



## **Uniformed Services West Chapter – AAP Newsletter- Fall 2019**

### **Presidents' Messages:**

**LTC Thornton Mu, MD, FAAP**

Greetings USW chapter members! Thanks for taking a few minutes out of your busy schedules to read thru our fall newsletter. I have stepped into the President's seat now, and it was an honor to present our Pediatrician of the Year Awards and meet our pediatric residents that the chapter sponsored to attend NCE. Additionally, I had a blast getting to meet so many USW chapter members at our happy hour gathering following USPS-lite. I linked up with old friends and met many new faces as well -- exactly what our chapter executive committee had hoped for when planning this event! The feedback we received so far has been positive, so we will definitely host another get together next year in San Diego. One aspect about NCE that I particularly enjoy is the opportunity to step outside of my neonatologist mindset and attend other training sessions to broaden my perspective. I attended workshops on implicit bias and vaccine updates. Of course, I couldn't resist attending sessions such as neonatal sepsis and controversies with Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. Lastly, USPS-lite provided a venue for me to reflect upon the many accomplishments that the SOUS has achieved in 60 years of continued education and fellowship. I'd like to close my message with a request for USW chapter members to engage with colleagues who may have let their AAP memberships lapse. Perhaps the membership renewal letter got lost in the mail pile or there are financial barriers or perhaps philosophical differences with AAP national priorities. Please encourage your colleagues to consider renewing their memberships. The AAP actively engages on our behalf, i.e. sponsorship of our USW resolution to extend deployment deferments for active duty mothers to one year for all services (currently passed by the House of Representatives and awaiting Senate to take up). Pediatricians can also select to rejoin USW chapter only and are eligible to attend other state AAP chapters' CME offerings at their duty stations at the "in-state" rate. Our USW chapter is also rolling out MOC part 4 sponsorship initiative in partnership with NMCSO. So... all in all... many reasons to talk to your friends into rejoining the AAP! I hope everyone has a fabulous holiday season, and I'll check in with y'all in the spring!



### **Congratulations!!!**

The Chapter takes great pride in congratulating, LCDR Manju "MJ" Hurvitz, our immediate past secretary treasurer for being selected as the AAP fellowship trainee liaison for the section on Pediatric Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine (SOPPSM). We continue to wish her all the best in her fellowship training and service in SOPPSM.

## **Reflections Hub & Spoke: Quality Improvement Training**

4 members of the Uniformed Services West Chapter had the opportunity to attend the AAP sponsored Hub & Spoke: Quality Improvement Training in San Diego, CA this past 23-24 August 2019. Along with a great learning opportunity they were able to enjoy the fun and sun of San Diego, CA.

Sarah Ditch, MD, FAAP  
Maj, USAF, MC  
SAUSHEC Adolescent Medicine

The AAP QI workshop was extremely helpful, and a very fun experience this year. Prior to attending, I had just finished my QI project for fellowship (in fact I was writing it up on the airplane!). On the first day they broke the group up into QI basics and QI intermediate. Despite having just finished my own QI project, I quickly realized I had a lot to learn after hearing Dr. Laura Noonan speak for just a few minutes during the introduction. I quickly chose the basics track and was very glad I did. Despite being fresh out of fellowship, this is the first time I feel like I really understand how to carry out a QI project, such as organizing a team, the steps of PDSA cycles, and following run charts. It was also extremely meaningful at this stage in my training to network with staff physicians who are authentically interested in doing QI projects to improve their clinics and patient care rather than doing it just because it's required. I was also inspired by the coordination of QI projects between clinics in the same AAP chapter and would be interested in doing something similar in my chapter. San Diego was gorgeous, although to be honest the hotel was so nice I didn't even have to venture far to enjoy my trip. The HPV grant that made this workshop possible ends this year, but I sincerely hope the AAP continues to host workshops similar to this one to network and educate physicians all over the U.S. and inspire new staff such as myself!

Nicholas Carr, MD, FAAP  
Maj, USAF, MC  
SAUSHEC, NICU

This past August I was fortunate enough to continue my participation in the AAP Spoke and Hub QI program. I can't speak enough on the quality of the speakers in this program and their dedication toward quality improvement education. This time, the participants were able to customize their education more so than in the past according to level of experience and personal goals for education. We were able to share experiences and learn from different champions who have successfully led projects from small scale to statewide collaboratives. I can't endorse the benefits of this program and the thankfulness for the grant that allowed this program to exist and continue to educate AAP members.

Amy Michalski, MD, FAAP  
Christine Johnson, MD, FAAP  
Naval Medical Center San Diego

On August 23-24, I attended the AAP QI training session in San Diego with CAPT(ret) Christine Johnson. Each Chapter was allowed to send 2 Chapter members to the training, but since I lived in San Diego, the AAP agreed to let me add on. At NMCS, CAPT(ret) Christine Johnson has worked diligently to get our facility established as a Portfolio Site for the ABP. We are allowed to review and approve pediatric QI projects for MOC credit. As a member of this committee, I was very excited to attend this conference and expand my QI knowledge. The conference was led by Dr. Laura Noonan and Dr. Cheryl Courtlandt who were both very eager to be sharing their experiences with the group. It was amazing to hear some of the projects that their respective groups have worked on. I really enjoyed hearing from other participants from all over the country (even from Puerto Rico) on what projects they were working on and challenges they had had to deal with and overcome. Being able to hear from other pediatricians is reassuring that we are current in our pediatric practice and face similar struggles to those outside of military medicine. This was also an opportunity for me to meet one of our new Executive Committee Members-at-Large, Dr. Sarah Ditch, and catch up with Dr. Nicholas Carr who were both at the meeting. I would encourage anyone to take advantage of these kind of learning opportunities that the AAP offers.



Maj Sarah Ditch enjoying the sun and fun in San Diego, CA while attending the AAP sponsored Hub & Spoke: Quality Improvement Training



Dr. Amy Michalski and Dr. Anna Ogena, Alaska Chapter, enjoying a fun night at Petco Park in San Diego, CA catching a baseball game.

### **NCE 2019 – New Orleans, LA**

#### **Pediatrician of the Year Award**

Congratulations to LCDR Sebastian Lara, MC, USN, MAJ Rebecca Ortolano, MC, USA, and MAJ Elizabeth Schulz, MC, USAF for being recognized by your supervisors and peers as stellar physician leaders who continue to go above and beyond for patients, the organization, and for our readiness mission in Military Medicine.

#### **USW Chapter resident travel grant**

We were honored to sponsor four residents from Tripler (CPT Danielle Levy), Balboa (LT Rachel Neubert), SAUSHEC (CPT Mateo Betancourt), and Madigan (CPT Alexander Bowers) with travel grant awards to attend the 2019 NCE.



## **Uniformed Services West Chapter: Resident Experience at 2019 AAP NCE:**

### **CPT Alexander Bowers at Madigan Army Medical Center (MAMC)**

My experience at the Section of Uniformed Services Program at the 2019 AAP conference was not only educational but motivational. Leadership was the theme that most resonated with myself starting with the speech from COL (ret) Burklow who was honored for his lifetime of contributions to military children from his work first as a general pediatrician to a pediatric cardiologist and with training residents. His speech along with the presentation from Major General Murphy helped to reinforce what we contribute to military medicine and the importance of pediatrics in the military. Additionally, the presentation about the small pox virus and vaccinations and the current work being done with additional vaccinations to help support global medicine around the world was very informative. The dual presentation about evaluation and novel treatment concepts for Autism spectrum disorder was something that I will take back and use in my practice throughout the remainder of my residency and into a staff position. It also was great to see the various case reports, QI/PI, and research projects that are being developed from residents and junior staff. I really enjoyed the networking time with the other members of my chapter after the conference. Overall, I felt my time at AAP and USPS was very informative, motivational, and enjoyable and I thank the chapter for sponsoring my attendance at this great conference. I look forward to returning in the future.

### **CPT Mateo Betancourt at San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium (SAUSHEC)**

Last week, I had the honor and the privilege to be sponsored by the Uniformed Services West Chapter and represent my pediatric program at the AAP National Convention in New Orleans. The trip was both educational for me as well as inspiring from the perspective of a third year prospective graduate from SAUSHEC Pediatrics.

Upon arrival to the conference, I was impressed by the magnitude and variety of workshops, exhibitions, and small group discussions; however I would like to focus on my experience during the Uniformed Services Pediatric Seminar. We as a military pediatric community were fortunate enough to have Major General Sean Murphy in attendance who delivered a compassionate and motivational talk on leadership. This message resounded with me, especially given the current debate on the importance of pediatrics in the military setting. As a graduating pediatric resident who could potentially be sent out on a first assignment to a new setting with the expectation to take on clinical roles and leadership positions specific to both the clinical setting as well as the US Army, I felt that MG Murphy's talk both laid out the expectations of what it means to truly be a *Military* Pediatrician, as well as brought home the point that our end goal should always be service to that man or woman who is serving this country and trusting the health of their loved ones to us at home and abroad. Lastly, his recommendation to "find your center" has resounded with me, and put in perspective why and who I put the uniform on for every morning and go proudly do my job.

Next, the seminar continued with a very interesting discussion on the smallpox vaccine by CDR Brett Petersen. This talk was informative in the fact that it combined the historical origins of smallpox into a discussion on the evolution of medicine as a whole to modify and transform how we care for patients and ongoing research to this day. This was followed by a discussion on modern advances in treatments for Autism Spectrum Disorder by COL Eric Flake and LTC Daniel Schulteis. I found this talk interesting from the perspective of an aspiring general pediatrician. Specifically, the recommendations to "put yourself in their world" as opposed to trying to bring them to societal norms spoke to me and will impact my practice when seeing children on the spectrum moving forward. I believe MG Murphy said it best when noting that the advancements made specifically with the Autism Center in JBLM is exactly what makes pediatrics relevant in the military.

Aside from the esteemed speakers, there were multiple awards recognizing extraordinary individuals who continue to serve those involved in military pediatrics. Multiple preceptors from across all branches and programs, including some familiar faces from my program at SAMMC, took home well-earned awards and recognitions. I was also proud to be representing a program that had multiple abstracts accepted to present at this conference, including Dr Gale's presentation on an analysis of outcomes and interventions for female pediatric casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan, which was awarded the Howard Johnson Top Research Abstract.

In conclusion, I am immensely proud to be a military pediatrician, and beyond grateful for the Chapter to allow me to be able to participate in this unique experience. I value the exposure I have had during this past weekend, the colleagues, both new and old, who I was able to connect with during this experience, as well as the lessons passed on by those who have paved the way for pediatrics in the military. I look forward to implementing the lessons learned this week into my practice, and I hope to participate in this seminar in the years to come.

### **LT Rachel Neubert at Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS D)**

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the AAP National Conference. This was my first professional conference and it was a great experience.

On the first day, I attended the Section on Pediatric Trainees where the AAP President-elect discussed this year's new advocacy campaign "Protect Kids: Trainees for Firearm Safety." The group also voted on new resolutions. During the opening plenary session, LaToshia Rouse spoke about resiliency in the face of chronic illnesses. She has an older son with autism and triplets born at twenty-six weeks. She discussed how important it was when her pediatrician actually took the time to slow down and truly ask how she was doing and help her develop a plan. She was followed by Josh Shipp who spoke about "The Power of One Caring Adult". He addressed the difference we can make if we take the time to care and be there for the child. It was such a powerful message. Finally, Justice Sonia Sotomayor spoke about her new book, *Just Ask: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You* and answered questions from children in the audience. That night, I was able to attend the New Orleans Experience! at the National World War II Museum. There were light snacks, and the museum was open to independent exploration. It is an amazing museum with lots of great history.

The next day was the Section on Uniformed Services. After introductions were made, the Outstanding Service and Dave Berry Awards were given out. It was inspiring to hear what other military physicians are doing in their careers. All awardees were very deserving. There were wonderful speakers to include a key note provided by Air Force Major General Sean Murphy who has had an extraordinary career and shared his experiences on how to be a good leader. Lunch consisted of mentoring and networking while the poster presentations were available for review. After lunch, there were more presentations.

In the afternoons and on the third day, I had the chance to explore other educational sessions of my choosing. Since these elective sessions were a primary reason that I wanted to go to NCE, I attended as many sessions as I could. These included Lumps and Bumps in Children (a dermatology lecture), Reading Journals with a Critical Eye, Communicating the Science of Vaccines to Parents, the Public and the Media, and another dermatology lecture which consisted of a case with images and audience participation via phone polling.

Going to this conference allowed me to meet and network with many other military and civilian pediatricians; students, residents, and attendings; generalists and specialists. This was an invaluable experience. Anyone who is given the opportunity should participate should do so.

### **USW Chapter sponsored social gathering during NCE**



NMCS D reunion (with photo bomb by LCDR Todd Hansen, internal medicine (spouse of Maj (sel) Alexandra Hansen))



pediatric residents (Drs. Betancourt, Sonney, Bowers, Weber) and staff mingling over drinks



TAMC, MAMC, and NMCSO staff



SAUSHEC reunion (Drs. Butler, Carr, and Gale)



USN Okinawa reunion



Enjoying good food and company



NMCS D Catching up (Drs. Cadotte, Weisse and Michalski)

**NCE 2020 – 2-6 October 2020 Hope to see everyone in Sunny San Diego, CA**



**Resident CATCH (Community Access To Child Health) Corner**

CPT Matthew Nestander

The 2020 CATCH Grant Cycle < <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/compeds/catch/Pages/CATCH-Grants.aspx> > is open!

Application deadline – 15 January 2020

I would encourage all to apply. If anyone has ideas that want to discuss or help submitting a grant please email me at [matthew.a.nestander.mil@mail.mil](mailto:matthew.a.nestander.mil@mail.mil)

**Chapter Grant Coordinator**

Norman J. Waecker, Jr., MD FAAP



Please note the change of email address for the Chapter Grant Coordinator, Norman J. Waecker Jr. MD. MPH, FAAP, [njwaecker@gmail.com](mailto:njwaecker@gmail.com)

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