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VISITS NAMRU-6



NAMRU-SA CHANGE OF COMMAND HIGHLIGHTS EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH & STELLAR OPERATIONS (COVER)

From Naval Medical Research Unit - San Antonio Public Affairs



SAN ANTONIO -- Capt. Thomas C. Herzig relieved Capt. Elizabeth A. Montcalm-Smith as commanding officer of the Naval Medical Research Unit – San Antonio (NAMRU-SA) during a change of command held at Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Aug. 24.

Montcalm-Smith assumed command of NAMRU-SA June 2015, having previously served as the Executive Officer at Naval Medical Research Center in Silver Spring, Maryland.

“In the Navy, we say to excel, you have to be brilliant on the basics. This means that you have to maintain readiness of the staff while passing all the periodic inspections. In other words, you can’t be an outstanding research lab if you can’t pass a fiscal audit,” said Montcalm-Smith.

“One of the accomplishments I’m most proud of is our continuous innovation, while still being brilliant on the basics,” said Montcalm-Smith. Montcalm-Smith and her team were experts on the basics passing all inspections, including the 2017 Medical Inspector General site visit and a fiscal audit where NAMRU-SA received the highest rating available for the audit inspection.

However, the mission of NAMRU-SA is science and as she balanced the many demands of internal and external reviews and inspections, she made certain that getting the science done was first and foremost. Under Montcalm-Smith’s leadership, NAMRU-SA crossed new performance thresholds resulting in a nearly 2-fold increase in completed products from 2015 to 2016.

With a focus on readiness for the warfighter, Montcalm-Smith pioneered NAMRU-SA’s anti-venom research initiative which resulted in two provisional patent applications. This new phage-based universal antidote for the treatment of snakebite venom could clearly translate to treatment products equally beneficial in a civilian setting.

Rear Adm. Paul D. Pearigen, commander, Navy Medicine West and Chief of the Navy Medical Corps, served as the principal speaker of the ceremony.

“This is a day of celebration for Elizabeth Montcalm-Smith, Thomas Herzig, their families, and a special day for NAMRU-SA,” said Pearigen. “Today we are honored to express our personal gratitude and thanks to a superb officer, formally effect a change in command, and welcome in another outstanding commanding officer.” ...(cont.)

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Capt. Thomas C. Herzig (left, front) assumed command of Naval Medical Research Unit - San Antonio (NAMRU-SA), Aug. 24, relieving Capt. Elizabeth A. Montcalm-Smith (right, front).

(Photo by Jerry Wright/502nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs)

Capt. Thomas C. Herzig assumed command of Naval Medical Research Unit - San Antonio (NAMRU-SA) Aug. 24, relieving Capt. Elizabeth A. Montcalm-Smith. NAMRU-SA serves as one of the leading research and development laboratories of the U.S. Navy under the Department of Defense and is one of eight subordinate research commands in the global network of laboratories operating under the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC), Silver Spring, Maryland.

(Photo by Jerry Wright/502nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs)



Rear Adm. Paul D. Pearigen, commander, Navy Medicine West and Chief of the Navy Medical Corps, delivers remarks during a change of command ceremony held at Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. During the ceremony, Capt. Thomas C. Herzig relieved Capt. Elizabeth A. Montcalm-Smith as commanding officer of the Naval Medical Research Unit- San Antonio(NAMRU-SA).

(Photo by Jerry Wright/502nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs)



NAVY SURGEON GENERAL VISITS U.S. NAVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH UNIT No. 6 - PERU (FEATURE)

From U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs



LIMA, Peru (NNS) -- Navy Surgeon General Vice Adm. Forrest Faison met with several senior Peruvian and U.S. officials and visited Peruvian naval medical facilities, Aug. 28-31.

Faison, who is also chief, U.S. Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, was joined by Force Master Chief, Hosea Smith.

While in Peru, he conducted two all hands calls with military and civilian staff members assigned to U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 6 - Peru (NAMRU-6) in Lima and Iquitos, Peru and received tours of both facilities.

Faison thanked both staffs for their dedication and commented on how impressed he was with the great work they do in support of service members around the globe.

“Our Sailors and Marines have to be ready to fight in any environment to preserve peace and stability around the world,” said Faison. “That’s why what you do is so important. We have to keep our Sailors and Marines healthy to do their jobs. Every Sailor and Marine is important to our mission.”

He also discussed how important NAMRU-6’s current research efforts are to ensuring command leaders, medical planners and health care providers have the latest information related to infectious disease threats, tools and techniques available in a rapidly changing operational environment.

“Medicine is changing rapidly. The things we do to keep Sailors and Marines healthy are changing as well,” said Faison. “The Navy’s research commands, of which you are a part, are playing an important role looking at new ways of protecting our Sailors and Marines from infectious diseases, saving lives and keeping people healthy. You are leading a revolution in medicine.”

Faison also highlighted the importance of the United States and Peru’s strong relationship and efforts to grow and strengthen the bonds between the two countries.

“Our friendship with Peru, the friendship between our militaries, is not only important to preserving peace and stability in light of the global challenges we face, it is important because of our ability to respond to natural disasters to save lives,” said Faison....(cont.)

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NAMRU-DAYTON HOSTS TRI-SERVICE TOXICOLOGY CONSORTIUM

By Megan Mudersbach, Public Affairs Officer, Naval Medical Research Unit - Dayton



DAYTON, Ohio -- Naval Medical Research Unit - Dayton (NAMRU-D) hosted a Tri-Service Toxicology Consortium (TSTC) meeting at Tec^Edge Wright Brothers Institute, August 16-17. More than fifty scientists from Navy, Air Force, and Army research facilities joined on-site and virtually.

Attendees represented NAMRU-D, U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, 711th Human Performance Wing, U.S. Army Public Health Center (USAPHC), U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center and U.S. Army Engineer Research Development Center’s (USAERDC) Materials Testing Center.

“I realize the importance of this group to national defense, our warfighters, Department of Defense civilians and the population at large,” said Cmdr. William Howard, NAMRU-D executive officer to the group to kick off the meeting.

Through close interaction with participating agencies, the group is organized to coordinate, optimize, and communicate recent toxicology information and data to protect human health and the environment for the Department of Defense (DoD).

According to Dr. Mark Johnson, Chair of TSTC and Toxicology Portfolio Director at USAPHC, the group must align themselves and be agile to meet the needs of the warfighter.

NAMRU-D scientists provided two separate project updates.

Dr. Lisa Sweeney, research physical scientist at NAMRU-D, presented new work for the Navy investigating the impact of physiological adaptations associated with an extreme environment - diving.

Dr. Andrew Keebaugh, post-doctoral fellow for the Environmental Health Effects Laboratory, NAMRU-D, shared his research looking at the respiratory, cardiovascular and neurological health effects exposures in theater.

Dr. Brian Lukey, Secretary of TSTC and senior toxicologist at Air Force Research Laboratory, said, “TSTC is a model for DoD.”

Air Force scientists provided ten project updates on several research efforts. USAFSAM researchers Patrick Mclendon and Daniel Cowan presented work on measuring phenotype variation in physiological response to chemical substances through comparative genetics.

TSTC will hold a teleconference, November 2017, to focus the science of toxicology toward the pressing needs of the DoD to minimize duplication and enhance mission capabilities.

NAMRU- DAYTON RECOGNIZED AS INNOVATIVE, EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE

By Megan Mudersbach, Public Affairs Officer, Naval Medical Research Unit- Dayton

DAYTON, Ohio -- Naval Medical Research Unit - Dayton (NAMRU-D) was honored with the 2017 When Work Works Award for exemplary workplace practices.

Phillip L. Parker, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce President, presented the award to NAMRU-D's commanding officer, August 23. The award recognizes employers of all sizes across the country who offer a variety of employee initiatives such as work-life fit policies, flexible scheduling and transition to parenthood programs.

"The support of NAMRU-D by the Dayton community has been tremendous. Together with our Air Force colleagues, local industry and academic collaborators, we are having a national impact," said Captain Rees Lee, NAMRU-D commanding officer.



NAMRU-D was evaluated on factors associated with employee health, well-being and engagement; opportunities for learning; a culture of trust; work-life fit; supervisor support for work success; autonomy; and satisfaction with earnings, benefits and opportunities for advancement. Winners undergo a rigorous assessment that emphasizes the real-life experiences of employees and incorporates national benchmarks of employer practices from the National Study of Employers and the employee experiences from the National Study of the Changing Workforce. Two-thirds of an organization's winning score is based on a survey of employees.

The prestigious When Work Works Award is part of the Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM's), a national initiative helping employers become more successful by transforming the way they view and adopt effective and flexible work environment.

NAMRU-D is a major Department of Defense medical research command and the home of the Naval Aerospace Medical Research Laboratory and the Environmental Health Effects Laboratory. As a subordinate command to the Naval Medical Research Center, NAMRU-D conducts aerospace medical and environmental health effects research to enhance warfighter health, safety, performance, and readiness. NAMRU-D conducts research to address identified Fleet needs, resulting in products and solutions ranging from basic knowledge, to fielded technologies.

Follow NAMRU-D on Facebook @navalmedicalresearchunitdayton and visit us at www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmrc/Dayton.

R&D CHRONICLES: THE STORY OF DR. RIVERS AND THE ORIGIN OF NAMRU-2, PART I

By André B. Sobocinski, Historian, BUMED



"I was asked to take a trip to the South Pacific to see whether it would be useful to organize a medical research unit at the fighting front."

~Rear Adm. Thomas Milton Rivers, Medical Corps, USNR on the formation of NAMRU-2 (From an oral history with Saul Beniston, published posthumously in 1967)

The Rockefeller Institute, now Rockefeller University, in Manhattan, New York, has been the nation's preeminent biomedical research center since its inception in 1901. Over the course of its storied history, the Rockefeller Institute has been home to some of the most significant figures in medical science. Among them was the Jonesboro, Georgia-born Dr. Thomas Milton Rivers (1888-1962).

Rivers first came to the Rockefeller Institute in 1922 following several years at Johns Hopkins and a short stint in the Army Medical Corps. Over the next decade he would help establish virology as a unique discipline through his work on filterable viruses and studying the pathological effects of viral infections. His ground-breaking research on polio and oversight of the clinical trials for Dr. Jonas Salk's life-saving vaccine would only further solidify his scientific legacy.

His contributions to science go far beyond being a famous virologist and medical researcher. What is far less well-known about his career is the foundational role he played in the establishment of the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) No. 2—a name that has long been synonymous with the fight against infectious and communicable diseases in Asia.

Rivers joined the naval reserves in July 1940 while serving as director of the Rockefeller Institute Hospital. Soon after, he would begin persuading a number of his illustrious colleagues to do the same.

Under the guidance of the now "Commander" Rivers, this collective of medical reservists became, what was termed, the "Rockefeller Hospital Naval Research Unit." Throughout World War II working in conjunction with the Naval Hospital Brooklyn, this unit would take on some of the Navy's most severe cases of acute hepatitis, rheumatic fever and atypical pneumonia while also conducting cutting-edge research on the diseases of importance to the military.

In July 1943, Rivers relinquished the reins of the unit to serve on a naval commission in Washington, D.C. looking into the problems of scrub typhus and infectious hepatitis then plaguing the Armed Forces in the South Pacific. His first meeting would prove more than a little fortuitous for Rivers and the future of medical research. As he remembered in a 1961 oral history, "During the discussion, a great deal of doubt was expressed as to the utility of work performed by temporary commissions, and someone suggested that it might be a better idea if a permanent research unit were established close to the fighting lines to investigate medical problems as they came up"...(cont.)

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NAVY MEDICINE R&D ENTERPRISE COMMAND



Capt. Adam Armstrong
Commanding Officer
Medical Corps, USN



Capt. William Deniston
Executive Officer
Medical Service Corps, USN

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Commanding Officer
CAPT Adam Armstrong

Executive Officer
CAPT William Deniston

Director for Administration
Steven S. Legette

Public Affairs Officer
Doris Ryan