



# Nurse Corps News

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## Director's Corner



Dear Nurse Corps Colleagues,

It seems like just yesterday that I became the Director of the Navy Nurse Corps...with the blink of an eye the past three years have simply flown by. As you know, I will be transitioning from active duty after 32 years in the Navy Nurse Corps at the Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial on August 1st. If you haven't ever been to WIMSA you need to visit to appreciate the rich history of our Corps. As I look back on my blessed career, it has truly been a wonderful, exciting, and unforgettable journey...if I could do it all over again, I would!!!

As I reflect on the past three years, I am amazed at the many activities and achievements accomplished by the Navy Nursing Team--active, reserve, and civilian. During my first two years as the Director, I had the unique and very special opportunity to testify at the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense (SAC-D). This annual opportunity provided the Navy, Army, and Air Force Nursing Chiefs a voice to thank Congress for their support and to discuss our successes. It was a great honor for me to represent all of you during this testimony. With the loss of Senator Inouye this past November, we did not testify this year. We were prepared to do so though, and in lieu of a Congressional testimony I am publishing an amended document as the "State of the Navy Nurse Corps 2013." I urge you to review it as it highlights the many collective achievements of our Navy Nursing Team.

The focus of the testimony in years past was to highlight your activities and accomplishments across the breadth and depth of the Navy Nursing Team. I enjoyed reporting your successes and updating the SAC-D on progress we were making in support of our strategic goals. Over the past three years, they were numerous and your collective efforts were nothing short of remarkable. Please know I extend my heartfelt thanks for all you've done to move our profession forward.

I also want to publically thank the Nurse Corps Office staff for their unwavering hard work, dedication and loyalty during my tenure. CAPT (sel) Valerie Morrison has been my Executive Assistant (EA) in my roles as Director, Navy Nurse Corps, Deputy Chief, Wounded, Ill and Injured, and Deputy Chief, Installations and Logistics. I could not have succeeded without her attention to detail, focused efforts and friendship...did I mention she also completed her Doctorate in Business Administration while being the EA? CAPT Sarah Martin has been a stellar Deputy Director...I am incredibly fortunate to have shared the leadership of the Nurse Corps with her. She is an incredible officer and leader, and I wish her many successes as she transitions to be the first Navy Nurse Corps officer to serve as the Deputy Commander, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.



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## Director's Corner (Cont)



RDML Maggie Rykowski has reshaped the Reserve Corps to meet the current requirements and provide a fully integrated "One Force" Team. CAPTs Lisa Houser, Brenda Davis, and Anne Bloom have been essential to ensuring our Corps progresses professionally in concert with the many national nursing and Military Health System changes. As the Nurse Corps Fellow, LCDR Toni McCrae has ensured that Navy Nursing is reaching out to meet recruitment and retention priorities, and we are not only meeting but are exceeding our goals. Last, but not least, our action officer, LT Todd Uhlman has been a stalwart in the Nurse Corps offices. Often behind the scenes, he has ensured documents move forward and that we are all connected during Video Teleconferences.

I also want to thank the Senior Nurse Executives/Directors of Nursing Service around the globe. You are the heart of nursing leadership and we would not succeed without your dedication to the practice of nursing and your commitment to development of nurses. I am always amazed at the caliber of nurses who readily step to the plate for this important leadership role. The same is true of our Specialty Leaders. I have been incredibly appreciative of your keen insights and wisdom in your respective areas of practice.

Without a doubt, one of the things I enjoyed most as the Director, was meeting as many nurses as possible and seeing first hand, your accomplishments, improvements, and commitment to patients and the work at hand. I was lucky during my tenure, to visit many of our hospitals, clinics, and operational sites. Collectively, the Navy Nurse Corps is innovative, energetic, and committed to each other and our patients. Your enthusiasm was readily apparent in the pride displayed during my site visits, and I will treasure the many fond memories made at each site. I can say, I often returned to BUMED energized and motivated by your passion and dedication. I look forward to being able to revisit these memories through pictures and through reunions with the Navy Nurse Corps Association.

As I transition from active duty, I will enjoy watching the continued forward progress of the Nurse Corps. I leave active service knowing you are in good hands and I am encouraged by the strength of leadership and commitment to excellence I see every day. I thank every one of you for making this last assignment my most rewarding. I am honored, humbled, and very proud to have served as your Director and I will forever be grateful for the opportunity.

RADM Elizabeth Niemyer, NC, USN  
 Director, Navy Nurse Corps  
[State of the Nurse Corps 2013](#)



## BUMED Chief of Staff



Greetings to all Navy Nurses from Northern Virginia.

Mid-July already and soon we will gather to honor RADM Niemyer and recognize her tremendous accomplishments as a Navy Nurse and as our 23rd Director. I, like so many, am grateful for her mentorship, friendship and support over the years. She and her team have worked tirelessly to advocate on our behalf and to steer the Nurse Corps' strategic path.

I am honored, humbled, awed, but nevertheless excited to follow in her footsteps as the Acting Nurse Corps Director. There is a clear path and a solid foundation on which we will build. I thank those who have participated in our goal groups. They have worked hard and achieved much. I look forward to hearing their reports in the coming weeks and using their input to guide our next steps.



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## BUMED Chief of Staff (Cont)



We serve in a time of significant and fast paced change. Navy Nurses are doing incredible things, world-wide, every-day, 24-7. The work is hard, but ever so important and worthwhile. Thank you for all you do. Please take care of yourself and one another to remain focused, strong and well balanced. I am so very proud to be a Navy Nurse and grateful for the opportunity to serve along with you.

R. J. McCormick-Boyle  
RDML, SHCE, USN  
Chief of Staff (MO9B)

Bureau of Medicine and Surgery



## Meet the New Assistant to the Director for Reserve Corps Nurses



Irene Katharina Weaver is a 1977 graduate of Brockton Hospital School of Nursing, Brockton, MA. In 1982 she received her Bachelor's of Science Degree in Nursing, from Salve Regina University, Newport, R.I. and in 1994 she received her Master's of Science in Nursing, from Northeastern University, Boston, MA. She was commissioned as an Ensign, Nurse Corps, in the Selected Reserves in 1986.

As a Direct Commissioned Officer, CAPT Weaver began serving as assistant training officer and lead physical examination coordinator for Navy Reserve (NR) Naval Hospital Newport. Other roles included that of deputy officer-in-charge and training officer for NR Fleet Hospital 07, and program coordinator for NR Naval Hospital Portsmouth, where she was a key figure with the incorporation of the hospital corpsmen to work within the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Providence, RI, in 1992.



CAPT Weaver moved overseas in 1994, where she joined NR Naval Hospital Guam, working in staff education and training before joining the Task Force Commander of Logistics Support Forces, Seventh Fleet, in Singapore as an Administrative Assistant, Reserve Component. In 1998 she moved to Europe where she was gained by Naval Hospital Sigonella, Italy, as a Reservist, taking on multiple roles, specifically in staff education and training, special projects and clinical support. In 2001, the selected reserve billet was moved into the Overseas Peacetime Contributory Support Group—Europe, where CAPT Weaver assumed the role as department head for training, while still maintaining her drill status and presence at Naval Hospital Sigonella until 2004 when she returned to the United States.

CAPT Weaver joined NR BUMED as administrative officer in 2004. After completing this tour, she was recruited to work with NR US Northern Command HQ by the Combatant Commander Surgeon General as the department head in medical operations. She joined NR Naval Hospital Portsmouth, Det M, in 2006, as the unit's nurse leader and in August, 2009, became assistant officer in charge for the detachment.

In November 2009, she was offered the Senior Nurse Executive position for Operational Health Support Unit Camp Lejeune HQ, by the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Reserve Component. CAPT Weaver is authorized to wear the Navy Commendation Medal (one award), National Defense Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Naval Marine Corps Overseas Service Medal with silver star.

In her civilian career, CAPT Weaver has taught in multiple University settings, in Europe and the United States, and currently consults on various projects while continuing to educate nurses in various trauma programs combining the civilian and military components within the Naval community.





## Examining the Relationship Between Workplace Stress and Intent to Leave of Navy Nurses



I would like to begin by thanking the many nurses who took time out of their busy schedules to complete this survey, issued March-April 2012. It is an honor to share in your perceptions regarding this important topic. I would also like to thank Admiral Niemyer for sponsoring the survey, and CAPT Martin and all the Senior Nurse Executives (SNEs) for sharing the survey. I have presented the finding to the Nurse Corps Office Leadership, and Admiral Niemyer asked that I also share with the SNEs in a future SNE telephone conference. Thank you to CDR Michele Kane, PhD, as well for being a great mentor and friend throughout this process, and to CDR Stacey Fridley, who watched me sweat bullets defending my work to my dissertation committee. All of you were integral to my success, and I am forever grateful!

510 surveys were returned, with 465 meeting subject criteria – Nurse Corps officers in the ranks of Lieutenant Commander, Lieutenant, and Lieutenant Junior Grade assigned to MTFs aligned under BSO-18, or the Bureau of Medicine & Surgery. This represented a 28% response rate of the 1,677 nurses potentially meeting criteria in accordance with Nurse Corps personnel data as of March 2012.

Demographic data revealed:

- 53% held certifications in their primary nursing specialization
- 42% worked in medical-surgical nursing areas
- 42% were in the rank of Lieutenant
- 58% worked in Naval Hospitals
- 77% worked in MTFs located in the continental United States
- Mean age was 36 years
- 63% were female
- 81% were White
- 70% held only a Bachelor's degree

Findings demonstrated the sample group reported perceived workplace stress as “*occasionally stressful*” with four subscales rated above the group mean—problems relating to supervisors, workload, conflict with physicians, and patients and their families. Furthermore, nurses who care for wounded warriors, who do not work in critical wartime nursing specializations, and nurses who have never deployed reported perceived workplace stress above the group mean. Findings also revealed the sample group reported they were “*likely*” to stay on active duty. Nurses who do not care for wounded warriors, who do not work in critical wartime nursing specializations, and who have never deployed reported ratings of intent to leave above the group mean.

Moderate effect size correlations were found between perceived workplace stress and intent to leave active duty for the entire sample population, and also increased effect size correlations for those likely/highly likely to care for wounded warriors, those who work in critical wartime nursing specializations, and those who have deployed one or more times.

Because a correlation was found between perceived workplace stress and intent to leave active duty, recommendations center on the facilitation of healthy work environments with focus on the four areas reported above the group mean. Research in the literature demonstrated organizational initiatives which promote educational advancement, certification, research, and mentorship promotes organizational commitment, alleviates perceived workplace stress, and aids in career growth and retention (Hodges, Keeley, & Troyan, 2008; Laschinger & Finegan, 2005; Leach, 2005; Nogueras, 2006).

### Conflict with Physicians

Research demonstrated common barriers to not reporting disruptive behavior included intimidation, fear of retaliation, and belief the behavior will not change (Rosenstein, 2002). Communication and collaboration issues are the most noted cause for conflict between nurses and physicians (Sirota, 2007). Nurses who lack assertiveness to communicate their opinions when interacting with physicians experience increased anxiety and stress (Nelson, King, & Brodine, 2008).

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## Examining the Relationship Between Workplace Stress and Intent to Leave of Navy Nurses (Cont)



**Knowledge is Power**—Provide education and training to nurse leaders and junior officers on policy regarding disruptive behavior by members of the healthcare team.

**Practice Makes Perfect**—Consider incorporating scenario-based exercises which require multidisciplinary teamwork and communication between nurses and physicians into Nurse Internship/orientation programs.

**Use Existing Resources**—Review current implementation achievements of TeamSTEPS® to understand which clinical areas of the 28 MTFs are successfully using this system. Highlight these implementation successes as best practices for others to emulate.

### Problems Relating to Supervisors

Officials in organizations with the greatest success in minimizing workplace stress from leadership related issues emphasized preparation for those in leadership positions and an organizational structure designed to promote trust, value, and support for the employee contribution (Kleinmann, 2004). Preparation for leadership positions must incorporate knowledge on staff feedback, social support, meaningful recognition, and encouragement (Kanste, 2008). Novice nurses are more susceptible to workplace stress due to limited skill and experience handling a full patient load, multitasking, and triaging priorities, and described feeling unsupported, overwhelmed, and hung out to dry (Christmas, 2008).

**Knowledge is Power**—Review and consider formalizing mechanisms used to prepare nurses to assume leadership positions at all levels of the organization.

**Practice Makes Perfect**—Consider standardizing nursing practice/policy and the incorporation of shared governance through the creation of an enterprise level Executive Committee of Nursing Services instruction.

**Use Existing Resources**—Review and consider updating the Clinical Leadership Model to match the current strategic environment, followed by remarketing of the model to Navy nurses as the paradigm from which to pattern their career progression.

### Workload

There is a growing evidence base linking patient safety and the patient experience to the health, safety, and wellbeing of the health care staff (Sunley, 2010). Chaotic work environments contribute to frustration and dissatisfaction and may negatively affect the retention of nurses (Christmas, 2008). The creation of a stable nursing work environment and fostering team member socialization and decision latitude were reported as means to decreasing perceived levels of workplace stress (Lavoie-Tremblay, Wright, Desforges, Gelinias, Marchionni, & Drevniok, 2008). Nurses rely on one another for support because they understand the nature and emotional attachment of nurse work. Programs that bolster a supportive work environment enhance the nurses' sense of personal value, connectedness, and commitment to work (McNeely, 1996; Miliken, Clements, Tillman, 2007; Schwab, 1996). Collegiality and civility are key components to a healthy work environment (Laschinger, Finegan, & Wik, 2009).

**Knowledge is Power**—Provide mentorship through Career Development Boards regarding collateral duties and time management of “*must do*” projects versus “*nice to do*” projects.

**Practice Makes Perfect**—Consider the implementation of standard metrics to assist MTF Senior Nurse Executives and other nurse leaders to understand and track patient acuity and nurse staffing.

**Use Existing Resources**—Advocate for nursing representation in facility renovations to ensure influence on facility design for appropriateness of nursing workflow and promote the design of staff break rooms which encourage socialization, relaxation, and resilience.

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## Examining the Relationship Between Workplace Stress and Intent to Leave of Navy Nurses (Cont)



### Patients and Their Families

Nurses are at high risk for workplace violence and are among the most assaulted workers in the American workforce. Violence is primarily generated by patients, patients' families, and visitors (National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice, 2007). The most common form of violence experienced by nurses is verbal abuse. The effects of verbal abuse can lead to increased stress, lowered morale, decreased job satisfaction, and altered job performance (Pejic, 2005). Adaptive coping is facilitated when nurses have opportunity to express their emotions (Palmer, 2008).

**Knowledge is Power**—Provide education and training to junior officers on nursing staff's rights and responsibilities, and how to handle abuse by patients and families.

**Practice Makes Perfect**—Incorporate scenario-based exercises to practice communication techniques in which patients and/or their families are being disruptive/abusive to build nursing staff confidence to handle these situations at their lowest level and at the time of occurrence.

**Use Existing Resources**—Similar to support programs used with nurses who work on oncology units, consider the incorporation of training for all nurses on the care of wounded warriors. Include discussions of attitudes regarding life with disfiguring or disabling injuries to build a nurses' personal awareness of their views, and to develop positive attitudes and resilience when caring for wounded warriors.

This research found a relationship existed between perceived workplace stress and intent to leave active duty. Furthermore, this research found that caring for wounded warriors, working in a critical wartime nursing specialization, and having deployed one or more times moderates the relationship, increasing the effect. Other findings for continued research included a demonstrated relationship between perceived workplace stress and intent to leave for nurses working in non-critical wartime nursing specializations, and for nurses who have never deployed. The effects of perceived workplace stress can be impacted through empowerment, advanced education, specialty certification, participation in professional organizations, and evidenced based practice/nursing research in accordance with the Navy Nurse Corps' Clinical Leadership Model. Continued exploration of this important topic in future research is worthy in order to influence positive job satisfaction and retention of junior officer, and in branding the Navy Nurse Corps as an employer of choice.

Please see attachment for references cited in this article.



Dr. Valerie A. Morrison  
CDR, NC, USN



### SeaPerch Challenge 2013



On June 8<sup>th</sup> the Navy City Outreach-Los Angeles sponsored the SeaPerch Challenge 2013, an innovative underwater robotics program that provides students and teachers the resources needed to assemble an underwater remotely operated vehicle. Students representing 20 Los Angeles County middle and high schools convened on the USS IO-WA (BB-61) to compete in the challenge, which consisted of a myriad of events to showcase their mastery of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, and is sponsored by the Office of Naval Research, the United States Navy, and the Association of Unmanned Vehicles Systems International Foundation.

Science and technology are cornerstones of everyday life, from our phones and tablets, to the innovative robotics being utilized in healthcare and warfare. SeaPerch harnesses young students' inquisitiveness of science and technology with the intent to transcend that curiosity into future inventions and technological advancements.

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## SeaPerch Challenge 2013 (Cont)



Science and technology are the cornerstones of everyday life, from our mobile phones and tablets, to the innovative robotics being utilized in healthcare and warfare. The SeaPerch program harnesses young students' inquisitiveness of science and technology with the intent to transcend that curiosity into future inventions and technological advancements. The benefits of the program include meeting the designated national learning outcomes of propulsion, buoyancy, depth measurement, and ergonomics, and supporting diversity by presenting the possibilities of technical careers to minorities, girls, and underrepresented populations.

Many participating naval organizations were present such as ROTC and BUMED, and Navy Medical Center San Diego Command Diversity Officer LT Eric Banker and other staff assisted with logistical details, booth set-up, and transportation associated with the event. The coalescence of Naval service members from various commands including RDML Susan Adams, Deputy Commander Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, LCDR Anthony Tran, Navy City Outreach, and a variety of science and math teachers demonstrated their commitment, dedication, and belief that our youth are an integral component in this woven tapestry called technology.



From Left to Right: LCDR Brandon Williams, ENS Christopher Bunag, ENS Leslie Caputo, ENS Virginia Stevens, LT Eric Banker, HN Elysia Curry, and ENS Pamela Johnson with the winners from South El Monte High School



RDML Susan Adams looks on as LTJG Christina Collazo and ENS Nicolle Comia judge the students' the navigation of the pool obstacles.

The SeaPerch mantra, "Teach, Build, Become" mirrors the Navy's Ethos, "Integrity, Honor, Courage, Commitment, Teamwork." Teaching and mentoring our youth upholds the Navy's commitment to service, and building bridges for a pathway to excellence demonstrates teamwork. Becoming all we aspire to be inspires the courage to believe in ourselves, integrity helps us to remain steadfast when confronted with adversity, and to always preserve honor by being truthful to yourself and others.

Congratulations to all the SeaPerch Challenge 2013 participants!

<http://www.seaperch.org>

ENS Pamela Johnson, NC, USN  
 Edited by LT Eric Banker, NC, USN



## TriService Nursing EBP & Research Resource Page



To meet the needs of military nurses, a strategic goal team of nurses and nurse scientists from the Army, Air Force, Navy and staff from the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program was formed with the goal to develop multimedia evidence-based practice (EBP) and research resources. The purpose of these resources is to help promote the conduct of EBP and research projects, and other scholarly activities by nurses, physicians, and other allied health professionals in the DOD.

The team is utilizing *milBook* and *milSuite* platforms to provide these resources. On *milBook* we have created the [TriService Nursing EBP & Research Resource Page](https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/navy-nurse-researcher-strategic-goal-2-team) which includes EBP, research and scholarly podcasts, web links, handouts, PowerPoints, and other resources (<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/navy-nurse-researcher-strategic-goal-2-team>). Podcasts have been uploaded on the *milTube* platform and links to the videos are included on the resource page. The following page has a list of some of the podcasts.

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## TriService Nursing EBP & Research Resource Page (Cont)



### EBP Podcasts

- Introduction to EBP
- Searching and Reviewing the Scientific Literature
- Article Critique-Statistics Overview
- Implementing
- Institutional Review Board Issues
- Overview of Processes & Models
- Article Critique
- Appraising and Synthesizing the Evidence
- Dissemination

### Research & Scientific Writing Podcasts

- How to Write a Case Report
- How to Write an Abstract
- Writing and Publishing Scientific Papers
- Research Methodology
- Survey Research Design
- Choosing a Statistical Test
- SPSS Statistical Software Demos
- How to Make a Poster
- Scientific Writing Tips
- Formulating a Research Question
- Experimental & Quasi-experimental Design
- Qualitative Research
- The Role of Biostatistics in Research

A tutorial podcast has been posted on the *milBook* page that explains how to navigate the site (<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-105973>). Members are encouraged to watch the tutorial to identify the resources they may find beneficial. If you are a novice investigator and are planning on developing an EBP or research project we encourage you review some of the podcasts and other resources if possible prior to seeking out a Military Nurse Scientist.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the team leader of this project, CDR Dennis Spence at [dennis.spence@med.navy.mil](mailto:dennis.spence@med.navy.mil).

CDR Dennis Spence, NC, USN



## Navy Nurse Corps Association 2014 Reunion



The Midsouth Chapter of the Navy Nurse Corps Association is planning the Navy Nurse Corps 2014 Reunion. The event will be held from April 30<sup>th</sup>-May 4<sup>th</sup> in Nashville, Tennessee at the Millennium Maxwell House.

This is a time for Navy Nurses from years past and present to meet and have a great time. There will be many opportunities for touring the local area, including (but not limited to): The Grand Old Opry, Country Music Hall of Fame, General Jackson Showboat Luncheon Cruise. Group rates are available with early booking.

Navy Nurses have an incredibly rich reservoir of short, funny/interesting stories. Would you be willing to contribute yours? If so, please send an e-mail to Admiral Mary Hall at [nomahall@msn.com](mailto:nomahall@msn.com) or via the postal system to: P. O. Box 749 Florence AL 35631. Admiral Hall can also be reached at 256-767-4390.

For more information, please contact the Military Reunion Planners at 1-800-672-0456 or Bonnie McClure at 870-575-2444. Further reunion and reservation information can also be obtained via the internet at: <http://nnca.org/news/meetings-reunions/2014-nashville/>

We hope to see you there!







## Naval Hospital Pensacola Nurse Recognized



LT Mike Cole, Division Officer, Family Medicine, Naval Hospital Pensacola (NHP), was recognized in May as the Nurse of the Year for the Pensacola area, coinciding with National Nurses Week, May 6th – 12th.

The first-time award for the area was organized by Mary Alexander, a registered nurse and senior director of business development for Select Specialty Hospital, Pensacola. Alexander received hundreds of submissions from healthcare facilities in the Pensacola area, which includes Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

*“He is an impressive Nurse Corps officer,”* said CDR Marnie Buchanan, Associate Director of Medical Services. *“He demonstrates the diversity that is essential for a Nurse Corps officer. He is always willing to step up and accomplish what is needed.”*

Cole, whose Navy career started in 2004, represents the type of individuals that form the Navy Nurse Corps, which on May 13 celebrated 105 years of service. Created in 1908, the original Nurse Corps consisted of 20 female nurses who were assigned to the Naval Medical School Hospital in Washington, D.C. Today, Navy nurses, both men and women, are deployed all over the world and are not only assigned to Military Treatment Facilities like NHP, but also participate in humanitarian and combat missions.

Cole, who grew up in the Philippines as the son of missionaries, didn’t decide to pursue a career in nursing until his senior year of high school. Cole had a natural desire for a career in the medical field because his father was a pediatric physician, but it was actually his science teacher in high school that convinced him to pursue nursing.

*“I had a lot of respect for [my teacher], and he explained to me the benefits of being a nurse,”* said Cole. After graduating high school, Cole attended Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio, to earn a degree in nursing. With no family history of military service, joining a branch of service had never really crossed Cole’s mind until he attended a health fair on the campus.

It was at that health fair that Cole met a Navy recruiter that showed him that he could not only be a nurse in the Navy, but he could travel the world. Inspired by the prospect of seeing the world, Cole joined the Navy and after graduation reported to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Va. Cole’s first assignment as a Navy nurse was as a maternal child nurse, not his first choice, but one he is now happy he got.

*“I wanted to be a pediatric nurse, but [Labor and Delivery] was where I was needed,”* said Cole. *“Now, Labor and Delivery is my passion. Being a nurse is very rewarding and it’s a real sense of accomplishment, but it’s especially rewarding in Labor and Delivery because I was part of the [delivery] experience.”*

Since his first duty station in Portsmouth, Cole has worked in Labor and Delivery in both Okinawa and Naval Hospital Pensacola before his current role in Family Medicine. He has also taken part in three deployments. He deployed to Kuwait as part of the Expeditionary Medical Facility and to Guantanamo Bay where he worked as part of the Joint Medical Group. He also deployed to Haiti to provide humanitarian aid after an earthquake in 2010. *“Haiti has been the highlight of my Navy career,”* said Cole. *“I was part of the pediatric unit and I got to take care of children that were affected by the earthquake.”*

For someone who grew up in the Philippines and never had thoughts of serving his nation until college, Cole has quickly made an impression in the Navy and the surrounding community. A regular volunteer at his church, Cole’s hard work and contributions have now been recognized by his peers in both the Navy and the local community.

*“I am honored to have just been nominated, especially since I’m not a native of [Pensacola],”* said Cole. *“It’s great to be recognized for the hard work [Navy nurses] do in the area.”*



LT Mike Cole deployed to Haiti

Jason J. Bortz  
Public Affairs Officer  
Naval Hospital Pensacola





## Enlisted Marine Transitions to Role as Navy Nurse



Growing up in Milton, Fla., Shauna Ralston was very active in sports and had planned on a career in physical therapy. Her father had served in the Marine Corps, but it was her sister that inspired her to pursue being a Marine. *"My sister was in the Marine Corps, and her stories about the challenges of boot camp intrigued me,"* said Ralston. *"I thought I could do [boot camp]."*

After attending her sister's boot camp graduation at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., Ralston decided to speak to a recruiter. Her plan was to enlist in the Marine Corps and take a few years to decide if physical therapy was a career she still wanted. She just had to find a way to tell her parents that she was turning down a full scholarship to South Alabama University to be a Marine. *"I prayed about it and said if it's the right decision, my parents will support me,"* said Ralston. *"And they were super supportive."*

Ralston enlisted to be an aerial navigator because her recruiter told her it would be hard and she would get to travel, which, for someone who spent her entire life in the small town of Milton, was very exciting. As part of the air crew on a KC-130 Hercules air transport aircraft, Ralston did get to travel. *"I traveled to Iceland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Djibouti, Canada, Bahrain, Hawaii, Guam....,"* said Ralston, who also participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After eight years as an aerial navigator, Ralston learned that her military occupational specialty in the Marine Corps was to be removed and that her future in the Marine Corps was uncertain. Having already decided that she didn't want to be a Marine Corps officer, she began thinking again of going to college to study physical therapy, but her husband pushed her to look for an option that would capitalize on her time in the Marine Corps. It was then that Ralston heard about the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP) that would allow her to remain on active duty while earning a nursing degree.

Upon being accepted for the program, Staff Sgt. Ralston attended the University of West Florida to earn her bachelor's degree in nursing. *"[School] was a challenge, but I loved it,"* said Ralston, who earned the Marine Corps rank of gunnery sergeant before graduating. *"It was hard attending school as a 30-year-old with 19- and 20-year-olds, but I set a goal to get straight A's and I did."*

Since reporting to Naval Hospital Pensacola last year, Ralston has adapted to life as a Navy officer and as a nurse, but she said it has not always been easy. *"[As an aerial navigator], I had a checklist that I just had to follow, but as a nurse, every patient is different,"* said Ralston, who someday hopes to be a professional educator. *"There is no such thing as a typical day as a nurse."*

Though it usually surprises her patients and peers when they find out she was a Marine, they are quick to point out the quality nursing care that Ralston provides. *"She is very thorough and meticulous,"* said LT Mohneke Broughton, the Division Officer in the Women and Children's Department. *"She always goes above and beyond what is expected, and she always wants to educate the patients and staff. She has handled the transition [from Marine Corps] to the Navy well."*

Ralston has never backed down from a challenge, but instead faces them, which is a characteristic often shared by Marines and nurses. *"I loved being a Marine, but I love being a nurse,"* said Ralston. *"Instead of having Marines I'm responsible for, I have patients."*



ENS Shauna Ralston

Jason J. Bortz  
Public Affairs Officer  
Naval Hospital Pensacola



# 105th Nurse Corps Birthday!



*Navy Nurses Celebrate Nurse's Week and the Nurse Corps Birthday Getting the Job Done All Over the World!*



# Bravo Zulu!



## Certifications

LCDR Melissa Kennedy at Naval Hospital Guam who passed her Forensic Nursing [AFN-BC] certification exam.  
 LCDR Glenda Hedstrom at Naval Medical Center San Diego who passed her Perioperative Nursing [CNOR] exam.  
 LT April Gilbrech at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth who passed her Pediatric Nursing [CPN] certification exam.  
 LT Christopher Lynn at Naval Hospital Pensacola who passed his Critical Care Nursing [CCRN] and Emergency Nursing [CEN] certification exams.  
 LT Kristin Aucker, LTJG Jeanne Ludvigsen, and LTJG Sarah Shields at Naval Hospital Pensacola who passed their Post Anesthesia Nurse [CPAN] certification exams.  
 LT Kelli Bunnel at Naval Hospital Guam who passed her Emergency Nursing [CEN] certification exam.  
 LT Kara McDowell at Naval Hospital Guam who passed her Medical-Surgical Nursing [RN-BC] certification exam.  
 LT Jessie Gorman at Naval Hospital Naples who passed her Pediatric Nursing [CPN] certification exam.  
 LT Dwight Hampton at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery who passed his Ambulatory Care Nursing [RN-BC] and National Committee for Quality Assurance Patient Centered Medical Home Content Expert Certification [NCQA PCMH CEC] certification exams.  
 LTJG Heather Roland at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth who passed her Medical-Surgical Nursing [CMSRN] certification exam.  
 LTJG Sue Klingbeil at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth who passed her Pediatric Nursing [RN-BC] certification exam.

## Awards

LT Sharon Clements at Uniform Services University of Health Sciences who received the Naval Medical Center San Diego Academic Research Competition second place award for her original research, resident poster presentation: "*Effects Of Epidural Normal Saline Bolus On Parturient Motor Function Recovery.*"  
 CDR Dennis Spence at Naval Medical Center San Diego who received the Naval Medical Center San Diego Academic Research Competition second place award for his original research, staff podium presentation: "*Enhanced Awareness of Obstructive Sleep Apnea through Education and Use of the STOP/BANG.*"

## Education (non-DUINS)

CDR Christopher Reddin at Naval Medical Center San Diego who earned his PhD from Rush University.  
 LT Christine Burns at Naval Medical Center San Diego who earned her Master of Science in Nursing Leadership and Health Systems Management from Drexel University.  
 LT Sabrina Mork and LT Camille White at Naval Hospital Naples who earned their Master of Business Administration from University of Phoenix.

## Publications

LCDR Eric Bopp at Naval Medical Center San Diego  
 Bopp, E. J., Spence, D. L., Burkard, J. F. (2013). A Preoperative stress inquiry and a vulnerable US military population. *Journal of perianesthesia nursing*. 28(2), 67-76.

### NC New Staff

Editor:

LT Edward Runyon

[Edward.L.Spizio-Runyon.mil@health.mil](mailto:Edward.L.Spizio-Runyon.mil@health.mil)

Design/Layout:

LT Nicholas Perez

[Nicholas.Perez@med.navy.mil](mailto:Nicholas.Perez@med.navy.mil)

LT Eric Banker

[Eric.Banker@med.navy.mil](mailto:Eric.Banker@med.navy.mil)



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command to:

LCDR Timothy Rousselow, NC, USN

Senior Editor, Nurse Corps News

[Timothy.Rousselow@med.navy.mil](mailto:Timothy.Rousselow@med.navy.mil)

