



The Journal

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April 26, 2012

Staff Appreciation Week Provides Excitement for Personnel

By Helen Hocknell
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) treated military and civilian personnel to a series of fun activities during Staff Appreciation Week, April 16-19. Highlights included a musical jam session, "Spa Day," bowling tournament, and many more events, all aimed at promoting the wellbeing of hardworking base staffers.

"Thank you for what you do here each and every day," said WRNMMC Commander Rear Adm. Alton Stocks to the crowd assembled at the finale luncheon on Thursday. "It's wonderful to get out and celebrate together." Stocks thanked the contributing sponsors for helping put on the luncheon, which featured a drawing for dozens of baskets donated by various departments. Music played over loudspeakers added to the festive atmos-

phere, and guests danced to remixes of popular hip-hop and disco songs.

"Seeing people dancing was definitely a highlight," said NSAB Commander Capt. Frederick Kass of the luncheon. "I'm thrilled with the turnout. It was great to see so many people actively participating," Kass noted that many events honor the military for their service but this event specifically targeted the unique duties of hospital and base staff.

"It's easy to take for granted the outstanding professional contributions of base personnel, but it's important that we take an occasional time out to recognize the hard work that goes on to make the various missions on base a success," said Kass.

Each day of the week had a different theme. "Mindful Monday," highlighted relaxation techniques, including a tai chi demonstration, visits with hospital therapy dogs, and labyrinth walks. On Tuesday, staff was treated to a "Spa Day," featuring

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Photo by Helen Hocknell

Rear Adm. Alton Stocks (left) and Capt. Frederick Kass (second from right) congratulate the winners of the bowling tournament (named from left to right) Senior Chief Corpsman Nathaniel King, Sergeant 1st Class Parrish Purnell, Master Chief Corpsman William Glascoe, Chief Corpsman Tiphonie Gibbs and Senior Chief Corpsman David Clipson, at the Staff Appreciation Week finale luncheon on April 19.

Military Child Perseveres in the Face of Autism

By Sharon Renee Taylor
Journal staff writer

April is designated as the Month of the Military Child as well as Autism Awareness Month, and military installations around the world recognize the sacrifice, and honor the courage of military children who face distinct challenges.

Military children often face challenges such as frequent moves, disrupted relationships, separation from parents and extended family members, as well as deployment-related stress. These challenges are intensified for children with autism, who need consistency and routine.

According to TRICARE medical record coding classification statistics, more than 20,000 of the 9.7 million TRICARE beneficiaries were seen and (or) diagnosed with autism or Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) during Fiscal Year 2011, explained Austin Camacho, a spokesman for the program that provides civilian health care benefits to the Depart-

ment of Defense Military Health System.

According to Col. Edward Coll, chief of developmental pediatrics at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), autism is a pervasive neurodevelopment disorder typically diagnosed in children by the age of 3. The disorder most commonly affects language, social skills as well as day-to-day activities and leads to speech delay. Children with autism and autism-related disorders often display unusual repetitive behavior, such as hand flapping or rocking, more or less sensitivity to sensations than typical, and experience difficulty with transitions, with possible aggressive or disruptive behavior.

"We don't know what causes autism," said Coll, who explained research appears to show a genetic component to the disorder. He said the medical center staffs two development pediatricians can diagnose autism or ASD and monitor their progress. In addition, WRNMMC

and local TRICARE resources provide occupational, speech and physical therapy, psychologists and applied behavioral analysis (ABA), an intensive early intervention which helps youngsters learn new skills, behaviors and improve communication abilities.

Coll added the installation provides additional support with two programs: the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), which helps service members and their dependents with services and coordination to live successfully with the diagnosis, and the second, TRICARE Extended Care Health Option (ECHO), which provides approved non-medical services like ABA and respite care to active duty parents.

In March, Tricare Management Activity extended an ECHO pilot program that provides autism treatment to children of service members though March 2014. Under the program, eligible beneficiaries receive

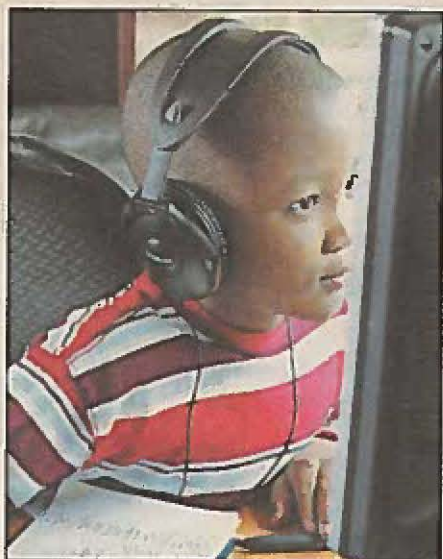


Photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

Joshua Purcell Taylor, 9, plays a computer game. Diagnosed with autism at age four, the youngster has flourished with the support the military healthcare system provides his family, explained his mother, Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ardelle L. Purcell.

See AUTISM page 6

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Commanders Column

The words "Thank You" can never be overstated, especially here at our Nation's Medical Center. I cannot count the numerous times benevolent organizations have partnered with us in providing the utmost comfort to our beneficiaries and wounded warriors. So saying "Thank you," certainly warrants repeating time and time again.

I know that volunteerism is recognized during the month of April along with a number of other worthy causes, but each and every day "We are thankful" for those who assist with volunteering their time, effort and resources that aid in the recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of our patients.

The selfless dedication and kindness these organizations bestow is invaluable. From providing plane tickets to enable families to unite with a loved one so they can stand bedside vigils upon arrival from theater, to clothing and financial grants or just a good movie, the relief is heartfelt and much appreciated.

This is often witnessed as I walk around both the inpatient and outpatient facilities, where there is no shortage of folks whose lives have been touched. Seeing tears well up in the eyes of mothers and fathers of young service men and women who are so grateful because they don't have to worry about a place to sleep, meals or daily provisions that we may sometimes take for granted, really does draw on your emotions. It is because of you that they can rest comfortably knowing that their immediate needs have been met.

So again from the bottom of my heart, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!! We are proud to partner with you during these historic times.

Commander Sends,
Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks
MC, USN
Walter Reed National Military Medical Center



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Bethesda Notebook

Walter Reed Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Walter Reed Society is Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Dining Room. Brunch will be served, so RSVP as soon as possible at (301) 571-1580. Cost is \$30 per person. For more information, e-mail walterreedsociety@verizon.net.

Navy College Tuition Assistance Brief

Sailors may now attend either the 7 a.m. or noon Navy College Tuition Assistance brief every Wednesday in Building 17, Suite 2D, Navy College Classroom. For more information, call the Navy College at (301) 295-2014.

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meets at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as noon on Wednesdays in Building 8, Rm. 2230 (Chaplain's Conference Room). For more information, call (301) 503-1210.

Pulmonary Clinic Educates Patients, Staff

Throughout April, Walter Reed Bethesda's Pulmonary Clinic will focus on educating patients and staff about sarcoidosis, an inflammatory disease. Most commonly affecting the lungs, this disease can have an impact on almost any organ in the body. Additionally, it can cause heightened immunity, damaging the body's tissues. For more information, contact Gail Hayes in the Pulmonary Clinic at (301) 295-7786.

"Bike To Work Day"

May 18 is the annual "Bike to Work Day," and a pit stop for Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) will be located at the South Gate entrance across from the Metro. The pit stop will be open from 6 to 10 a.m. with light refreshments. To pre-register for the event, go to www.biketoworkmetrodc.org, or call 1-800-745-7433. Those who pre-register before May 11 will get a free "Bike to Work" T-shirt. The NSAB point of contact is Jack Jackson, Morale Welfare and Recreation intramural sports coordinator, at (301) 295-0031.

Social Security Administration Support

Social Security Administration representatives are available to assist service members with their disability applications every Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Tranquility Hall, second floor in the Soldier and Family Assistance Center. For more information, call Lisa Ramdass at (301) 400-0208.

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Women's Leadership Group Tackles Fraternization, Sexual Harassment

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nathan Parde
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer



Photo by Sarah Fortney

From the left: Chief Ship's Serviceman Charlotte Gee, Women's Leadership Group organizer; Hospitalman Mandissa Thompson, group member; Lt. Cmdr. Bridgette Ferguson, command equal opportunity officer; and group members Hospitalman Ashley McCown and Logistics Specialist Private Sarah Mosley.

fraternization and sexual harassment were the focus of this meeting.

"Fraternalization and sexual harassment affect morale and have negative consequences in the workplace," said Ferguson. "We're here to help you resolve these issues at the lowest level."

Hospitalman Ashley McCown found the information and advice passed to be useful for professional development and encouragement, and recommends the women's leader-

ship meetings to female service members

"It is important to have groups like this to know where to go to find information on the issues that we (as women in the armed forces) face today," said McCown. "We are the leaders of the future, and the education and mentorship passed down at these meetings provides the foundation for strong leadership."

Approximately 30 female Sailors and Soldiers attended the third monthly meeting of the Women's Leadership Group Friday morning to hear the guidance of Lt. Cmdr. Bridgette Ferguson, command equal opportunity officer for Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, on the topics of fraternization and sexual harassment.

"It doesn't matter if you are Army or Navy; we all work together, and we all have to be aware of these matters," said Ferguson. "We create our own work environment, and you're the one in control of your atmosphere."

The Women's Leadership Group was formed earlier this year to foster education, career development, networking and mentoring opportunities. Some of the issues discussed at the group's meetings include women's health, financial issues, career/family balance discussions and professional development workshops. However,

Lean Six Sigma: Increasing WRNMMC's Efficiency with Studies & Teamwork

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dion Dawson
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer



The LSS program office frequently hosts on-site green belt and black belt courses, targeted at military and government service civilians. The training provides an introduction to a broad range of basic principles, practices, tools and business models that personnel can apply to identify and implement efficiencies throughout the medical center. The courses cover Lean and Six Sigma to establish greater awareness of the respective concepts together.

"Lean Six Sigma is a combination of two different theories and methodologies," said Lt. John Gardner, national capital region program director. "Lean is focused primarily on reduction of waste, while Six Sigma is focused on the reduction in variance. For example, when dealing with variance, a person might get pathology reports in one day and the next time it may take six days. By reducing the variance, you are able to help achieve consistent cycle times. The

lean techniques identify how each step in the process adds value to the production of pathology reports while clearly identifying those steps that do not."

The green belt course is five days and will be offered three more times this year. The next course will be June 11-15, with the remaining classes taking place Aug. 6-10 and Nov. 5-9. The black belt course is 15 consecutive days and will be offered June 11-25. This course is offered to practicing green belts that are prepared to tackle the additional analytics and statistical analysis.

At WRNMMC, there are currently 15 black belt and 104 green belt officers. The training goal this year is to add at least 80 more green belts and 15 black belts to help the command meet the challenges faced every day. "Over the past three years, we have successfully completed projects in every directorate and touched almost every aspect of service within the hospital," said Brian McCormack, chief performance improvement officer for the National Capital Region at WRNMMC. "We have a diverse team that comes together to solve a problem that no single group could resolve on their own. I am very proud of everyone involved when a robust multi-discipline solution is imple-

mented that meets the objectives and things are put in place that ensures these gains are sustained."

McCormack, a senior master black belt, said a typical day consists of meeting with process owners to define the problems that have been identified, obtaining sponsor commitments to the teams, helping the green belts or black belts creating agendas and prepare for their meetings, and participating in the teams as a mentor for the belts.

"After more than 25 years of implementing quality management systems for some of the largest for profit and non-profit healthcare organizations in the country, I am honored to be working at the military medical center implementing a program that contributes to the delivery of high quality care for all those who depend on us. LSS is creating value, one project at a time," he said.

Eligibility requirements for the course include a commanding officer recommendation, completion of the Lean Six Sigma "white belt" introductory course and completion of the introduction to statistics found online at Navy Knowledge Online (NKO).

To sign up for the next class, contact Gardner at 301-295-2037.

STAFF

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free massages, haircuts and makeovers. Wednesday's activities included a drum circle, musical performance by Charley & Friends, and a bowling tournament. Winners received trophies at the finale luncheon on Thursday.

Neneh Barrie, part of the research team at the Vaccine Healthcare Center (VHC), said the luncheon made her feel very welcome at WRNMMC.

"It was a great chance to get to see everyone, and meet people you wouldn't normally meet because you're all in different departments," said Barrie, who was previously located at the Forest Glen Annex in Silver Spring.

Stephanie Ryder, a health systems specialist with VHC, said she had the most fun participating in the line-dancing at the luncheon. "I hope they do this again next year," said Ryder.

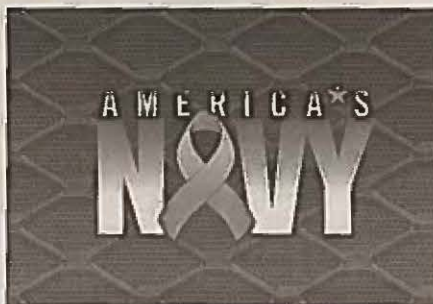
Chisun Chun, deputy commander for healthcare operations and strategic planning at WRNMMC, said Staff Appreciation Week could become an annual event.

"It was truly wonderful to see staff come together to enjoy the festivities," said Chun. "We want everyone to love working here at Walter Reed Bethesda by showing them all the love and care we possibly can."

'Hurts One, Affects All. Prevention is Everyone's Duty'

Training Empowers Sailors to Intervene

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nathan Parde
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer



Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) is currently conducting one-hour live sessions promoting the Navy's Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) campaign throughout the month of April.

Sailors are focusing on the awareness and prevention of sexual assault, in support of the Department of Defense's theme for SAAM 2012: 'Hurts One, Affects All. Prevention of Sexual Assault is Everyone's Duty. We will not tolerate sexual assault.'

Sexual assault is defined in the Uniform Code of Military Justice as intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. "This stand-down is mandated by the Chief of Naval Operations for all active-duty Navy personnel to have received the training by the end of April," said Anton Altman, sexual assault re-

sponse coordinator (SARC) for NSAB.

"SAPR (Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program) is providing the training in accordance with the mandate [to] all Navy Personnel on the installation. Non-Navy personnel are welcome and encouraged to attend the stand-down as well," said Altman.

The first phase of the theme, "Hurts One, Affects All," informs service members that even a single incident of sexual assault negatively impacts combat readiness and effectiveness. The second phase, "Prevention is Everyone's Duty," focuses on how Sailors and Marines must look out for one another, both on and off duty, to prevent harm. The third phase, "We Will Not Tolerate Sexual

Assault," stresses the fact that sexual assault is a problem affecting everyone in the military, regardless of service or paygrade and must be eliminated through an all-hands effort.

"The sexual assault 2012 theme emphasizes the effect of sexual assault on individuals and on the military as a whole," said Altman. "The theme also reminds all DoD personnel that bystander intervention is the most effective method through which we all are empowered to make a difference in lowering the incidence of sexual assault. Bystander intervention includes techniques used by persons who sense the possibility or planning of a sexual assault occurring in their presence."

The most widely-known form of bystander intervention is using the 'buddy system' to make sure that someone who has had too much to drink gets home safely. If further measures of intervention are needed, the SARCs (Altman and Crystal Justice) are available in Building 11,

Room 109, or by phone at (301) 319-4087, said Altman.

"It is important to note that although sexual assault can be an intimidating topic to discuss and think about, there is something that everyone can do about the issue," said Altman. "Stand up, be a leader and intervene when you sense that something is not right. Also, work to support survivors of sexual assault by believing them and aiding them in getting the help they need. Part of that support is directing victims to SAPR for assistance. Victim advocates are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at (301) 442-8225."

NSAB is committed to doing its part by embracing the Navy's SAAM mission and actively working to increase awareness and prevention among its service members. Additional support and information regarding sexual assault prevention can also be found at www.sapr.navy.mil.

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ATS Offers Education, Support to Family Members

By The Department of Addiction Treatment Services

The Department of Addiction Treatment Services (ATS) at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) offers a family program every Friday from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in Building 7, 4th floor. The program provides education and support for those who live with or care about a person with substance abuse problems.

"The Department of Addiction Services is committed to providing treatment to those affected by the disease of chemical dependency and to family members and friends who are inevitably affected as well," said Angelica Johnson, a licensed practical nurse who works in the ATS.

"As part of our commitment to recovery, we offer [the family] program as an opportunity to learn more about the effects of chemical dependency and to offer support, strength and hope in the process," Johnson continued. "Even in the healthiest of families, as addiction takes over, everyone is affected. Family members and close friends may experience as much confusion, anger, hurt and guilt as the person with the alcohol or drug problem. As a

result they may be stressed, have problems relating, communicating, and adjusting to the recovering person as he or she returns to a sober and clean way of living."

Johnson said recovery rates increase as much as 50 percent when the family is involved in the treatment process.

"During the weekly sessions, we hope participants will gain new knowledge about addiction, acquire new ways to communicate for the purpose of achieving healthier relationships and appreciate the value of getting help as they begin the journey toward recovery," Johnson added.

"If your family is being affected by addiction, don't give up hope," Johnson continued. "We will offer you opportunities to grow and in so doing, acquire the skills and confidence to overcome obstacles and restore communication so that better relationships are possible for all. We want to begin the recovery journey with you and welcome you to our program."

For more information about the family program provided by ATS, call Debra Isenstein, Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical at (301) 400-1296 or Angelica Johnson at (301) 400-1291.

Evacuation Drill



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nathan Parde

Firefighters from the Montgomery County Fire Department raise a stretcher with a training dummy into a medical ambulance during Naval Support Activity Bethesda's HURREX 12 drill Tuesday. Evacuating Tranquility Hall, the wounded warrior barracks was part of the hurricane preparedness exercise. HURREX 12 ends tomorrow.

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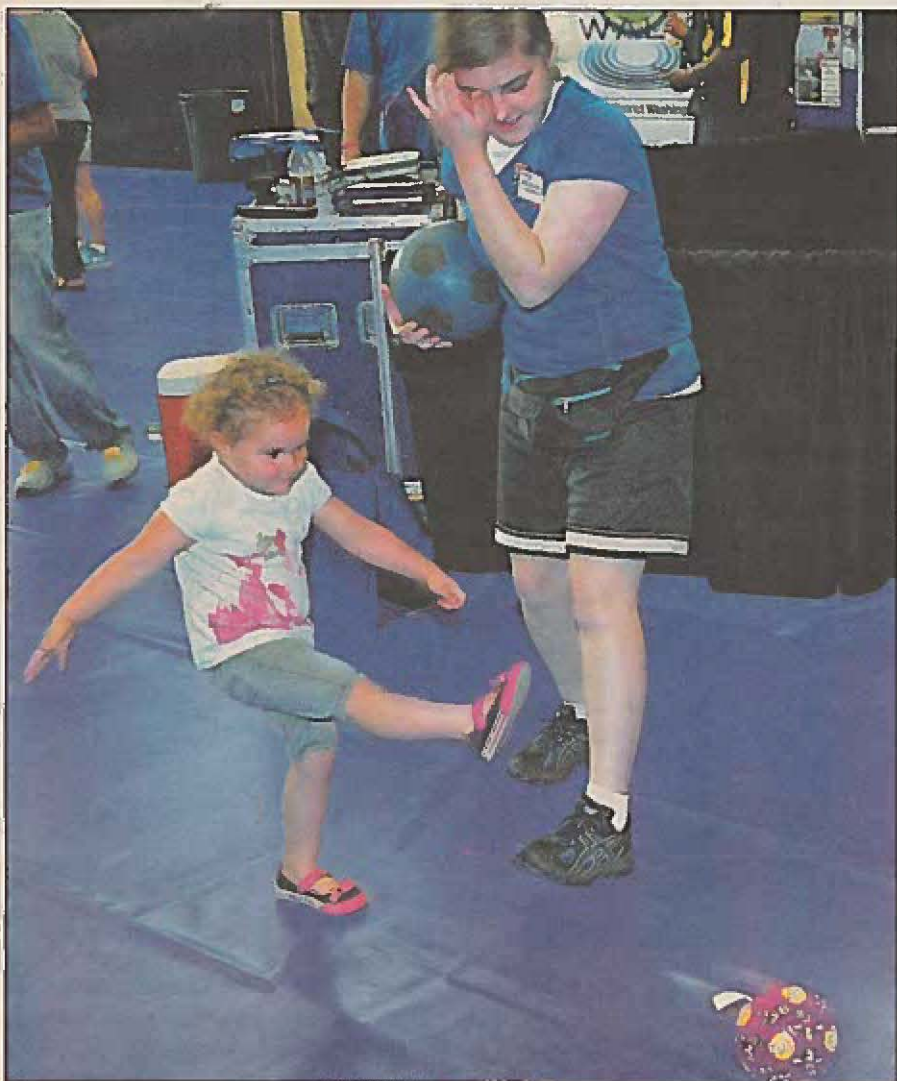


Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nathan Parde

Lorelei Johnson, 3, kicks a ball straight towards a target during the Month of the Military Child Health and Fitness Fair hosted by Naval Support Activity Bethesda Fleet and Family Support Center Saturday.

The Pursuit of Health and Fitness

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John K. Hamilton
NSAB Public Affairs staff writer

Naval Support Activity Bethesda's Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) hosted a youth health and fitness fair inspired by first lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" initiative targeted toward encouraging healthy eating habits and lifestyles for children.

Participants took part in a variety of fitness related activities, such as weight lifting, rowing, soccer, basketball and more throughout the day.

"Events such as this one, show that we care and support our military families and the sacrifices they make for our freedom," said Latasha R. Vernon, Fleet and Family Support Center's exceptional family member program liaison.

"These events help us to be a supportive force and encourage family togetherness and fun. The

events let children play and have fun, allowing them to forget about the stressfulness of being a military child," she added.

The diverse activities allowed participants the opportunity to experience and try new fitness programs. Participants also engaged in fitness videos that were taught by experienced professionals.

Daniel Gallagher III, a parent attending said, "We had been to previous events here so we knew we needed to make a point to come out. My son Danny has really enjoyed going to the different stations and collecting the stamps, and we have been getting information from the different organizations that help support our Soldiers and Sailors."

For more information on upcoming events check out the MWR Happenings booklets that can be found in Building 17 or contact the FFSC at (301) 310-4087 for all the latest dates and times.

AUTISM

Continued from 1

ABA intervention services from board-certified behavior analysts and paraprofessionals under their care. In January, law makers introduced legislation to extend autism benefits to military families when active duty service members retire.

The *Journal* spoke with a military family with an autistic child for a perspective on the challenges they face, and how the military supports their needs.

Joshua Purcell Taylor, age 9

Listening from a phone aboard the USS Nassau (LHA-4) stationed out to sea December 2005, a single word brought Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ardelle L. Purcell to tears.

"Hi," Joshua told his mom.

His first word.

"I remember breaking down and just crying my heart out because that was the first word that I heard him speak and I wasn't there," Purcell said. Nearly 3 at the time, Joshua was already more than a year behind his peers, who learned to speak at 18-months. He experienced delays in other areas of development, but his mother attributed them to his premature birth. Two months

earlier, the family, which included her older son Johnathan, moved from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. to Chesapeake, Va., with Purcell's sister Carolyn, who stayed with the boys while the Sailor was deployed, in and out to sea over the following three years - three crucial years pivotal to her young son's development, the single mother explained.

It was Carolyn, a recent college graduate majoring in psychology, who first noticed he wasn't talking.

"He didn't talk at all. He did sign language," Carolyn said. "He would always point, but he would never use his words." The shy toddler avoided eye contact and interaction with others, spending hours on the computer.

"It was unimaginable how good he was on the computer [at age 2]; he was really good," Carolyn said.

The diagnosis

At age three, Joshua began school to attend a program for children with developmental delays. After a battery of tests at age four, he was diagnosed with high-functioning autism, and Purcell was enrolled in the EFMP, which enabled her son to receive speech therapy, behavioral analysis, occupational therapy and physical therapy. ECHO provides the single-mother with up to 40 hours of respite care per month.

Purcell said she often uses the little breaks respite care provides to take naps. "I just can't leave him up by himself. Sometimes he has destructive behavior, so I'm constantly cleaning up or just making sure he's okay," she said. "He's so inquisitive about everything. He almost has no level of fear until he actually learns that there's something wrong, he just won't stop. I can stand there and tell him the stove is hot, but until he actually sees for himself and understands it, he'll still do the same thing." Sometimes Joshua has outbursts and throws tantrums, his mother said. He repeats what he hears and washes his hands, over and over again. "Autism is really about personality. There are things about his personality that are not the same as your personality or mine. That's what makes him unique, and I realize that, but sometimes it's tiring, especially being in the military and having a child with an autism-type of disability or even a special need."

Support

"He receives excellent care under TRICARE. They make sure that if he needs extra services that he gets them and I don't know many other jobs that would actually do that," said Purcell, who plans to retire from

active duty next year. The transition from the military to civilian life and having a child with special needs is a concern.

The Sailor said her son is flourishing with all the support the military healthcare system provides her family. Joshua can now read and write. A local community group, the African American Festival of Academic Excellence of Montgomery County, Md., plans to recognize Joshua for academic achievement in June. He's comfortable with his teachers and has friends at school - a major concern for his mother who once worried her son would spend lunchtime and recess alone. Although he's not the typical 9-year-old, Purcell said she has hope.

"Is it time consuming? Absolutely. Is it overwhelming? Absolutely, but I think about the bigger picture, and the bigger picture is him actually being able to live life on his own when he gets older and not having to live with me," Purcell said.

Does she believe he can live on his own? "Absolutely. That's the one goal that I think every parent has, for their child - to live on their own."

For more information on the EFMP and ECHO at Walter Reed Bethesda, contact EFMP coordinator Joshua Taylor at (301) 295-4092. Contact EFMP Liaison Bonnie Hayes at (301) 400-2542 for local autism resources.

Research Competition Highlights Ingenuity in Military Medicine

By Sarah Fortney
Journal staff writer

Residents, fellows and staff members at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) had an opportunity to showcase their research in military medicine during the fourth annual National Capital Region Military Research Competition, held at the medical center April 11-18.

About 50 researchers participated in the event, which included an oral competition for the Robert A. Phillips award, recognizing a single project by either a resident or staff member. A total of four winners were chosen for this award, with a clinical and laboratory category for both residents and fellows. These individuals will advance to the annual Navy-wide Academic Research Competition in May at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), said Col. Mary Klote, chief of the Department of Research Programs (DRP). They will compete against participants from several other military treatment facilities, such as Portsmouth and San Diego.

Hosted by the DRP, the research competition also included a poster competition for the Bailey K. Ashford award, open to those in their final year of their residency or fellowship. The winner of this award will be an-

nounced in May during the graduation ceremony for the Graduate Medical Education program, explained Klote, who was a Bailey K. Ashford finalist twice, in both her residency and fellowship.

Delivering opening remarks during the competition, and congratulating participants, WRNMMC Commander Rear Adm. Alton Stocks and WRNMMC Chief of Staff Col. Charles Callahan emphasized the value of academics. Research helps teach students to be observant, while enhancing their skill set, according to Callahan. It also benefits the institution, stating, medical centers that focus on education and teaching enhance their ability to provide quality care.

"The enterprise wins to the degree that we invest in research and education," said Callahan.

Recognizing the growing number of collaborative research projects at the medical center, Klote said the medical center is currently leading the region, with about 1,100 open research protocols - the next largest institution has less than 500.

"We are definitely the powerhouse," said Klote. "We are the hub of all the multi-site research that's going on right now in the MHS [Military Health System]."

Klote noted the benefit of research

to an individual's career. To have a body of published work allows the researcher to become a known authority in a particular area of expertise, in order to be academically promoted and to go on to be invited to national meetings, she said.

"That's the great thing about it. You become known as a speaker on a particular topic, and become known as a national or even internationally recognized expert on a particular topic," she said. "We [also] get the reputation for our residency and fellowship programs, and our staff. It is a win-win for the organization."

Klote added those presenting during the competition poured countless hours into their research, working on their own time outside of their studies - and it's because they truly enjoy it.

"There is no dedicated research time in anybody's day," she said. "It's a lot of dedication."

Army Capt. Daniel Kang, a resident in Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation, won the residents clinical category of the oral competition for his presentation, "A New Classification for Complex Lumbosacral Injuries." Army Maj. Fouad Moawad, of Gastroenterology, won the staff/fellow clinical category with his presentation, "Comparison of Aerosolized Swallowed Fluticasone to Esomeprazole for the Treat-

ment of Eosinophilic Esophagitis," and Army Capt. Sharone Frattalone won the staff/fellow laboratory category for her presentation, "FTY720 Inhibits T-Cell Mediated Tissue Injury in Autoimmune Prone Mice." The winner of the residents laboratory category was Lt. Cmdr. Keith Alfieri, a resident in Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation, for his presentation, "Early Risk Stratification for Wound Specific Heterotopic Ossification Formation in Combat Casualties."

Alfieri, whose research was conducted in the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC) lab on base, in Building 17, said he focused on using wound-specific, instead of patient-specific, genetic indicators to determine which wounds would develop abnormal bone formations within the muscle tissue, which he said is a significant concern in the blast-injured patient population.

"The team at NMRC is doing unbelievably complex, yet clinically applicable world-class research that is on the cutting edge of science," Alfieri noted.

"It is an honor to be a member of the team, and present such groundbreaking work. To be able to contribute even a small amount to helping wounded warriors regain meaningful functional mobility and independence is incredibly rewarding."

'Laboratory Professionals Get Results'

Observance Salutes Those 'Behind-the-Scene' In Patient Care

By Bernard S. Little
Journal staff writer

"Laboratory Professionals Get Results" is the theme for National Medical Laboratory Professional Week (NMLPW), April 22-28, and the numbers show just that at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC).

More than three million reportable tests are done per year in labs at WRNMMC, according to Navy Capt. Larry R. Ciorlito, laboratory manager.

Ciorlito, and Navy Capt. David M. Larson, chief of the Department of Pathology at WRNMMC, agreed on the importance of NMLPW because it spotlights staff members who perform critical functions behind the scenes in daily health care delivery at Walter Reed Bethesda.

Larson credits the 330-member lab and pathology staff with not only achieving these results each day, but also for the department's "highly successful" unannounced inspection by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) in November. He explained the inspection, conducted every two years, is the "gold standard" in labo-

ratory accreditation in the United States.

Performed by board-certified pathologists, the team inspects facilities for quality management, safety and overall operations of labs.

"The Department of Pathology consists of seven services located in five separate physical locations of the command," Larson continued. He added the lab provides analytical services supporting health care providers in the diagnosis of disease, preventative health care, as well as pre- and post-deployment screenings.

Missions within the department include specimen collection and accessioning, surgical pathology, cytopathology, autopsy pathology, infectious disease testing, transfusion services, blood donor center collection and screening, and clinical and reference lab testing.

"It's impossible to have done what we have done, and are doing daily, without a truly joint and unified approach on the part of our staff," Ciorlito said.

"We have good people," Larson added. "They are hard working and professional."



photo by Bernard S. Little

Nakita Glorioso, a medical laboratory technologist, works in the core lab of the Chemistry Department at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). This week is National Medical Laboratory Professional Week celebrating the "behind-the-scene" efforts of laboratory staff and their contributions to world-class health care at WRNMMC.

If there is a common thread among the professionals in the lab, it would be their "love" for helping others, especially those in uniform and who have been injured.

Lizette Monhart, a medical technologist, said she "loves helping patients by performing [her] job to the

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best of [her] knowledge." She works in the hematology section of WRNMMC's core lab where she performs complete blood counts, urinalysis, coagulation, and body fluids and flow cytometry.

"I love helping the wounded warriors and their family by performing these high complexity tests," Monhart said.

Vicki Baer, a registered histologist who has worked at WRNMMC since 1999, agreed, saying, "Working at WRNMMC has given me the opportunity to lend my services and skills to the brave men, women and their families who serve our country."

Baer performs a variety of special stain procedures, maintains quality control records and orders supplies for the lab. In addition, she trains and supervises new histopathology technicians, as well as new staff and students in the lab's special stain unit.

"I truly enjoy working in the special stain area," Baer continued. "Although some of the stains are automated, there are many that are done by hand, which is like being a chef in a busy restaurant."

In regards to observing National Medical Laboratory Professional Week, Baer said, "[It's] an opportunity to educate others on the 24/7 commitment it takes to provide a service for our staff and patients."

"Oftentimes, the lab is not noticed as being providers to the critical care of patients," added Nakita Glorioso, a medical laboratory technologist. "We play a big role in the background so that so many others can shine in the foreground, and that is quite alright with us. But, of course, it is great to be recognized every once in a while."

Glorioso works in the core lab in the chemistry department where she performs a variety of tests, including basic metabolic panel, liver function, pregnancy and drug. She enjoys helping physicians and nurses find answers to help patients.

"I believe our job is one in which we have to have a great attention to detail and dedication to continue to learn," said Glorioso. "I come to work willing to learn with patience, and prepared to provide quality health care."

"I feel National Medical Laboratory Professional Week is important because it brings awareness to the dedication and commitment the lab profession provides to the quality of patient care," said health technician Tracey Johnson. She works in Client Services, Referral Section, where she is responsible for receiving, organizing and maintaining the accessioning and processing of clinical specimens for multiple labs to ensure accurate and timely handling of samples.

Johnson explained team work, planning, consistency and efficiency are necessary to providing quality patient care, and those qualities are found in the lab staff. "They are excellent team players who possess friendly and pleasant attitudes," she said.

Army Sgt. Danette Hartzell worked at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) before coming to WRNMMC after WRAMC and the former National Naval Medical Center merged. She is a medical laboratory technician who is currently functioning as a supply (logistics) technician for the lab and pathology department where she's responsible for tracking and ensuring adequate inventory for the labs, particularly the Infectious Disease lab.

"I enjoy the sense of accomplishment when all areas [of the lab] are functioning properly, [and]

knowing that we have been able to get results out to patients and providers to make a difference in a warrior's life," Hartzell said.

The Soldier said when working in the lab it's important to remember "fast is not always friendly,' and 'do it right the first time.' We work in an area in the hospital where a small mistake can have a huge impact on another human being's life. By doing it right the first time, one has the satisfaction of knowing they did their best.

"When I need to be reminded of why our jobs are so important, I take a walk around [the base]," Hartzell added. "Seeing our wounded brothers and sisters making the best of what has been handed to them always inspires me to move forward."

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Justin Harris agreed. The certified medical laboratory technician said, "After being deployed to Afghanistan and working in a combat hospital, I was able to

see the fruits of my labor. I left my deployment with a new prospective on life. Being able to treat wounded warriors and their families motivates me daily."

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week originated in 1975 as National Medical Laboratory Week, or NMLW, under the auspices of the American Society for Medical Technology, now called the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS).

In the fall of 2005, NMLW was changed to National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week to focus on the people whose expertise is needed in the performance lab testing. Beginning in 2010, the organizers decided to "brand" the event by using the same theme each year: Laboratory Professionals Get Results.

There are approximately 300,000 practitioners of clinical laboratory science in the United States, according to the ASCLS.

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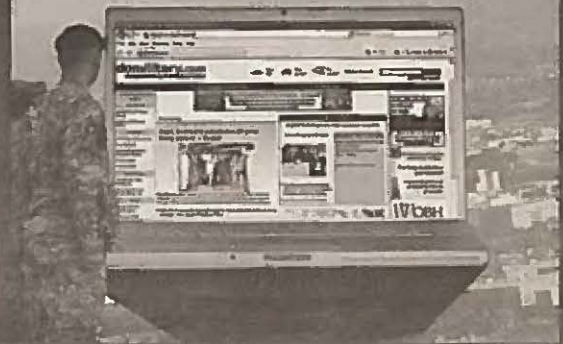
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