

#INNOVATOR

Optimizing Combat Casualty Care



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Vol. 6 No. 7

July 2017

Happy 242nd Birthday Army!



Oldest, Youngest Soldiers Team Up to Cut Birthday Cake

Soldiers and civilians of the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research gathered to celebrate the Army's 242nd birthday June 14 with a traditional Army birthday cake cutting ceremony. In keeping with the tradition, the oldest and youngest Soldiers of the organization cut the cake. Col. (Dr.) Timothy Mitchener, left, Acting USAISR Commander, and Pvt. Jaime Padilla shared in the cake cutting duty as Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Lucas, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Jehnsen Gomez look on.

CDR's Corner



Col. (Dr.) Shawn C. Nessen
Commander, USAISR

"Optimizing Combat Casualty Care"

Team ISR,

I can't believe how fast time has been flying. July marks the end of my first year at this Institute and it seems like I just took over this job a few weeks ago. I must say, it has been one of the best years of my career. I have had the opportunity that is afforded to only a handful of Army officers. This job has given me a firsthand look at the research that addresses the issues that our Warriors are facing at on the battlefield. I was reminded this week of the incredible talents our team possesses when the Burn Flight Team flew back-to-back missions to bring

a severely injured Soldier back from Germany and a day later a Marine from San Diego. Both of these wounded servicemen have a chance to survive wounds that a few years ago would have been fatal because of the skill of our people. Ultimately, people are the difference, and every one of you is important to the Institute's ongoing success, and so a few words on taking care of yourselves and each other.

I ask that you continue your focus on your work, but not at the expense of your health or family and friend leisure time. We are in the summer months and the kids are out of school. I urge you to spend as much time with your family and friends and enjoy your time away from work. We all need the time to unwind and recharge from our hectic work schedules. I ask that whatever you do to relax, whether sitting by the pool or at the beach with a beverage, to do that responsibly. There's absolutely nothing wrong with enjoying your time with a beverage, but you have to be responsible for your actions. Think ahead of time of what you are doing and take the appropriate steps to ensure that you and your family or friends do not end up in a situation that you do not need to be in.

We are all adults and I know that I don't need to be preaching to the choir, but a friendly reminder from time-to-time doesn't hurt. This message is about keeping yourself and your loved

ones safe. Even if you don't drink, think about the safety hazards that are around you while you are enjoying your leisure time. It doesn't take much for something that is harmless to turn on you and make it a disaster. What I'm asking you is to be responsible, think about what you're doing, and everything else will be fine.

Your work here is too valuable for us to be involved in meaningless paperwork or bureaucracy that can be avoided. One last thing, look out for each other. The Battle Buddy system goes a long way. Even if you're not Battle Buddies, step up if you see something wrong. Too many incidents that could have been prevented happen without anyone stepping up to stop it from happening. It's all common sense.

As I've mention many times before, it is a privilege to be your commander. There's nothing better for me than to be in charge of this wonderful organization and the people who work here that make this place a great place. Your work is not going unnoticed. You've come a long way to give this Institute that is well-known worldwide. It's all because of your efforts and dedication for advancing combat casualty care. Thank you for all you do.



Col. (Dr.) Jennifer Gurney with her Certificate of Promotion during her promotion ceremony June 7. She is joined by Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen and her husband Daniel O'Sullivan.

THE INNOVATOR

Vol. 6 No. 7

Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen
Commander

Sgt. Maj. William "Dave" Poist Jr.
Sergeant Major

Steven Galvan, D.B.A.
Public Affairs Officer

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Deadline for submission is five days before the first of the month. We reserve the right to edit submissions selected for publication.

SGM Says



Sgt. Maj. William "Dave" Poist Jr.
USAISR Sergeant Major

ISR Family,

It is an absolute honor to be able to serve the Soldiers and Civilians of this organization. I am extremely excit-

ed and honored to be your Sergeant Major. I am extremely impressed at the clinical and research work that our team accomplishes on a daily basis. This institution has an impact on our Army Medicine at strategic levels. I have noticed that our personnel all have unique and special qualifications that you will not find anywhere else in today's units or our Army.

I am also extremely proud of the quality of NCO's we have in this organization. Persons of special qualities and talents need dynamic NCO's to coach, mentor and lead them. We have some of the most intelligent NCOs I have been associated with in 27 years of service. These NCOs are the rock, brick and mortar to the foundation of

this organization. The Soldiers and Civilians are the structure.

There is a lot going on during this years "Summer Surge." As you know this is PCS season with Soldiers in and out bound. Those leaving take a wealth of knowledge with them and the new personnel bring new ideas and creativity. Some of our organizational supporting events are the MEDCOM Best Warrior, CTLDTS (command team leadership development & training session), Army Best Medic planning, and a host of other external support tasks.

We are a "one of a kind" unit that truly lives up to the deeds of "Optimizing Combat Casualty Care." I hope everyone had a great 4th of weekend and always stay safe.



Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen and Sgt. Maj. William Poist Jr. presented awards to USAISR Soldiers during a Soldier/Civilian awards ceremony June 2.

Left: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen and Sgt. Maj. William Poist Jr. with Spc. Eric Force and Sgt. Jessica Fry, who were presented with Certificates of Achievement.

Bottom: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen presents Anthony Pusateri, Ph.D. with the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award as Sgt. Maj. William Poist Jr. looks on during the Soldier/Civilian awards ceremony June 2..

June Awardees

Superior Civilian Service Award
Anthony Pusateri, Ph.D.

Certificate of Achievement
Sgt. Jessica Fry
Spc. Eric Force

Certificate of Appreciation
Lt.Col. (Dr.) Andre Cap

Promotions
Staff Sgt. Luis Sanchez
Sgt. Eric Force
Spc. Andres Penagos-Nino



Company Notes



Company Commander
Capt. Cleveland S. Bryant Jr.

For the month of June, the ISR participated in the Army Birthday Run located at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. The run was in celebration of the birth and beginning of the most powerful and most diverse uniformed military organization in the world.

The First Sergeant and I would like to congratulate to the following personnel: Spc. Ashley Taylor for graduating



Spc. Logan Leatherman gets his new rank pinned on June 2 during the USAISR Soldier/Civilian awards ceremony by Spc. Alexander Dixon.

the Basic Leadership Course; Staff Sgt. Scott Eriksen Jr. and Spc. Andres Penagos-Nino on their reenlistments; and Col. (Dr.) Jennifer Gurney, Maj.

Stephen Crimmins, Maj. Ericka Landers, Staff Sgt. Luis, Sgt. Eric Force, Spc. Andres Penagos-Nino, Spc. Logan Leatherman, and Pfc. Marvin Humphries on their promotions. Our final congratulations go to Spc. Matthew Durant and Sgt. David Watson of their selection as June's Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Month, respectively.

Upcoming events: Fourth of July celebration

Once again, remember that your work and ideas from this organization are critical to the advancement of medicine and science globally. You are the tip of the spear of medical innovation and progress. Continue to be the torch of this noble cause. Remain vigilant, be creative, be productive and stay focused on the mission you support here at the ISR.

Thank you all for everything you all do every day. Continually, it is truly an honor serving as your Company Commander and First Sergeant! God Bless you all.

One Team. One Purpose!
Conserving the Fighting Strength!



NCO of the Month
Sgt. David Watson



Soldier of the Month
Spc. Matthew Durant

Around the ISR Company

Top right: Col. (Dr.) Jeffery Cleland, left, administers the Oath of Office to Capt. Andrew Holt during his commissioning ceremony June 1.
Center right: Capt. Kyle Cunningham, left, presents the Army Achievement Medal to Spc. Kirk Matthews June 13. Photo by Staff Sgt. Wendy Abel.
Bottom right: Sgt. Eric Force gets his new rank from his wife Erica during the USAISR Soldier/Civilian awards ceremony June 2.
Bottom left: Sgt. 1st Class Jehnsen Gomez gets his new rank pinned on June 6 during his promotion ceremony by his wife Angela.
Top left: Spc. Andres Penagos-Nino gets his new rank pinned on by Spc. Matthew Durant June 2.



USAISR welcomes new deputy commander

Photo and Story By Dr. Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Erik K. Weitzel reported for duty as the deputy commander at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, a subordinate institute of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. Weitzel joins the USAISR after serving as the San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium Otolaryngology Program Director at the Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He replaces USAF Col. (Dr.) Michael Davis who was selected to serve as the deputy director of USAMRMC combat casualty care research program at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

“What an amazing opportunity!” said Weitzel. “I get to work with some of the most gifted scientific investigators on the planet in an institution that has a true commitment to something extremely special. This common binding purpose, ‘to optimize combat casualty care’ results in reduced competition and binds us together to achieve something fantastic.”

Weitzel added that he would like to build high-powered teams to execute the Institute’s mission. He also said that he wants to leverage his extensive clinical and academic background to help the Institute’s researcher gain access to gifted clinician-scientists outside of Fort Sam Houston.

“I plan to reduce barriers to accomplishing high quality research by leveraging non-traditional relationships outside of the San Antonio Military Medical Center,” he said.

Energetic and in the middle of the action is how Weitzel describes himself. He’s aware that the staff at the USAISR may not be accustomed to this level of interaction.

“I tend to use this level of interaction to build trusting relationships, but it usually takes some time for people to



Col. (Dr.) Erik K. Weitzel, left, is briefed on the Burn Navigator by Jose Salinas, Ph.D. and Maria Serio-Melvin. Weitzel took over as Deputy Commander of the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research in May.

recognize that I’m genuine in my interest in improving their ability to accomplish their missions,” said Weitzel.

Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen, USAISR Commander said that Weitzel’s reputation as a clinician and program director at BAMC along with his energy and motivation are welcomed at the USAISR.

“He is the right person for the job,” said Nessen. “I’ve heard a lot of good things about him. His agenda is

“What an amazing opportunity! I get to work with some of the most gifted scientific investigators on the planet in an institution that has a true commitment to something extremely special. This common binding purpose, ‘to optimize combat casualty care’ results in reduced competition and binds us together to achieve something fantastic.”

Col. (Dr.) Erik Weitzel
USAISR Deputy Commander

aligned with our mission and we look forward to working with him.”

Weitzel loves science and discovery. He said that’s why he’s always asking questions, “I’m genuinely interested in enjoying the process of innovation.”

When it comes to his leadership philosophy, Weitzel said that he tries to model it after a former president.

“I don’t claim to be Abraham Lincoln, but I certainly try to channel his leadership philosophy: enthusiasm, efficiency, engagement, visible leadership, and integrity above all else,” he said.

Weitzel’s leadership philosophy is associated with his core values.

“The big three core values for me are capability, determination and integrity,” Weitzel said. “Trust is essential for teamwork. I commit to everyone in the USAISR that I will be honest and forthright in all that I do. I’m here to help us become a more effective team.”

Morris, Arthur receive Military Comptroller Achievement Awards



Julia Arthur and Maj. Kristi Morris are recipients of the 2016 American Society of Military Comptrollers Achievement Awards presented May 31 at the National Professional Development Institute, ASMC's premier training event.

By Dr. Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

Two staff members from the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, a subordinate institute of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, are recipients of the 2016 American Society of Military Comptrollers Achievement Awards.

Maj. Kristi Morris, the USAISR chief financial officer, was presented the Ernest J. Gregory Award.

"This award is presented to outstanding Comptroller/Deputy Comptroller who demonstrates dedication to leadership, operational excellence, professional development, ethics and mentorship," according to the ASMC website.

Julia Arthur, the budgeting officer, earned the Meritorious Award for outstanding accomplishment in the Budgeting category.

The awards were presented May 31 in San Diego, California, at the Nation-

"It means that all of our efforts at the ISR are getting noticed. Specifically, we have really tried to improve budget execution, contracting processes, and our use/tracking of indirect funds. These efforts have been painful—for everyone—at times. It shows the resource management community that even though RDTE funding is complicated, many opportunities exist to improve on our financial position and provide better support to our core customers."

Maj. Kristi Morris
Chief Financial Officer

al Professional Development Institute, ASMC's premier training event.

"I feel honored and surprised," said Morris. "Julia and I were the only AMEDD personnel to receive national awards at the conference, so I think that it gave some visibility to the Institute among the comptroller community. Hopefully it will help in attracting

only the best comptrollers to the ISR and to other MRMC units."

Part of the write-up for her nomination submission read, "Her leadership, planning, and management of the USAISR's funding led to her success in acquisition strategy reform, overhead/indirect charge reform, and execution of cost-saving measures."

"It means that all of our efforts at the ISR are getting noticed," said Morris. "Specifically, we have really tried to improve budget execution, contracting processes, and our use/tracking of indirect funds. These efforts have been painful for everyone at times. It shows the resource management community that even though RDTE funding is complicated, many opportunities exist to improve on our financial position and provide better support to our core customers."

Arthur was recognized for her customer-focused efforts which led to savings that paid for additional research on combat casualty care and ultimately enabled the Department of Defense to save more lives on the battlefield.

"This award means some great recognition for my team and the ISR," said Arthur. "The ASMC is a well-respected national organization of professionals from all services, and I'm very proud to have been selected."



Safety Notes

By Stephanie L. Truss
Health, Safety and Environmental Specialist



Heat Wave Safety

Learn how to stay safe during a heat wave and how to treat heat-related illness like heat exhaustion. The tips below are from the American Red Cross please visit their web site for additional checklists on heat wave safety in various languages. <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/heat-wave-safety#About>

About Heat Waves

In recent years, excessive heat has caused more deaths than all other weather events, including floods. A heat wave is a prolonged period of excessive heat, generally 10 degrees or more above average, often combined with excessive humidity.

You will likely hear weather forecasters use these terms when a heat wave is predicted in your community:

- Excessive Heat Watch - Conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event to meet or exceed local Excessive Heat Warning criteria in the next 24 to 72 hours.
- Heat Advisory - Heat Index values are forecasting to meet locally defined advisory criteria for 1 to 2 days (daytime highs= 100-105° Fahrenheit).
- Excessive Heat Warning - Heat Index values are forecasting to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least 2 days (daytime highs= 105-110° Fahrenheit).

Before

- Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperature changes.
- Be aware of both the temperature and the heat index. The heat index is the temperature the body feels

In the Spotlight

Xandria Gutierrez

Job title: 59MDW/ST En route Care Research Center Clinical Research Coordinator

How long have you worked at the ISR? 10 months

What or who has been an inspiration to you in your work? The team that I work with on a daily basis continues to be an encouragement in my work. We work in collaboration to complete our tasks in order to better serve the battlefield Warrior.

What is your favorite part of your work? Learning new things from the many different people that I am able to work with.

What is your proudest achievement? I have run three half-marathons.

Short- and long-term goals: My short-term goal is to be an author in a publication. My long-term goal is to become a physician assistant.

Hobbies: Running, working out at the gym, reading, and traveling.

Favorite book: *Harry Potter*

Favorite movie/TV show: *Bridesmaids* and *Law and Order SVU*, *This is Us*, *Game of Thrones*.

Favorite quote: "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline." - 2 Timothy 1:7



when the effects of heat and humidity are combined.

- Discuss heat safety precautions with members of your household. Have a plan for wherever you spend time— home, work and school—and prepare for power outages.
- Check the contents of your emergency disaster kit in case a power outage occurs.
- Know those in your neighborhood



who are elderly, young, sick or overweight. They are more likely to become victims of excessive heat and may need help.

- If you do not have air conditioning, choose places you could go to for relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day (schools, libraries, theaters, malls).
- Be aware that people living in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than are people living in rural areas.
- Get trained in first aid and to learn how to treat heat-related emergencies.
- Ensure that your animals' needs for water and shade are met.

What To Do During a Heat Wave

- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio for critical updates from the National Weather Service (NWS).

SAFETY Continues on Page 9

Health News



By Maria G. Dominguez, R.N. COHN-S/CM Occupational Health

Happy Birthday United States! If you live in the US, you know what the Fourth of July means to the country. Each July, from coast-to-coast, millions of people set off fireworks and come together for outdoor picnics to celebrate America's independence. July brings travel and summer vacations. This includes hectic airports and long rides in the car, but fun family times with ice cream and apple pie.

So pack up the car and go. Wait! July also brings Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month. What is Juvenile Arthritis? Juvenile arthritis (JA) is not a disease in itself. Also known as pediatric rheumatic disease, JA is an umbrella term used to describe the many autoimmune and inflammatory conditions or pediatric rheumatic



diseases that can develop in children under the age of 16. Some types of juvenile arthritis affect the musculoskeletal system and joint symptoms may be minor or nonexistent. Juvenile arthritis can also involve the eyes, skin, muscles and gastrointestinal tract. Depending on the symptoms, your child may be diagnosed with one of the following categories of JA: oligoarthritis, polyarthritis, systemic, enthesitis-related, juvenile psoriatic arthritis or other JA's. The unpredictability of JA can mean it's hard to make and keep plans. The word "vacation" takes on a whole different meaning to a JA family.

Your child wants to be like everyone else, which can be very difficult when their body aches and basic daily functioning can be an effort. Playing sports and other extra-curricular activities may need to be altered for a child with JA, which to a child means not being like everyone else. As if travelling with children isn't stressful enough, managing a child with special health challenges can make family trips even more difficult to navigate.

A special hug on July 23 on National Parents' Day, this day honors parents' contributions to their children. Let's especially honor those parents who walk the road of special needs families which are unique and pressing. Even though relatives and friends don't always understand, there are people who get it. We're out there. You are not alone. Hats off to you!

July is Eye Injury Prevention Month designed to prevent eye injuries of all types. This type of injury occurs at a rate of more than 2,000 per day, and an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces alone. This week, learn how to best protect yourself and others from eye injuries.

July is also UV Safety Month to raise consciousness about UV rays and its dangerous effects. One last observance in July is World Hepatitis Day which is on July 28. That's it for now! Happy July!

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- Never leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Avoid dark colors because they absorb the sun's rays.
- Slow down, stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day.
- Postpone outdoor games and activities.
- Use a buddy system when working in excessive heat.
- Take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.
- Check on your animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat.

During heat waves people are susceptible to three heat-related conditions. Here's how to recognize and respond to them.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms that usually occur in the legs or abdomen. Heat cramps are often an early sign that the body is having trouble with the heat.

- Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch the affected muscle and gently massage the area.
- Give an electrolyte-containing fluid, such as a commercial sports drink, fruit juice or milk. Water may also be given. Do not give the person salt tablets.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a more severe condition than heat cramps. Heat exhaustion often affects athletes,

SAFETY Continues on Page 13

Around the ISR

Top right: Vicky Barrera-Garcia gives a brief of the rehab section at the Burn Center to members of the American Gold Star Mothers during a tour of the Burn Center June 19.



Center right: Members of the Burn Flight Team pose with Luke Simons, a reporter for KENS5 TV who was doing a story on the Burn Flight Team June 9.



Bottom right: Col. (Dr.) Jeffery Cleland explains ocular trauma research June 14 to retired Navy Rear Adm. (Dr.) Bruce Doll, center, Assistant Vice President for Technology Research and Innovation, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Bottom left: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen presents Janet Roe with a command coin during her going away gathering June 6.

Bottom left: Sgt. Matthew Anselmo, right, gives a brief of the Burn Flight Team missions and capabilities June 20 to participants of the Oklahoma City Recruiting Battalion Educators Tour.



Around the ISR cont.

Top right: Col. (Dr.) Erik Weitzel gets his new rank pinned on by his wife Shari Yibsin Mao and their son Kent during his promotion ceremony June 12.

Center top right: Capt.(P) Troy Dilmar welcomes participants of the Nashville Recruiting Educators Tour to the Progressive Care Unit at the Burn Center June 7.

Center bottom right: Staff Sgt. Wendy Abel, left, welcomes foreign military officers attending a course at Defense Institute for Medical Operations to the Burn Center June 21.

Bottom right: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen, left, presents Col. (Dr.) Andre Cap with his Certificate of Promotion during his promotion ceremony June 2.

Bottom left: USAISR and JTS staff members pose with Geir Strandenes, center, Senior Medical Officer, Norwegian Naval Special Operation Commando Researcher and a founding member of The Remote Damage Control Resuscitation (THOR). This year's THOR meeting was held in Bergen, Norway June 25-28.

Top left: Maj. Stephen Crimmins has his new rank pinned on him by his parents, James and Phoebe Crimmins at his promotion ceremony June 5.



USAISR Intramural Soccer Team Wins 2nd Place

The U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Intramural soccer team finished 2nd in the 2017 Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston intramural league, improving from last year's 4th place.

Right : Staff Sgt. William Vidal, right, coach and players presents USAISR Company Commander, Capt. Cleveland Bryant Jr., with the 2nd place trophy.

Bottom: Left to right, bottom row: 1st Lt. Graeme Roberts, Luis Mendez, Teryn Roberts, Spc. Olawale Aderemi, and 2nd Lt. Raj Mangana. Top row: Spc. Raymond Calzada, Troy Demetech, 1st Lt. Justin Hoppe, Spc. Andres Penagos-Nino, Petty Officer First Class Olobunmi Fadahunsi, John Wall and Staff Sgt. William Vidal. Not in photo: Lt. Col. (Dr.) John Decker.



SAFETY Continued from Page 9

firefighters, construction workers and factory workers. It also affects those wearing heavy clothing in a hot, humid environment.

- Signs of heat exhaustion include cool, moist, pale, ashen or flushed skin; headache; nausea; dizziness; weakness; and exhaustion.
- Move the person to a cooler environment with circulating air. Remove or loosen as much clothing as possible and apply cool, wet clothes or towels to the skin. Fanning or spraying the person with water also can help. If the person is conscious, give small amounts of a cool fluid such as a commercial sports drink or fruit juice to restore fluids and electrolytes. Milk

or water may also be given. Give about 4 ounces of fluid every 15 minutes.

- If the person's condition does not improve or if he or she refuses water, has a change in consciousness, or vomits, call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that usually occurs by ignoring the signals of heat exhaustion. Heat stroke develops when the body systems are overwhelmed by heat and begin to stop functioning.

- Signs of heat stroke include extremely high body temperature, red skin which may be dry or moist; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; rapid, shallow breathing; confusion; vomiting;

and seizures.

- Heat stroke is life-threatening. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number immediately.
- Rapidly cool the body by immersing the person up to the neck in cold water, if possible OR douse or spray the person with cold water.
- Sponge the person with ice water-doused towels over the entire body, frequently rotating the cold, wet towels.
- Cover the person with bags of ice.
- If you are not able to measure and monitor the person's temperature, apply rapid cooling methods for 20 minutes or until the person's condition improves.

For those that are interested in seeking additional first aid training visit the Red Cross web site.

GEMS gets Underway

For the seventh year in a row, the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research is hosting three sessions of the Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science or GEMS. GEMS is an Army-sponsored program for middle and high school students interested in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. A total of three sessions for 22 students each are offered during the last two weeks of June and the second week of July for GEMS I (middle school students) and GEMS II (high school students).



Top: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen, US-AISR Commander, gives pointers on suturing techniques to middle school (GEMS I) students.

Left: Col. (Dr.) Shawn Nessen, US-AISR Commander and Sgt. Maj. William Poist Jr. meet with high school students attending GEMS II.



Kottke named deputy director of CCC research



Capt. Melissa Kottke is the new Combat Casualty Care Research Directorate Deputy Director at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research

Story and Photo by Dr. Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

Capt. Melissa Kottke, Ph.D., was named as the deputy director of the Combat Casualty Care Research Directorate at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, a subordinate institute of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. She replaces Lt. Col. (Dr.) Kevin Akers who transferred to the USAISR Burn Center where he will serve as the chief of clinical research support branch. Kottke, a research physiologist, was assigned as the assistant deputy of research before taking on her new role.

“Being named deputy director of research is quite an honor,” said Kottke. “I am very pleased to serve this very special scientific community.”

“Captain Kottke was known to us from working closely with research directorate admin on various special projects,” said Akers. “She was one of two candidates, and I supported her candidacy.”

Kottke said that during her tenure her top priority is to continue the

efforts of those before her in streamlining the internal processes to take further burdens off of the investigative staff.

“Other critical tasks that must be addressed include preparing for increased research mission requirements for 2019 and beyond,” she said. “As we continue to increase our research mission it will be of the utmost importance to eliminate unnecessary redundancy, optimize our use of physical space and establish strong research teams to enable future research capabilities.”

Kottke said that she has always been the type of person who is never afraid to tackle anything. She knows that there may be some challenges ahead for her, but she’s ready to take them head on. A challenge that she is aware of is a personal one.

“I will have to tone down my personality to accommodate some of our staff,” Kottke said. “Sorry to those who have already noted my excessive energy.”

“I am very happy to have Captain Kottke as my deputy,” said Anthony

Pusateri, USAISR director of research. “She very energetic and has some great ideas on advancing combat casualty care.”

Kottke comes from a long list of relatives who have served in the military and at San Antonio. She has a great, great, great cousin buried at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. He died during the great American Influenza Epidemic of 1918 while at Camp Travis, a World War I Army camp in Spicewood, Texas.

“My father’s father went to basic training at Fort Sam Houston and then trained as a medic. His first assignment was at Post Hospital which is known today as the San Antonio Military Medical Center. He was later stationed at Lackland Air Force Base as an early version of a physician’s assistant before retiring,” said Kottke. “My mother’s father retired from Fort Sam Houston, and my father’s stepfather served at Lackland. Basically, every Service Member in my family since 1918 has had a tour in San Antonio.”

Kottke wants to continue contributing to our military and country like her family did before her. In her case, she wants to contribute to combat casualty care for the Warfighter and greater society.

“Mission will always be my primary objective,” she added. “However, I believe passionately in creating a work environment that promotes the well-being and advancement of our staff. As a leader, I will try my best to provide answers and solutions to best serve my staff.”

“The most rewarding aspect of this current position is assisting research staff accomplish ‘tip of the spear’ work in combat casualty care research. No pile of paperwork can reduce the elation each of us receives when we hear about all of the accolades our staff receives or how the material or knowledge products we have delivered have had a direct impact on care.”

USAISR gains Shock Society/DOD fellowship recipient

Photo and Story By Dr. Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

In 2016, the Shock Society partnered with the Department of Defense to offer two fellowships to Shock Society members to conduct research in trauma, hemorrhage shock and sepsis. The fellowship named the Shock Society-Department of Defense Battlefield Health and Trauma Fellowship in San Antonio is for post-doctoral fellows or medical/dental residents or clinical fellows to conduct research at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research or the Navy Medical Research Unit-San Antonio collocated at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The first recipient of the fellowship awarded in 2016 was Dr. Tony Chao, who earned a Ph.D. in biomedical science from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas, in December 2016. The second fellowship slot was awarded to another UTMC student in May to Dr. Michael Wetzel, who earned his Ph.D. in cell biology.

Chao is starting his second year at the Institute, an option of the program.

“My first year has been a great experience thus far,” he said. “I came from a unit doing solely clinical work so the switch was quite a drastic change. I have been getting some extensive hands-on experience. The ISR is equipped with some of the most state-of-the-art equipment, and I’ve been able to continue to build my laboratory skills. My fellow colleagues and mentors are some of the most intelligent and supportive people that I have had the honor to work with. I’m very thankful for the opportunity to do my postdoctoral work here.”

Wetzel applied for the fellowship to continue honing his research skills and to be closer to home.

“I applied for the program because the institution where I did my graduate work at has collaborations with



Michael Wetzel, Ph.D., left, and Tony Chao, Ph.D. are the two Shock Society-Department of Defense Battlefield Health and Trauma Fellowship in San Antonio post-doctoral fellows at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research.

ISR, and I wanted to take what I had learned into a setting that did similar work,” said Wetzel. “I also wanted to move back to San Antonio because I grew up here and my parents live here.”

Wetzel will be working with Joseph “Josh” Wenke, Ph.D., manager of the USAISR extremity trauma and regenerative medicine, who believes these fellowships are a win-win for the Shock Society and the DOD.

“It formalizes the collaboration between the Shock Society and the DOD research,” said Wenke. “For the society, it broadens their participation into battlefield injuries. For the DOD, it allows us make members of the society, especially academic institutions, aware of our mission and research efforts.”

Chao added that he is excited to continue his research in the Damage Control Resuscitation task area.

“With all the support and resources surrounding me here at the ISR, I am looking forward to a very productive second year in my fellowship,” he said. “Without a doubt, the training that I had and will continue to receive here at

the ISR will provide a strong foundation to further progress me in my goal to become an independent investigator.”

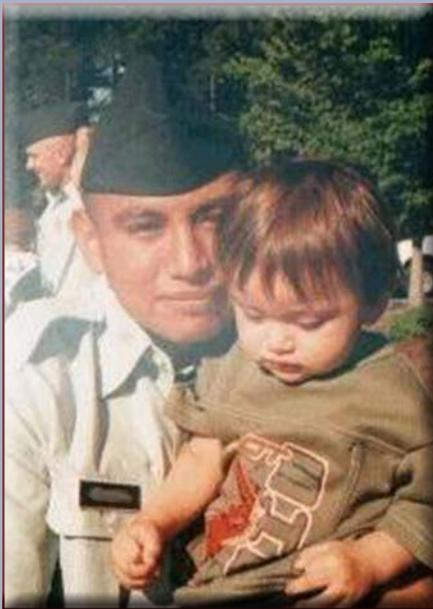
Wetzel is just as excited to start his first year at the ISR.

“I am very grateful for this opportunity,” he said. “I believe it will benefit me by requiring me to think along clinical lines. In the past my main experience was in basic science focusing on cellular and molecular medicine, so working at ISR will require me to shift my mindset to practical applications of research. I hope to expand my knowledge and publish several first author papers about the effects of drugs and treatments on extremity wound healing and infection.”

Wenke said that he looks forward to mentoring Wetzel and conducting research that benefits Wounded Warriors.

“It is vital for us to attract good early career scientists as they bring in new perspectives, experiences and skills and apply them to combat casualty care problems,” said Wenke.

Back When...



Can you guess who this ISR staff member is? This photo was taken in 2002 when he was a Pvt. graduating from Basic Combat Training at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was also the first time he saw his son Abel walk.

Submit your photo to PAO for publication in upcoming issues.

Last Month's Answer:



Lt. Col. Gerald Ross
BICU OIC

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For the Record

By Glen Gueller
Records/
Knowledge
Manager



Most of us are now feeling the change since the local copier no longer scans. Many offices are turning to desktop scanners as the solution. While this is a good solution there are other options. The majority of those scans started electronically. Why were they printed? Why continue making more work by printing only to later turn it into a PDF?

The process could be changed to digital resulting in an easier, cheaper method which can make better sense for your business needs.

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What is GEARS?

The Army Global Electronic Approval Routing System (GEARS), located at <https://army.deps.mil/NETCOM/sites/GEARS/Home.aspx>, is an automated document routing and tracking system built on the Army Enterprise SharePoint platform that includes a set of available approval routes to imple-

