Happy 10th anniversary Lovell FHCC!

Lovell FHCC serves veterans, military patients

Lovell FHCC was dedicated as the nation’s first and only integrated federal health care facility a decade ago, during a well-attended ceremony in front of the new ambulatory care clinic and parking garage.

The integration came after nearly a decade of work, beginning with an idea to combine the services of the former North Chicago Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the nearby Naval Health Clinic Great Lakes. Both facilities were in danger of closing after the 1995 recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Committee, the Center for Naval Analysis 2002 recommendations and other realignment studies.

Today Lovell remains the only fully integrated federal health care center, employing 3,000 active duty and VA civilian staff.

Mural celebrates 10-year anniversary, promotes healing

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Where others see an expanse of bare concrete walls in the covered walkways between buildings on the sprawling Lovell FHCC campus, FHCC RN Michelle Franklin has always imagined an artist’s canvas.

Franklin envisions multiple life-sized murals adorning many of the walls in the walkway system known at the FHCC as the tramway.

“I started asking in 2008,” said Franklin, an artist and muralist herself. “Art is healing. It makes you stop and get out of your head.”

Franklin used the “stars aligned,” said Franklin, when she joined other FHCC staff members, veteran patients and community muralists to paint a mural in a busy section of the tramway.

The mural gave veterans an opportunity to participate in much needed art therapy during the pandemic, said FHCC Recreation Therapist Elizabeth La Combe, one of the project leaders. “It gives all staff and patients – everyone who walks through the tramway - something beautiful to look at, creating positive feelings for all.”

The mural project also is helping the FHCC celebrate its 10-year anniversary this month. A more than 6-foot tall portrait of the facility’s namesake - former Apollo astronaut and retired Navy Captain James A. Lovell - appears on the left side. Next is the moon, an Apollo spacecraft, the Lovell FHCC logo, a bald eagle and a serviceman silhouetted in front of a U.S. flag, and finally an image of a veteran being cared for by a provider.

The mural resulted from a partnership between Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods and the FHCC, and was funded by an Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs Cash Grant and the McCormick Foundation.

“This mural symbolizes the hope and healing that Lovell has committed too since our inception ten years ago,” said FHCC Director Dr. Robert Buckley. “We celebrate the veterans and artists who made this project possible, especially Brushwood Center.”

Combat veteran and FHCC staff member Romney Dodd didn’t hesitate to get involved. Dodd, who served 16 years in the Navy, both enlisted and as an officer in the Nurse Corps, said, “I’m proud of the role I play here at the FHCC and the opportunity to support my fellow veterans, but this project felt like an opportunity to step away from that and do something creative.”

Waukegan veteran Jairo Andrade, who also served in the Navy, said painting the mural lines up with what he learned as a FHCC Pain University patient. “I’m guessing this is what Pain University is all about,” he said when interviewed during a June painting session.

Andrade said Pain University taught him healing and alternative ways to alleviate pain, including changing his diet.

The mural will be unveiled in a virtual ceremony Oct. 29 as one of the FHCC’s anniversary events. Lovell visited the FHCC recently to cut the ribbon. While standing in front of his portrait, Lovell joked about how the facility was named after him, as told to him by then-IL Congressman Mark Kirk. Turn to page 3 for the naming story.

Lovell FHCC’s main hospital in North Chicago is pictured center. Top; left to right, is USS Red Rover, USS Osborne, Fisher and USS Tranquility branch clinics. Bottom, left to right, are community based outpatient clinics: McHenry, Kenosha, Wis., and Evanston.

Capt. James A. Lovell, FHCC Director Dr. Robert Buckely, FHCC veteran staff member Leticia Knight and Master Chief Nick Noviello cut the ribbon on the mural. Brushwood Center Board Chair Gail Sturm and FHCC Supervisory Recreation Therapist Sean Gartland stand behind. (Photo by Mass Communication Seaman Apprentice Minh-Thy Chu)
From the Desk of the Director

Work in integration of VA and Navy hospitals started in 2003. Buckley: “We did it, and we did it well! I can’t wait to see what the future holds for Lovell FHCC.”

October 1, 2010

By John Ewert

Lovell FHCC Communications

The visit in my first decade as the captain, the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center, was a time of great challenges.

Then some of you know, I served as a Navy nurse in the Federal Health Care Center in the Buckley: “We did it, and we did it well! I can’t wait to see what the future holds for Lovell FHCC”

Commanding Officer’s Corner

Innovative thinking generated by pandemic

By Capt. Thomas Nelson

Lovell FHCC Deputy Director

National Medical Director

We will go through the doors of federal health centers and we will leave our staff, our patients, and our communities better than we found them.

Lovell, a renowned astronaut, retired Navy Officer and Vietnam veteran, said Kirk initially proposed to then-Navy Secretary Gordon R. England to name the facility after the hero of the Apollo 13 mission. Kirk also proposed the name of the command. Kirk also directed that the command’s medical center be named after Lt. Col. Robert W. Lovell of the V A.

By James Patrick Kennedy

National Medical Director

We launched the Veterans Ribbin Cutting ceremony, which was held to celebrate the opening of one of the nation’s largest clinic.

FHCC Police Dept.

and Lovell was a space pioneer.’”

The close relationship enjoyed by the FHCC’s health care teams is a testament to comprehensive and local medical care.

Lovell and the nearby community were a priority since it opened in 1998. It is a major hub for VA and DoD medical facilities, and home to four complex of medical services.

By John Ewert

Lovell FHCC Communications

The unique mission of the FHCC means that active duty, military, their families, military veterans and service members are cared for.

Just how was FHCC named?

The FHCC continues to go through the doors of federal health centers and will leave our staff, our patients, and our communities better than we found them.

Buckley: “We did it, and we did it well! I can’t wait to see what the future holds for Lovell FHCC”

Our patients are warriors: veterans unique to any other V A or DoD place – going about the honorable business of caring for a group of today – going about the honorable business of caring for a group of today.

Buckley: “We did it, and we did it well! I can’t wait to see what the future holds for Lovell FHCC”

Federal Health Care Center in the

By Robert Buckley

Lovell FHCC

I arrived here amidst a dark chapter in health care history. I knew my new position would offer us an opportunity to improve patient care, increase public confidence in the V A’s ability to deliver quality care, and strengthen the V A’s reputation.

By John Ewert

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FHCC 2020 LEAD class graduates

Graduates of Lovell FHCC’s recent Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability and Development (LEAD) class persevered through the pandemic and graduated in July. They brainstormed as a group to figure out how to make up missed classes, said Christine Misovie, the LEAD facilitator, which included dividing the class into smaller groups. Even graduation was a little different than past years; however, FHCC Director Dr. Robert Buckley and Commanding Officer Captain Thomas Nelson were still able to present each graduate a certificate.

“The LEAD program facilitator, trainers and mentors have dedicated so much and have stretched creativity during this time of COVID-19 to ensure student needs are met,” said graduate Terri Smith, a social worker. “We thank Dr. Buckley for presenting LEAD graduates with certificates. His presence truly further acknowledged the importance and the usefulness of this program.”

LEAD is the first tier of the VA leadership development program, offered to employees in civilian wage grades 5-11 (or wage-grade equivalent), and equivalent enlisted military ranks (E5 and E6). Prospective students must show the potential to advance to leadership positions with broader responsibility in the organization. In addition to monthly classroom sessions and mentoring sessions, students may attend facility-level committee meetings. LEAD students are paired with experienced staff mentors. They are required to regularly meet with mentors to work on Professional Development Plans.

Misovie said this class learned about Whole Health, Servant Leadership, “and they learned how to be that ‘change advocate’ person in the organization.”

Contact Misovie at 224-610-4539 about the next class, which is temporarily on hold. The other 2020 graduates are Robin Amankwah, Kristine Chynoweth, Blaise Gwellem, Andrea Ship, Tamara Summerville, David Sutter, Michelle Terrafino, Andrea Franklin, Meleyuna Ulloa and Svetlana Titarenko.

- Jayna Legg

FHCC orthopedic surgeon recognized nationally

FHCC Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Bernhardson, an orthopedic surgeon, never expected the research he started with his team at his previous duty station would result in an award and national accolades.

While in the busy process of reporting to the FHCC in June, he got the news of his paper receiving the honorable Hughston Award from the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine for 2020. This prestigious achievement was a surprise to Bernhardson and his co-authors.

Bernhardson’s research paper titled, "A Prospective Analysis of Patients with Anterior Versus Posterior Shoulder Instability: A Matched Cohort Examination and Surgical Outcome Analysis of 200 Patients," was featured in an issue of the American Journal of Sports Medicine. Berhardson describes Jack C. Hughston, the founder of AJSM and namesake for the award, as the “father of sports medicine.”

Bernhardson decided to research the differences between anterior and posterior shoulder instability with the goal of providing providers and patients a new resource.

Bernhardson hopes to implement an injury prevention program for Navy recruits. This would include providing a Vitamin D supplement since the deficiency is so common. It can cause muscle weakness and other health issues that can lead to injuries. Bernhardson’s role is to provide care, not only for recruits in training, but for all types of patients who seek care in his FHCC clinic.

“This reflects very highly on LCDR Bernhardson’s hard work and dedication to research, Navy Medicine, as well as his status as a national expert in sports medicine,” stated Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Griffin, head of Orthopedic Surgery and Bernhardson’s supervisor.

- Seaman Apprentice Minh-Thy Chu

Congratulations!

- Sailors of the Quarter, 3rd Quarter, were named: Senior Sailor is HM1 Kirk Bishop; Sailor of the Quarter is HM2 Salina Rutherford; Junior Sailor is HM3 Zackary Sage; Blue Jacket is HN Brianl Enriquezrrios.
- 2020 Green Award went to a PACT team for their Primary Care Electronic Fax System, developed in response to the pandemic. Team members were: Laura Boyle, Tina Cox, Monica Davis, Evelyn Dixon, Dr. Anna Layug, Dr. Ramiel Francisco, Ariel Olavere, David Szopinski and Dr. Hosam Zakariya.
- These sailors were selected for promotion to the next pay grade: HM1 Salina Rutherford, HM1 Kevin Mandel, HM1 Derek Stanway, HM1 Winston Winslett, HM1 Tylus Charles, LSI Jermal Calender, IT1 Brandon Adams, HM1 Jeremiah Cornelius, HM2 Brian Gomez, HM3 Colten Keeling, HM3 Dylan Conklin, HM3 Simeon Foreman, HM3 Alexis Roberto, LS3 Sebastian Sierra and S3 April Stocker.
- The 2020 Daisy Team Award went to the Home Telehealth Team. The May Daisy Award winner was RN Lt. Mayra Monarrez, ICCU. The March Daisy winner was RN Renju Ginson, 133-4A/B. Patients and co-workers submit nurses for the Daisy Award who model nursing excellence.
- Spirit of Lovell winners during the pandemic are the Primary Care PACT team, Primary Care Respiratory Clinic, and ICU/Critical Care. The Respiratory Clinic team is pictured.

The 2020 FHCC LEAD Class held a physically distanced graduation this summer. (Photo by Mass Communication Seaman Apprentice Caylen McCutchion)

The 2020 LEAD Class is pictured. The Respiratory Clinic team is pictured. (Photo by Mass Communication, Seaman Apprentice Minh-Thy Chu)

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Captain Lovell encourages all to wear their face masks
FHCC starts pharmacy curbside service for urgent, new prescriptions

• MOVE! cooking demonstrations restart
• Flu shots now available for patients
• Lovell FHCC updates, helpful info, and many more stories, photos and videos!
Army veteran 'half dead' recovers from COVID-19 in ICU

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

A
fter more than two months fighting COVID-19 in the ICU at Lovell Federal Health Care Center, Vietnam veteran Orlando Richardson was weak, but slowly regaining his strength.

The former Army paratrooper had nothing but praise for the ICU team he credits with saving his life. "I’ve received excellent care," said Richardson, who was still wobbly as he stood with some assistance and sat in a wheelchair in the ICU on an early summer morning. "I was half dead when I got here."

His memory of his first days in the ICU is hazy. He remembers calling a friend to bring him to the FHCC. He couldn’t stand up at that point he was so sick. Just two days prior, the retired postal carrier went to the store to do some shopping.

“I was in a mask,” he remembered. “Someone who wasn’t wearing a mask coughed on me … two days later I was so weak I had to crawl to the bathroom.”

Richardson, from Chicago, has participated in PTSD support groups and at the FHCC and also goes to the Evanston Vet Center for services.

Still, he was afraid to go to the hospital. "I drive," he said. "If you were going to be there, you could hear bullets whizzing by my head." Richardson said, "I’ve been given a second chance.” His first three or four chances.” His first “second chance” was surviving 1968-69 in Vietnam. “In combat, I could hear bullets whizzing by my head.”

He hopes that sharing his recovery experience will inspire “someone,” especially veterans.

Richardson was discharged in August and transferred to a rehabilitation facility, where his family reported he was doing well.

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Army veteran Orlando Richardson poses with a few of the Lovell FHCC ICU staff members he credits with saving his life. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

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The Apollo is the official newsletter of the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center. It is designed by the FHCC Communications Department.

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