



## Volunteers honored for work at FHCC

*Volunteers gave nearly 60,000 hours of time in FY 2013*

**By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore**  
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) volunteers received their passports April 9 at the Ramada Inn in Waukegan, Ill., and were on their way, collecting stamps in their

passports, and souvenirs, as they were welcomed into a room filled with boundless appreciation and gratitude towards them.

In conjunction with National Volunteer Week April 6-12, Lovell FHCC's Volunteer Awards Program – themed "Passport to Adventure" – honored nearly 200 volunteers.

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*In the far right photo, Lovell Federal Health Care Center volunteers get their "passports" stamped, and pick up their umbrella appreciation gifts as they enter the annual volunteer luncheon. In the immediate right photo, Captain José Acosta, Lovell FHCC acting director and commanding officer, presents Floyd Eubanks, Jr., with the 20,000 Hour Appreciation Award. Michael Hiley, not pictured, also reached the level of 20,000 volunteer hours, the highest level. (Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)*



## FHCC Combat Casualty Care course simulates battlefield

*Participants learn how to treat combat casualties*

**By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore**  
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

With what little steam they had left, the students trudged to the front of the vacant barracks, breathing heavily and struggling to remain standing under the weight of their medical backpacks.

It was the end of a three-mile force march in full uniform but there was no time to recover. Without missing a beat, their instructors had them hit the ground for more exercises. This, however, would prove to be the easy part of their morning.

Six Lovell Federal Health Care

Center (FHCC) Sailors, one Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) police officer and one Navy reservist completed Lovell FHCC's Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) provider course last month.

The five-day course is designed to enhance operational readiness by ensuring students possess the basic skills required in an operational or tactical setting.

"We teach junior corpsmen and new field medical corpsmen how to treat patients under fire," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (FMF) Dane Adams, the Lovell FHCC education and training department leading petty officer.

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*Department of Veteran Affairs police officer Scott Hubler, right, and Hospitalman Zachariah Cirgis, back, provide cover for a patient during the Lovell FHCC's Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) provider course. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)*



**Celebrate Nurses Week May 6 - 12**  
**Lovell FHCC Nurses lead change and advance health care**

## May is the time to honor work of nurses at Lovell FHCC



By **Captain José Acosta**  
Acting Lovell FHCC Director

What an exciting week we have this month when we honor and celebrate the work of our civilian and active duty nurses here at Lovell FHCC.

May 6-12 is national Nursing Week, and once again we have the chance to truly commend the nursing community for its contributions to our proactive, personalized, patient-centered health care. Activities during the week include a day of presentations, posters and awards May 7, the annual Professional Nurses Ball May 10 is a top draw, and May 13, the Navy Nurse Corps will celebrate its birthday with a cake-cutting.

I could write a book on the excellent patient-centered care that would not, and *could not*

happen, here without our dedicated, compassionate and highly skilled nurses, but instead I have just one column. Did you know we have nearly 400 nurses at Lovell FHCC – the exact number is 390. Of those, 13 are advance practice nurses – nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists and certified registered nurse anesthetists?

We are thankful for them every day, but Nurses Week is a special time for them, and us, to step back and reflect on what it means to be a nurse, especially what it means at Lovell FHCC, where we continue on our Magnet® journey of nursing excellence.

You should have heard about Magnet by now – they call it a journey for a reason. It's a long road we started last year with our application. It's hard work – ask any nurse – and the destination will result in far-reaching, positive outcomes for everyone at Lovell FHCC, from patients and their caregivers to all of our employees. Magnet means we are supporting nurses in their work to improve patient outcomes, and acknowledge the excellent work, every day, of extraordinary nurses.

I would like you to join me in appreciating the influence nurses have in our lives as professionals, friends, patients and coworkers.

Nurses are lifelong learners. They adapt to meet the needs of many. They lead and advocate for the best care for their patients. They are integral to the success of any health organization.

One new way we are recognizing our Lovell FHCC nurses will be unveiled during our May nurse festivities – the DAISY Award program. We will name a DAISY nurse every two months. DAISY nurses will be nominated by patients, visitors, physicians and other employees, and will be selected by a committee. The DAISY Foundation established the award program in 1999 to recognize the outstanding clinical skills and compassionate care given by nurses every day. This type of nurse recognition aligns with Magnet goals to increase the satisfaction of nurses, in turn improving customer satisfaction.

Also part of Magnet, and supported by the The Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Future of Nursing Report, the importance of enhancing the profession by encouraging nurses to practice to the full extent of their education and training, and achieve higher levels of education, cannot be understated.

The IOM report illustrates how nurses lead change and advance health care. Nursing is the largest

profession of the nation's health care workforce. The FHCC understands that nurses must achieve higher education and training levels to ensure the delivery of safe, patient-centered care in a demanding health care environment. At the FHCC, we provide scholarships to support this endeavor.

Currently, 75 percent of our nurses hold a bachelor's degree in nursing, or higher. I am excited about the work of the nursing councils to support lifelong learning, especially the Nursing Education and Professional Development Council, which encourages nurses to submit posters at local and national conferences. Recently a group presented at the 10th Annual Evidence-Based Practice conference at Edwards Hospital.

The bottom line is that *an educated, competent nurse saves lives*. So please join me in supporting our nurses, and if you are a nurse, congratulations and thank you for all you do here at Lovell FHCC to further our mission of "Readying Warrior and Caring for Heroes."

### The Apollo

The Apollo is the official newsletter of the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, published monthly for staff, Veterans, military families and volunteers. The Apollo newsletter is designed by the FHCC Communication Department  
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A 2P was held recently to use Lean principles to redesign microbiology and the blood bank. (Photo Provided)

lab representing the future of microbiology. Admin Lab Director Adam Bauer was the 2P leader. The "process owners" were Microbiology Supervisor Gordon Escondo and Blood Bank Supervisor Janki Patel. Partners were Kurt Schild, engineering; Stephanie Traynoff, lab manager, and Maureen Wine, core lab supervisor. Lab staff filled the role of providing "fresh eyes" on the project. The LSS Sensei was Brian Poynor. Adjunct facilitators were Buck Hopkins, LSS, and Cmdr. Marc Herwitz.

## Lean Six Sigma "2P" project improves laboratory

Laboratory, blood bank request LSS help with redesign

By **James R. "Buck" Hopkins, Jr.**  
Health Systems Specialist, Lean Six Sigma

the sub-teams voted on the designs to determine an overall winner.

Feedback from lab staff members was used in conjunction with input from each sub-team to finalize a new hybrid design for the new spaces. The new design was then mocked-up, life-sized, with furniture and outlines on the floor. This ensured proposed design ideas would fit and would support the new process flow.

The team also had to plan ahead. Designs accommodated future workload expansion and technology upgrades. One idea was auto-notification using audio-visual alerts when samples arrive in central processing identified for microbiology. Other ideas involved electronic microscopes equipped with cameras and a display monitor to use for education and training; under-the-desktop computer monitors, to allow for increased horizontal workspace; wireless workstations, and USB/Ethernet ports surrounding the center workstations.

The team worked diligently to create a state-of-the-art

The purpose was to gather their insight and make recommendations, suggestions on redesigning microbiology from two spaces into one. The team underwent a valuable, but difficult process, using Lean tools to redesign the new spaces around the flow of the processes instead of the reverse – determining process flow based on workplace design.

Team members brainstormed the key requirements for each of the rooms and were then divided into three smaller teams. In a friendly competition, each sub-team was charged with creating a new design, to scale, and promoting their designs to the lab staff for comments and input. After "selling" their ideas,

## TCCC course field exercise tests students' mettle (cont.)

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"The course is vital for corpsmen and Marines' lives, so that a corpsman knows how to treat a patient effectively and what to do with them while they're on the 'X,' which is where they were injured, and what to do with them after they get them into a safe zone, and then how to medevac them."

The course begins with two days of classroom instruction, where the students learn various medical treatments and become familiar with operating in an intense environment. Next, they spend two days receiving hands-on training in specific skills such as needle thoracentesis, cricothyrotomies and venipuncture. On the final day, students participate in a field exercise, where they must treat patients as they move through a simulated battlefield environment.

Adams said one of the most important things the course teaches is how to effectively apply a tourniquet. Students carry a tourniquet in their pocket at all times during the course. At random times, instructors call out a bleeding injury to an appendage, and the students have no more than 30 seconds to apply the tourniquet securely to their own arm or leg.

The final day begins with a three-mile force march requiring students to run and perform various exercises from the starting point at the front of Naval Station Great Lakes, in Great Lakes, Ill., to where the casualties are located in vacant barracks on the opposite side of the base. Adams said this allows them to experience the

fatigue they would face in a real scenario.

"Everything we teach in the course should be muscle memory, so even if they're tired and not thinking properly, being distracted by all sorts of sights and sounds around them, they'll still be able to do what they were trained to do," Adams said.

Once the students arrive to the location, they enter the building in teams and strategically maneuver to each patient location in the building. As they move through the building, they are faced with many challenges, such as the sound of gunfire, enemy combatants jumping out of rooms and low lighting and visibility, to name a few.

"We dealt with basically everything you're going to deal with in combat situations as far as casualties," said Hospitalman Michael Stenhoff, from Lovell FHCC's pharmacy department. "That's the most important thing, is saving lives; that's our job as corpsmen, so I feel really prepared."

Stenhoff completed the class in preparation for Field Medical Training Battalion (FMTB), before his next duty assignment at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

"We went over everything as far as books and simple applications and really detailed explanations on how to do everything, and we go over it more than once," Stenhoff said. "It's basically as real as it gets without being real, and that's what totally gets you ready, and you



Hospitalman Zachariah Cirgis provides cover while his partner cares for a casualty during the Lovell FHCC's Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) provider course's field exercise. The course is designed to enhance operational readiness by ensuring students possess the basic skills required in an operational or tactical setting. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

realize what the seriousness of the situation you're dealing with."

TCCC is available to military members and civilians. Past graduates include Lovell FHCC's

hospital corpsmen, VA police officers, as well as members of the North Chicago Police Department. For more information about TCCC, call the education and training department at 222-610-4555.

## Volunteers are the 'lifeblood' of Lovell FHCC (cont.)

Continued from page 1

The volunteers dedicated their time and talent, and gave monetary donations to Lovell FHCC during the past year.

During the program, Kenny List, chief of community affairs at Lovell FHCC, emphasized the volunteers' importance to the operation of Lovell FHCC. "You make everything that we do possible," List said. "I believe that the FHCC does not operate

without volunteers, or at least does not operate well and smoothly, so this is our way to say thank you for everything you do."

During fiscal year 2013, more than 800 volunteers and six therapy dogs volunteered, adding up to more than 57,000 hours. Volunteers helped in a variety of programs at Lovell, including front desk greeters, hospice volunteers in the "No Veteran Dies Alone" program, greeters in the Caregiver

Support Center, hydration team members, therapy dog handlers, unofficial librarians pushing the book and magazine cart, assistants for patient recreation activities, My HealtheVet volunteers, patient escorts, and many other activities.

"The volunteers at the FHCC are our lifeblood," Lovell FHCC Acting Director and Commanding Officer Capt. José Acosta said. "They are there when our patients are ill. They are there when many have given their last breath. They are there when our patients are lonely; and be assured that loneliness is very, very bad. That's the big difference our volunteers make."

The annual luncheon is an opportunity for Lovell FHCC to show gratitude and recognize the volunteers who work tirelessly to support the facility. Army Veteran Nick Angelopoulos, from Waukegan, Ill., said he enjoyed the luncheon and appreciated that so many volunteers were recognized for what they do. He has volunteered at Lovell FHCC for 11 years and has accumulated more than 10,000 volunteer hours.

He said he stays active, lending a hand in many volunteer areas.

"I've been handling people my whole life," Angelopoulos said. "I like working with people, I've been helping people ever since I was 10 years old."

Donald Nys, a retired Navy chief hospital corpsman, said he also had fun at the luncheon, which he attended with his wife, Sandy, also a longtime volunteer. Nys helps his wife as the hospital representative for the American Legion Auxiliary. He volunteers in the Caregiver Support Center on Fridays and helps out in community affairs. Nys said he enjoys working with the patients, and helping with events such as the spring and fall dances and seeing the patients dress up and have a good time.

For more information on how to get involved in volunteering and helping the mission of "Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes" at Lovell FHCC, contact List at 224-610-3139 or Wayne Bolden at 224-610-3145.



Above left, Lovell FHCC Acting Director Captain José Acosta poses with Nick Angelopoulos, who was honored for 10,000 volunteer hours. Above right, Acosta stands with Sandy and Donald Nys, who were each recognized for giving more than 1,000 hours. (Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)



# Healing: Recovery in their own words ...



**Allen Hasselson**

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

**Name:** Allen Hasselson  
**Branch of Service:** U.S. Air Force  
**Dates of Service:** 1972-1975

I grew up in North Chicago with my parents, my brother and my sister. I always felt like an average kid when I was young. I was always a good student and was able to skip the fourth grade because school came easy for me. After completing high school, I

enrolled in Oakton Community college. College was a good experience but I decided to drop out and join the Air Force to serve my country. I served at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas where I worked as an air traffic controller.

Being an air traffic controller is a hard job. At this time in my life, I started to experience problems with my mood. I was "manic" a lot. When I was manic, I had lots of energy, drank a lot and used cocaine on the weekends. While this was going on, I did not realize that I had a mental illness. Later, while I was still in the service, I was diagnosed with manic depression.

I was discharged from the Air Force in 1975 after I was given the option for an early out due to my problems. It helped to not have the stress of being an air traffic controller.

I was married for 21 years to my first wife in 1977 and stayed clean and sober for 23 years. We had a daughter who has been, and still is, my biggest support. I relapsed to drug use in 1999 after the divorce and was in the hospital many times for drug problems and mental health problems. When I had these

problems, I would gamble a lot, spend money, go into debt and once was homeless for a month and a half. Although I was dealing with big problems, I was still able to work at different jobs. I am proud that I was a bookkeeper for Cook County from the early 1980s to the early 1990s. In the 1990s, I worked as a real estate agent and as salesman for a carpet company. I married a second time but she died a couple years later.

**How I came to Lovell FHCC:**

I first went to MHICM (Mental Health Intensive Case Management) about 14 years ago (through what was then the North Chicago Veterans Affairs Medical Center). They helped me a lot and got me a place to live at the Hervey House in North Chicago. Judy, my case manager, is the best. I was working as a bagger at a local food store for many years.

Then, I got sick. I had cancer, had surgery and treatment. I was weak and depressed and had to use a walker. This is when MHICM referred me to the PRRC – Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center.

At first, I didn't want to talk to anybody, but as I started to feel stronger, I started socializing

and made new friends. I did a lot of things in the community and encouraged other people to come with me. I learned skills which helped me make and keep friends, learned how to talk to people. I was the president of the member council for almost a year. I learned about healthy eating and lost weight through the MOVE program. I started thinking of what I can do outside of the PRRC, and someone suggested I go back to work since I had a pretty good work history.

When the new supportive employment specialist came to the VRU (Vocational Rehabilitation Unit), I decided to get a job. Chia Maier really helped me, and I found a job at Jewel. I love my job, and they love me (at my job). I am gaining muscles and feel better about myself. I'm saving money, and it feels good to be independent in my own apartment in Waukegan and have my own car. I feel like I worked hard on my recovery and have a good life now.

**My advice:**

The advice I would give to other Veterans in similar situations is to not wait to get support from the Lovell FHCC programs and get out and do things in the community with people you love and trust.

## Sailors hold flag at White Sox home opener



Sailors hold the American flag during the national anthem at the Chicago White Sox 2014 season home opener at U.S. Cellular Field. Sailors who participated in the event serve at Capt. James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago, Ill.; Great Lakes Naval Station, Great Lakes, Ill.; Recruit Training Command and other area commands. (Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

### LOVELL FHCC OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, May 15, 2 to 5 p.m.  
Bldg. 133EF Quarterdeck

Learn about health care services available at Lovell FHCC

Find More Online @ facebook.com/LovellFHCC



Lovell FHCC holds recycling event

Video shows excellent patient-centered care



- Earth Day celebrated
- Health Care Decisions Day
- ... and many more stories and photos!

Or Visit Our Website @ lovell.fhcc.va.gov