zoom Meet-and-Greet on the topic “Family Readiness Plan: A resource for USPHS officers preparing for deployment.”

Changes:

- Several SOAGDAG projects were put on hold due to multiple officer deployments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations:

- Provide an introduction of SOAGDAG and its mission and formulate goals in the beginning of the operational year.

- Solicit other committees for SOAGDAG voting membership.

D. CONCLUSION

This year, in collaboration with our Chief Scientist Officer, SciPAC focused on aligning with changing priorities and policies, highlighting the pivotal role Scientists occupy in the Commissioned Corps, and adapting to the new environment and operational tempo dictated by the COVID-19 response. Next year, SciPAC should focus on helping its officers comply with new policies and with policy changes in order to remain on active duty as an asset to the nation, and continuing to improve efficiency of approval for documents, including seeking delegation of broad approval authority to the Chief Professional Officer. This will enable bold new initiatives (e.g., SG-PEERS, advanced readiness) to flourish, ultimately furthering our mission and empowering officers to find innovative ways to advance the aims of the Commissioned Corps.

Respectfully submitted February 2021

CAPT Loren Rodgers
Scientist PAC Chair 2019–2020