GLOBAL HEALTH ENGAGEMENT QUARTERLY

United States Air Force Global Health Engagement Newsletter

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

In this issue of the Global Health Engagement (GHE) newsletter we are featuring two recent articles on enduring DoD GHE initiatives. The first focuses on a partnership between the United Arab Emirates and the United States, ongoing since 2019, focused on Trauma, Burn and Rehabilitation Medicine (TBRM). Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) personnel are key players within this program that is improving trauma care systems and medical readiness. Our second feature article covers International Education and Training at the US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM). The Advanced Aerospace Medicine for International Medical Officers (AAMIMO) course is a unique opportunity to build enduring partnerships and increase interoperability between the U.S. and partner nation Air Forces.

Our spotlight this quarter is on Mr. Paul McCracken, Chief International Military Student Officer at USAFSAM. This is our first spotlight on an Air Force civilian. The Total Force team is critical for effective GHE. I enjoyed the opportunity to spend some time with Paul and the current AAMIMO course participants when they were recently here in the National Capital Region. He is an indispensable member of the USAFSAM team and the broader Air Force and DoD GHE community.

It’s the season of graduations! Congratulations to the four International Health Specialist (IHS) graduates of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Master of Public Health with Global Health Concentration, and two graduates of IHS/GHE Full-Spectrum Readiness Fellowships at Air Forces Central and Air Forces in Europe and Africa. These graduates are well prepared for their follow-on IHS assignments supporting GHE around the world.

In April, I was thrilled to support the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program Conference, participating in a Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Panel alongside Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne Bass and other senior leaders. What a great opportunity to share how GHE conducted by the AFMS Total Force supports national strategic priorities, including the DoD WPS Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan. The Department of the Air Force has recently published it’s WPS Strategic Action Plan, which is linked in our “In the News” section, and will further guide our incorporation of WPS principles in GHE programs and activities.

Best wishes for an enjoyable, and safe, summer!

Elizabeth A. Erickson, Colonel, USAF, MC
Chief, GHE Branch & IHS Program
U.S. Air Force medical personnel are working with sister services to partner with the United Arab Emirates to build a hub for complex trauma, burn and rehabilitation capabilities in Abu Dhabi.

The U.S. Department of Defense has committed to sharing trauma, burn and rehabilitative medicine best practices with partners through global health engagement.

In 2017, the Secretary of Defense directed elements of the DoD to collaborate with the UAE in a series of bilateral cooperation initiatives to deepen and expand military-to-military ties between the United States and this key regional partner. One of these initiatives focused on building an intensive, long term, bilateral joint military trauma and rehabilitative care capability within the UAE.

Personnel from the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, or USAFSAM, are facilitating a six-month education and training course for international students, supporting medical readiness and enhanced interoperability between the United States and partners.

USAFSAM is a renowned center for aerospace medical training and education, consultation, and research. USAFSAM is developing an unmatched network of Allies and partners by training personnel from around the world. Education and training are key elements of security cooperation and is one way the Department of Defense, conducts global health engagement.

International students can attend the same courses as U.S. Air Force personnel, like the Aerospace [...]
IHS SPOTLIGHT: MR. PAUL MCCrackEN

As a prior U.S. Air Force Independent Duty Medical Technician, Mr. Paul McCracken had done everything from providing home station medical care to expeditionary work with Special Operations Forces. During his career, McCracken was stationed all around the world working with partner nations and conducting global health engagement (GHE) before he knew it had a name. After 25 years in the Air Force, he retired as a Senior Master Sergeant and understood that his career path in GHE was just beginning. "Those early GHE experiences were formative for me. After years of working alongside my partner nation counterparts, I wanted to continue that path," said McCracken.

In 2016, McCracken became the civilian Chief International Military Student Officer at U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM). At USAFSAM, McCracken uses his cultural competency skills to coordinate with partner nation senior leaders, engage subject matter experts, and work with embassies to ensure international students are receiving the best education possible. "Witnessing the diverse perspectives of the international students in the classroom convinced me that this was my calling," McCracken said. As a GHE professional, McCracken collaborates with various partner nation counterparts daily. McCracken has honed his facilitation skills to bridge gaps and strengthen bonds in multinational settings. "The courses at USAFSAM provide a unique learning environment where we can share experiences with our partners. Strengthening relationships is one of the most important elements of our international education programs," said McCracken.

As a civilian in a military environment, McCracken recognizes the unique capability he brings to GHE. "Civilians bring continuity to GHE and strengthen partnerships. I can pull up my phone and have messages from students I worked with many years ago," said McCracken. McCracken also pointed out the benefit of a joint, military-civilian team for GHE when working with IHS personnel at Combatant Commands, Air Force Major Commands and Numbered Air Forces. "As a civilian, we need the knowledge and leadership of our active-duty military alongside us. It is valuable to have a mix of active-duty and civil service to strengthen and retain relationships with our partner nations," McCracken said.

Colonel Jeffrey Harris, USAFSAM Chief of the International Training Branch, also emphasized the value of civilians in GHE roles. "Mr. McCracken is our not-so-secret weapon when it comes to getting things done. His corporate knowledge about international training, as well as our USAFSAM processes, is essential to keeping the USAFSAM mission going. The experience and stability our civilian counterparts provide is invaluable," Harris said.

McCracken plans to continue this global health work in the future. "My wife and I would like to live abroad and give back to the communities we have worked alongside for many years."
2022 Q4 IHS SPECIAL EXPERIENCE IDENTIFIER (SEI) AWARDEES

Familiarized
Lt Col John Camacho Ayala
Lt Col Jonathan Hancock
Lt Col Justin Wright
Major Brittany Bonds
Major Oscar Castro
Major Sheryll Ann Quinto Frias
Major Deven Johnson
Major Lauren Koehn
Major Nicola Morrison
Major Geryn Paguio
Major Annalynn Pilarca
Major Melissa Proctor
Major Miranda Smith [AFR]
Major Timothy Soeken
Major Theodore Urbano
Captain Ahmed Al Ghadhban
Captain Alyssa Brown
Captain Erika Flack
Captain Mckenna Fox
Captain Satinder Garcha
Captain Kate Ovington [ANG]
Captain Michael Sandel [ANG]
1st Lt Amanda Aguilar

Enabled
MSgt David Garcia
TSgt Johan Clark
SSgt Tannya Velazquez

APPLY FOR THE IHS SEI

The next IHS SEI application due date is 3 Aug 2023. Download the most recent version of the application from the AFMS GHE MilSuite page: (CAC login required). You can also reference frequently asked questions on the MilSuite page for more information about the IHS SEI.

IHS CORE COMPETENCY CORNER

Cross-Cultural / Geo-Political Competence
Personnel will possess and develop the aptitude to quickly understand and adapt to different cultures internationally, particularly in regard to health systems, practices, and beliefs. Knowledge of international affairs and the geopolitical context of each country/region is encouraged. This involves the ability to communicate with partners with mutual respect that fosters productive engagements. This is one of ten competencies that International Health Specialists must maintain to be fully capable. Read about the others here.

GHE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The African Partnership Outbreak Response Alliance (APORA) Evaluation Study: Building Multisectoral Health Security Alliances Center for Global Health Engagement

Health Facility Planning: A Key Global Health Engagement Capability James B Goetschius, MS, USA

**IN THE NEWS**

**APORA medical symposium hosts 28 nations in Lusaka, Zambia**
Medical personnel from the Zambian Defence Force and United States Air Forces Europe-Air Forces Africa hosted the annual in-person African Partner Outbreak Response Alliance.

**West Virginia Air National Guard participates in Cooperacion IX**
Members of the West Virginia Air National Guard participated in a week-long humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercise in Lima, Peru, May 7-12 [..]

**Allies, partner nations collaborate at military nursing conference, enhance USAFE-AFAFRICA partnerships, readiness**
Nurses and medical professionals from 24 Allied and partner nations, including [..]

**Med Hawks sign MoU and increase interoperability**
The 8th Medical Group, alongside medical representatives from Gunsan Public Health, signed a memorandum of understanding at Kunsan Air Base, March 30, kicking off [..]

**DAF releases Women, Peace, Security Strategic Action Plan**

**In sync: 934th Airlift Wing organizes joint force training exercise**

**BK 2023 seeks ways to be more interoperable, more collaborative**

**Washington National Guard Shares Domestic Response Expertise**
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT GRADUATES

On June 15, four IHS Masters of Public Health with Global Health Concentration students graduated from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) – congratulations to Major Shanna Vaughan, Major Catherine Coss, Captain Emiko Perkins, and Major Benjamin Pass! They are headed to IHS assignments with a strong academic foundation of public and global health concepts.

Also, this summer we celebrate the first completion of the IHS/GHE Full Spectrum Readiness Fellowships - congratulations to Major Nicola Morrison (USAFE/AFAFRICA) and Major Scott Vrooman (AFCENT)! These fellowships are a year dedicated to the formal and informal training and education required to optimally perform as an IHS, and are a new pathway to an IHS assignment.

CAREER BROADENING, EDUCATION, & TRAINING

Academic Year 2024 Fellowship and MPH Applications

The Academic Year 2024 USU Master of Public Health [with Global Health concentration] and IHS/GHE Full Spectrum Readiness Fellowship application calls open to officers in early summer. It is best to routinely check with your individual Education and Utilization Branch in each Corps for the latest updates and information about applying to these programs. Both of these opportunities include a potential follow-on IHS assignment.

Email us your success stories and announcements to include in future editions at usaf.pentagon.af-sg.mbx.ihs-program-office@health.mil.

Engage with Air Force Medical Service:  
Engage with the IHS program and learn how to apply:

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