



Sailors first to go to VA police academy

Master at Arms' attendance at Department of Veterans Affairs Law Enforcement Training Center outgrowth of integration of Department of Defense and VA at Lovell

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

There was talk about having a Navy Master at Arms from the Lovell Federal Health Care Center attend the Veterans Affairs (VA) Police Academy, but it seemed to the two MAs serving at the FHCC that the chances of that actually happening were slim.

After all, no Active Duty Navy Sailors had ever enrolled and graduated from the VA's basic police academy course before.

"We never thought it would happen," said MA 1st Class Lamont Ransom, Leading Petty Officer of Security at Lovell FHCC. "It was unheard of," said Ransom, who also is the anti-terrorism training officer at the FHCC.

However, as the result of the hard work of many – including a kick-start by the Secretaries of the VA and the Department of Defense after their joint visit

"We never thought it would happen. It was unheard of."

MA1 Lamont Ransom

to Lovell FHCC in the spring of 2012 – Ransom and MA 2nd Class Joshua Lavine last October found themselves at the VA's Law Enforcement Training Center (LETC) in Little Rock, Arkansas.

"Both of us were honored to be selected to attend," Ransom said.

"We are proud to be part of the foundation started for the

integration of the VA and the Navy here at the FHCC."

"It greatly expanded my police knowledge," said Lavine, an investigator who will now add "patrolman" to his training experience. "Finally, the two different police entities can work together and be on the same page. I think we can learn from each other. There should be pretty good cohesion."

Graduation day at the LETC after eight weeks of training was an especially proud moment for the two, who were pleased to see a contingent of Lovell FHCC employees in attendance, including their supervisor Physical Security Officer Kenneth Brown, Lovell FHCC Command Master Chief Maurice Coffey, and Lovell FHCC Deputy Director and Commanding Officer José Acosta.

"I've been talking about this back home for weeks – every time I have the opportunity to speak before our FHCC Sailors and civilian staff in addition to our stakeholders – because this graduation today of two of our Navy Master-at-Arms Sailors from the VA Basic Police Officer Training Course is another exciting first for the Lovell FHCC," Acosta said in his speech at the late December graduation. "Most significantly, it's another sign of what's yet to come at the nation's first federal health care center."

Before the former Great Lakes Naval Health Clinic and the North Chicago VA Medical Center integrated to create the Lovell FHCC in 2010, there wasn't a need for Sailors to attend a VA police academy. But after integration, FHCC leaders placed a high



Above, Lovell Federal Health Care Center's two Master at Arms, in their Navy uniforms, stand out in the class at the VA (Veterans Affairs) Law Enforcement Training Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. MA 1st Class Lamont Ransom, center, and MA 2nd Class Joshua Lavine, center above Ransom, are the only active duty Sailors to have attended and graduated from the basic police course at the LETC. (Photo by Jason Phillips, LETC)

Left photo: With the additional police training from the VA under their belts, MA2 Lavine on the left, and MA1 Ransom will be able to function fully as military police officers on Lovell FHCC property. (Photo by Mary Waterman)

priority on seeking approval for MAs to serve as MPs (Military Police) on VA property.

"The graduation of these Sailors from this course represents the future of our facility and potentially other FHCCs, as we continue to take care of those who are serving in the military, those who have served and their families ... What a great example of FHCC being one team, putting the safety of our patients and staff at the center of what we do," Acosta said at the graduation ceremony.

Lovell FHCC Chief of Police John Samples said, "This was a long time in coming." Samples added

that many people from the FHCC, Navy Medicine East, Navy Bureau of Medicine, and the VA Office of Security and Law Enforcement worked "diligently for over four years for this to happen."

From the first day Brown, a physical security specialist, started working in the Lovell FHCC Protective Services Department in June, 2012, he said he's been impressed with the work of Ransom and Lavine. "We're very proud of them," Brown said, "but I didn't expect anything less. They are two of the sharpest MAs I've worked with."

Continued on page 3



Celebrate One Team One Family

Thank you to each and every one of our staff members for being part of the FHCC Team! Through your commitment, we provide excellent care - *Every Patient! Every Time!*

Leadership Commentary

This year will bring many new ventures at Lovell FHCC

New projects 'represent hours of work, days of dedication, ongoing ingenuity and willingness to accept change'



By Patrick L. Sullivan
Lovell FHCC Director

After a day of touring and talking to Lovell FHCC staff recently, members of the Recovering Warriors Task Force remarked that Lovell FHCC is "the model" for how an integration of Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs health care should look.

Co-chair of the task force, Ms. Suzanne Crockett-Jones, remarked, "This is a place where you show there truly can be joint operations."

She also went on to praise the enthusiasm of every employee they encountered and singled out the Caregiver Support Center in particular for having a "truly open door."

These sentiments echo those we receive from our many visitors, no matter who they are or why they come here.

Our visitors are all appreciative and supportive of what we are doing here on a daily basis: working together as one team, providing the best patient-centered care possible to our Veterans, Active Duty military and military families.

I see 2013 bringing more of the same – and much more. We will continue to draw well-deserved attention as we expand our Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Kenosha, cut the ribbon

"For example, how many people know we have telemetry services available on the Medical-Surgical floor that allow us to monitor patients' hearts remotely instead of just in the Critical Care Unit, or that our Women's Health Clinic recently began offering stereotactic breast exams?"

Patrick Sullivan, Director

on a beautiful new courtyard in our Community Living Center, move residents into our second Green House® home and construct two more, and complete renovations for our new Education and Simulation Center of Excellence.

We ask you all for a renewed commitment as we seek Magnet status recognizing excellence in nursing, implement room-service-style dining for our patients, and launch more Lean Rapid Improvement Events (RIE), including one to streamline our recruiting process.

Nearly every day, something new is going on here, all for the benefit of our patients, volunteers and staff.

For example, how many people know we have telemetry services available on the Medical-Surgical floor that allow us to monitor patients' hearts remotely instead of just in the Critical Care Unit, or that our Women's Health Clinic recently began offering stereotactic breast exams? Now our female patients will have the very latest technology available to them for non-surgical biopsies.

After two years of work, we have incorporated the downloading of EKGs so they are automatically loaded into a system that allows

providers to read them directly.

We continue to expand our use of tele-health technology for the convenience of patients, who now can receive medical care without traveling to the FHCC for every appointment. We are implementing tele-audiology, which allows us to test a patient at a remote location, in real-time, using the Internet.

For all of us here at Lovell FHCC, each of these things represents hours of work, days of dedication, ongoing ingenuity, and a willingness to accept change.

So I will thank you now, ahead of time, as we celebrate the new year and resolve to continue providing the best patient-centered care as well as continue to be the employer and destination of choice. And let us also continue on our mission of "Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes."

The Apollo

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Navy League honors Sailors of the Year

Lake County Navy League hosts dinner for Sailors and Lovell FHCC leaders



The Great Lakes Navy League recently honored Sailors of the Year from Lovell FHCC. From left to right are Captain James Oxford, Lovell FHCC interim Executive Officer; Captain José Acosta, Lovell FHCC Deputy Director/Commanding Officer; Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Kleinne Lapid, Senior Sailor of the Year; Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Steven Taylor, Junior Sailor of the Year; Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Basiru Yatim, Blue Jacket of the Year; Lovell FHCC Command Master Chief Maurice Coffey, and Patrick Sullivan, Lovell FHCC Director. (Photo Provided)

Healing: Recovery in their own words ...



Army Veteran German Estrada

(Editor's Note: "Healing" is a series written first-person by Veterans and military members who have experienced significant medical recovery in their lives and are willing to share their stories.)

Name: German Estrada
Branch of Service: U.S. Army
Combat Service: Operation Just Cause, 1989

I was the oldest of two children living at home with our single mother. I smoked pot in high school around my sophomore year, and from then on, got hooked. I loved being high. I was a "B" student throughout school. I played football and basketball. I joined the Army in 1989, went

to Ft. Benning, Ga. for infantry training and then was stationed at Ft. Ord, Calif. I experienced combat as part of Operation Just Cause in December, 1989. It was during this operation that Panamanian President Manuel Noriega was removed from office. Following this, I was assigned to South Korea for a year, then Ft. Drum, N.Y., from where I was discharged from the service in May, 1992.

While in the service, I was demoted for smoking marijuana. So, I was discharged as an E1 (private). But, before I was discharged, the first sergeant and captain at Ft. Drum wanted me to re-up. They promised me I would be promoted to corporal. I called my mom to see what she thought, and she said come home. So I did.

I returned home – we were living in Cicero, Ill. at the time. I got a job in Chicago at a warehouse for leather goods. I pretty much did what I wanted to; my employer never drug-tested me. So, I smoked pot like there was no tomorrow. I worked there for eight years until I got into a fight with another guy. Then I quit because of the pressure to quit or be fired.

From Cicero, we moved to Park City in 2001. I had a series of jobs, including building a house with a carpenter in Libertyville.

In December, 2002, I kept hearing voices in my head, which I thought came from the ladies at work talking about me. The voices were saying that I was doing drugs. This caused me to quit my job. The voices were always there but I thought everyone had them too and that it was normal. I thought I could hear people's thoughts, believed that spies everywhere were following me.

That's when things got really weird, and I started believing that while watching television, people were sending messages to me through the TV set. I started walking around the neighborhood in Waukegan trying to fix everything. I was writing down license plates, thinking they were spies. I thought people were following me. I hardly slept.

One day I walked from Waukegan to Beach Park, where I ended up at a school on some swings. Police showed up and caught me for trespassing. I went to the Lake County Jail for three months. Then I was sent to Elgin Mental Health Center for another three months. The judge told me the charges were dropped, and I was discharged on medication. I went home but had to go to the Lake County Mental Health Clinic (LCMHC) for treatment every week for two months. Upon

the suggestion of a counselor at the LCMHC, I came to the VA (Veterans Affairs) in 2003. After stopping my medications, I was hospitalized at the VA from May to June, 2006. During this time, I enrolled in the Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) and Day Treatment Center program. I was awarded disability and didn't work for seven years.

In 2009, MHICM referred me to VRU (Vocational Rehabilitation Unit)/Supported Employment, where they helped me get a part-time job at Naval Station Great Lakes through Goodwill Industries, washing dishes. Following this, work was sporadic, and I was again out of work for about two years. I worked for a labor temp agency and then, with the assistance of my supported employment counselor, Roberto, got a job at a local major retail store. This has been the best thing that has happened to me in a long time. I am now a Maintenance Associate, working full time. I am a happy camper thanks to VRU/Supported Employment at Lovell FHCC.

My advice to others with schizophrenia is take your medications, do things that make you happy in your life, and don't give up hope. Above all, stay active!

Navy MAs attend VA basic police officer course (cont.)

Continued from page 1

Class subjects at the academy included use of firearms, batons and pepper spray, driver's education, constitutional law, VA-specific laws and regulations, ground defense recovery, and how to manage suicidal and PTSD patients. "This was the first time I've been through that type of training before," Ransom said. "We were training with cops with seven, 15, 20 years of experience on street forces ... to have that type of knowledge already there; it was just a good experience."

The training was intense, Ransom said, and not everyone graduated. Together, the two came up with a plan early on to team up, keep up and pass every test. "It was a big accomplishment," he said. "We were right there in the fight the whole way."

In Lavine's mind, one of the most notable things about the course was the instructors' motivation. "They consider everyone they are dealing with as brothers and sisters."

"They hold themselves to a high level of dignity when it comes to

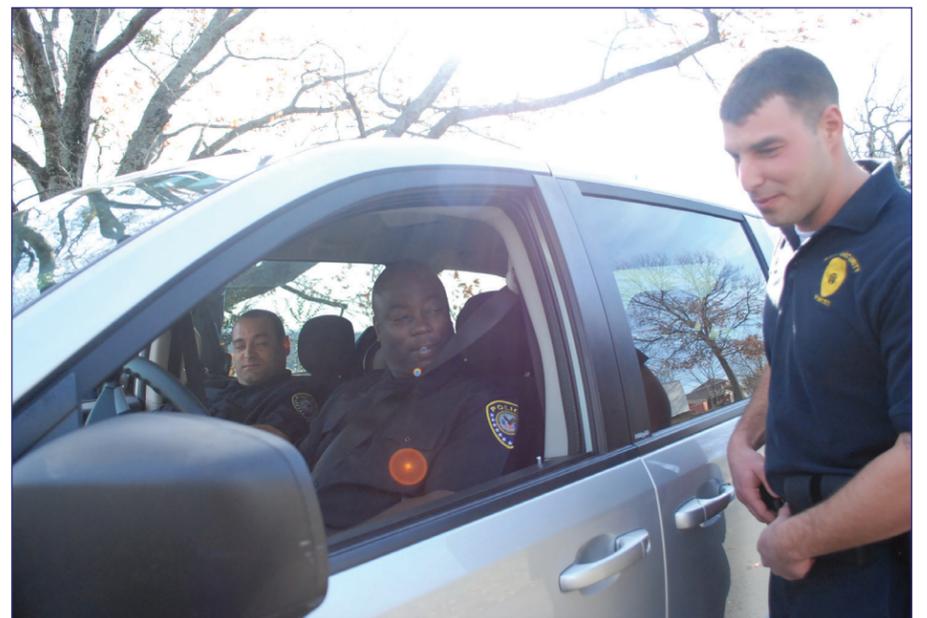
working with Veterans," Lavine continued. "They taught us the importance of understanding the VA mission; to treat Veterans with special dignity and respect because of their status as Veterans."

The Navy MAs arrive at the FHCC "highly trained," Samples said. The additional training the MAs received from LETC was focused on a different patient population. "Understanding the Veteran patient and the police's methods for special interaction with Veteran patients was the primary reason I insisted they get the same training as the VA police."

One of Ransom's best memories from the experience involved earning the respect of an instructor who was himself a former MA.

Trent Pettis presented Ransom and Lavine with LETC Special Agent Coins. Besides the overall best student, the academic leader and the "top cop" on the firing range, Lavine and Ransom were the only other two in the class of 60 to receive the coins.

"He was very proud that we went through the course and conducted ourselves well," Ransom said.



Above, MA 2nd Class Joshua Lavine conducts a simulated traffic stop at the VA (Veterans Affairs) Law Enforcement Training Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. Below, MA 1st Class Lamont Ransom investigates an accident scene at the LETC. (Photos by Jason Phillips, LETC)



First residents move into Lovell FHCC's Green House home

By the end of first week, eight former Community Living Center residents settle into their home in Heroes Harbor



In the photo on the left, new Green House® home resident Richard Guazzo checks out what's in the fridge of his new home on move-in day Jan. 7. Guazzo said he looks forward to "peace and quiet" in his new home. Above, Adrienne Burke, a World War II Veteran, shows off her bed in her new room. She plans to get an easy chair and set up her task light for knitting. She was escorted to her new home by one of her nurses in the Community Living Center, Elvira Balbin, who poses with her in the photo center left of the page. (Photos by Mary Waterman)



Director Patrick Sullivan. "This is a tremendous milestone in our history."

Residents started arriving after breakfast the first day, along with Lovell FHCC staff members who work in the home. As a cook prepared a lasagna lunch – the first meal to be served in the home – staff and the new occupants of the home excitedly awaited movers scheduled to bring their belongings later in the day.

"I'm excited and a little emotional," said resident Adrienne Burke, who was escorted to the home by one of her long-time nurses Elvira Balbin. "They took care of me for four years ... I'm going to miss them."

Burke, an Army WWII Veteran, was referring to employees of the CLC, where she was a resident for nearly five years before volunteering to move. As she waited for her belongings to arrive, Burke showed Balbin around the home, including Burke's new room and bathroom, both private.

Burke pointed out where she will hang her oil paintings and where she hopes to add a recliner and place her task light, "for knitting." Burke joked that as long as she

could find her toothbrush and a change of clothes later the first day, she would be set until one of her granddaughters arrived to help her unpack later in the week.

The Green House® homes represent a revolution in medical care for long-term residents who require skilled care services. In each home, 10 residents will have their own rooms and bathrooms. Communal spaces include the living room, den and kitchen, where there is a table large enough for all the residents, as well as two staff members.

Two "universal workers," also called "shahbaz" as part of the Green House® home model, will be on duty at all times. Shahbazim will take care of residents, cook and do light housekeeping. Residents will have the freedom to live their lives as independently as possible, from making menu choices to deciding when and where they will participate in activities in and outside the homes.

"This is very different," said Antonette Lear, formerly a nursing assistant elsewhere at Lovell FHCC and now a shahbaz in the first Green House® home. "It's a home-like environment. You can sit down with residents and just be with them, and they don't have to eat at a certain time."

Nauline Johnson, who was a certified nurse assistant in acute psychology at Lovell FHCC, said her new job as a shahbaz is a promotion and one she's been looking forward to for a long time. "I can be more involved with



RN Wali Shakoor, who is assigned to the first Green House® home, helps set up medical equipment on move-in day. (Photo by Mary Waterman)

patients now. I get to enjoy life with them. It's a great exploration, an adventure."

Resident Richard Guazzo said he couldn't believe moving day had finally arrived. "I'm nervous; it's stress," he said as he waited in the kitchen area.

Guazzo, who has resided in the Lovell FHCC CLC for three years, said he is looking forward to "the quiet" in his new home. "All I need is room for my movies and my DVD player ... as for the rest, I'll just have to wait and see how it comes."

Lovell FHCC cut the ribbon on the first of what will be up to six homes in October, 2012. Ten more residents will move into the second home in late winter or early spring of this year.

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Moving day finally arrived in early January for the first residents of the Green House® home at Lovell Federal Health Care Center.

On Jan. 7, two Veterans who formerly lived in the FHCC's Community Living Center spent their first night in their private rooms, in their newly constructed home on the grounds of the main FHCC campus in North Chicago, Ill. Six more moved in by the end of the week.

"This is very exciting, especially for our first Green House® home residents," said Lovell FHCC



Shahbaz Nauline Johnson on the left, and Shahbaz Kris Dreiske, both on day shift, go over the staffing plan for the first Green House® home. (Photo by Mary Waterman)