



# The Journal

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## USNS Comfort, Continuing Promise 2011 Arrives in Guatemala

By Mass Communication  
Specialist 2nd Class (SW)

Scott Wojciechowski

Continuing Promise 2011 Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship *USNS Comfort (T-AH 20)* arrived in Puerto San Jose, Guatemala, June 30, after a three-day underway period for its sixth mission stop during Continuing Promise 2011 (CP '11).

Continuing Promise personnel will provide medical, dental, veterinary and engineering services to Puerto San Jose, Guatemala residents. To date, the ship's crew of military and civilian personnel has performed medical, dental and optometry services for 36,371 patients, and has provided veterinary and engineering services ashore.

After this mission stop in Guatemala, *Comfort* and the CP '11 mission team will stop in Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Haiti before returning to the United States.

*Comfort* is operated by a crew of more than 70 civil service mariners (CIVMARs) that navigate the ship, maintain the hotel services such as electricity and water, and operate the small boats for transporting patients to and from the ship.

"There are so many moving parts to this whole mission," said Third Officer Laura Hammond, an MSC CIVMAR.

Hammond, a utility boat driver, is among the first to greet the patients and the last to see them go.



(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kim Williams)

As part of Continuing Promise 2011, hospital ship *USNS Comfort (T-AH 20)* is on a five-month humanitarian assistance mission to the Caribbean, Central and South America.

"We're all working incredibly hard, but it's okay because it's all about the patients and their faces to me," Hammond said. "When they get on the ship they look one way; a little nervous and curious, and when they leave, their eyes just shine with deep gratitude. It makes everyone involved feel like they're doing something right."

While in Guatemala, the CP '11 team will also

exchange professional knowledge with the region's military and civilian medical personnel through the subject matter expert exchange program.

"One of the goals of the entire program is to train both providers and educators how to improve the capacities of the health care systems in

See COMFORT page 6

## Obama Awards Gates Presidential Medal of Freedom

By Cheryl Pellerin,  
American Forces Press Service

The life of Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates is a lesson to young Americans that public service is an honorable calling, one that makes the nation better and stronger, President Barack Obama said June 30.

During a farewell tribute ceremony for Gates at the Pentagon, Obama reviewed Gates' accomplishments during the past four-and-a-half years.

"I can think of no better way to express my appreciation to someone I have come to admire and whom I consider a friend," Obama said. "I can think of no better way to express the gratitude of the nation for Bob Gates than with a very special recognition."

With that, he presented Gates the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the

highest honor a president can award a civilian.

"Robert M. Gates has selflessly dedicated his life to ensuring the security of the American people," the citation read. "He has served eight presidents of both parties with unwavering patriotism."

During the ceremony, Obama recounted the highlights of Gates' impact during his tenure at the Pentagon.

When the outcome of the Iraq war was in doubt, Obama said, Gates presided over the efforts that helped restore order.

"Over the past two-and-a-half years, we've removed more than 100,000 troops from Iraq, ended our combat mission and are responsibly ending that war," the president said.

When the fight against al-Qaida



DOD photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley

President Barack Obama presents Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates with the Presidential Medal of Freedom at the Armed Forces Farewell Tribute to honor Gates at the Pentagon, June 30.

See GATES page 6

## Commander's Column

We are nearing the end of what some might call a Herculean task — depending upon how you look at it, integrating two world renowned Flagships of military medicine into one, yet the attention to detail by everyone aiding in bringing this vision to fruition has been astounding. As you look out over this sprawling campus it's hard to imagine that only three years have passed since the presidential groundbreaking.

Many new buildings and services in support of our beneficiaries have come on-line and as you walk down the vast hallways, it is clear that we are a joint facility. It has been said that with all of the new additions, the footprint of our campus now rivals that of the Mall of America.

I am both proud and honored to be part of this new establishment and you too should be proud of your hard work, dedication and selflessness. Each day you pour your heart and soul into this fine institution and it has not gone unnoticed. The role each of you play in support of seeing this monumental task to completion and providing support to our wounded warriors for years to come, is like none other. Please know that what you have created here is unparalleled, and your courage and sacrifice will touch generations to come.

We are all aware that we are operating in a wartime environment with a number of wounded warriors entering our door regularly, but even in the midst of all of the construction and renovation upheaval, you have become pioneers on the medical battlefield, then returning to be at the bedside to



administer what you have gleaned to assist in the healing process. The civilian population will benefit greatly from what you have learned in military medicine, be it from the treatment of traumatic brain injuries to the advances in prosthetics and rehabilitation.

As we enter into the final weeks, I ask each of you to continue to walk with pride as you embrace new cultures, and to take full advantage of opportunities to learn and synergize with your fellow service members, for this is history in the making.

Commander sends,  
Rear Adm. Matthew L. Nathan  
Medical Corps,  
United States Navy

## Bethesda Notebook

### Are You Ready to Quit Smoking?

If you're thinking about quitting or ready to quit smoking, the Internal Medicine Clinic, located in the America Building, is offering 'Free Yourself' tobacco cessation sessions to help you quit for the last time. The sessions, which run for four weeks, begin on the first Thursday of every month. A new session will begin today at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call 301-295-2159, or e-mail [adrienne.brantley@med.navy.mil](mailto:adrienne.brantley@med.navy.mil).

### Wedding Gown Giveaway for Troops

Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) at Bethesda announced Couture Miss Bridal & Formal, located in Upper Marlboro, Md., will be giving away wedding gowns July 12-13 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. as part of Brides Across America, a national initiative to unite military brides with bridal boutiques across the country.

To qualify for a dress, brides must be engaged and planning a wedding within the next 18 months. In addition, either the bride or bride's fiancé must be on active duty and must be scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan, Iraq or Qatar. Brides can also qualify to receive a dress if they have not had a formal wedding yet because their fiancé, or the bride herself, was deployed within the last five years.

On the day of the giveaway, military brides must bring a driver's license, military ID, and copies of their deployment papers, stating the date of deployment. For more information about the event, call 301-627-1886, visit [www.cmbridal.com](http://www.cmbridal.com), or e-mail Kat Pettaway in MWR at [Kathleen.pettaway@med.navy.mil](mailto:Kathleen.pettaway@med.navy.mil). For more information about Brides Across America, please visit [www.bridesacrossamerica.com](http://www.bridesacrossamerica.com).

### FFSC Offers Walk-in Resume Reviews

Naval Support Activity Bethesda's (NSAB) Fleet and Family Support Office (FFSC) is offering 30-minute walk-in resume reviews July 18 from 10 a.m. until noon. On July 6, FFSC will offer, by appointment, 30-minute mock interviews from 9 to 11 a.m. Reviews and mock-interviews will take place in Building 11, room 148. For more information, call 301-319-4087, or e-mail [FFSC@med.navy.mil](mailto:FFSC@med.navy.mil).

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# Weekly Stress Reduction Group Now Offered at NNMC

By Sarah Fortney  
Journal staff writer

The Integrated Health Services at Bethesda now offers a weekly Stress Reduction Group that will start on Tuesday, July 12, to help manage stress and promote overall health and wellbeing.

Stress can have a significant impact on an individual's health, causing or complicating an estimated 90 percent of diseases, according to a recent study by the Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy.

"[Stress] interferes with accessing all your best problem solving resources. It effects how people think about their situation. It's hard to think clearly when people get ramped up," said Angela Gilbert, a behavioral health consultant who works in Bethesda's Integrated Health Services.

Stress can also make it more challenging to implement healthy behaviors, like regular exercise and healthy, mindful eating, Gilbert added, not to mention that it can compromise your immune system, can lead to sleep problems, headaches and backaches.

"It [also] affects digestion, causes inflammation, higher blood sugar," said Sue Johnston, Integrated Health Services Mind-Body Medicine program coordinator.

When your stress level is high, your whole body

See **STRESS** page 13



## Red Cross 'Volunteens' Lending a Hand at Bethesda

By Mass Communication  
Specialist 3rd Class  
Alexandra Snyder  
Journal staff writer

Most teens look forward to spending their summer by the pool, catching some rays and sleeping in, but for 37 adolescents in the National Naval Medical Center's (NNMC) Red Cross "Volunteen" program, those activities will be supplemented with real world experience.

"The teens will be able to work up to 20 hours a week and will be assigned to clinics throughout the hospital," said Juliette Harrison, a volunteer with the Red Cross. "The clinics we spoke to were very eager to receive the teens as volunteers."

The program, which started June 29, has integrated teens within the clinics of the medical center, said Harrison. Enrollees will work morning or evening shifts and help with clerical duties and other clinical functions, she added.

Although admission into "Volunteen" has been closed for weeks, adult volunteers are always in need, said Bob Lowery, Red Cross station manager at NNMC.

"We are a 95 percent volunteer organization," said Lowery. "There is not a single thing we can accomplish



**Bob Lowery, center, Red Cross Station Manager at the National Naval Medical Center, speaks with volunteers at NNMC.**

without volunteers."

At NNMC, a volunteer's duties typically include administrative support in the Building 8, 2nd floor headquarters, assisting in specific clinics with supply and stocking needs and visiting patients and their families on the wards with the courtesy cart, delivering books, movies and game systems to war injured service members, said Cindy Speed,

a Red Cross volunteer at NNMC.

"We also have a supply closet in our headquarters where families and patients can come to get clothing, especially clothing specifically tailored to amputees and the injured, baby powder, soap, shampoo, books, puzzles, model airplanes, cookies and rolling suitcases — all free of cost," said Speed.

Donations are also welcome, espe-

cially new books and comfortable clothing, magazines, movies and toiletries.

To volunteer, as an adult, the application process consists of two background checks, orientation and health screenings, including blood work, said Speed. Applicants must also gain base access, although most of these steps aren't necessary for NNMC staff.

With nearly 250 registered volunteers providing an average of more than 3,500 hours of service each month, the NNMC Red Cross chapter is always there for military members, said Lowery.

"I could go on and on about our volunteers," he said. "They're willing to do just about anything to help our patients, and even though many of them are retired from the military, they're still serving. All our volunteers ensure that there is someone here for every person who actively served and their families. We're here for everyone — always."

To volunteer for NNMC's Red Cross, call 301-295-1538 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. For more information, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

## COMFORT

### Continued from 1

the countries that we visit," said Lt. Cmdr. Amy Drayton, *USNS Comfort* Education and Training Team Department head.

One crewmember embarked aboard *Comfort* for the CP11 mission said that he is excited to go back to Guatemala, his country of origin.

"I am very excited to be going back to Guatemala," said Senior Airman Bernie Torres, a Spanish linguist for CP '11. "Guatemala is not only a very beautiful place, but the people are very warm."

Torres is one of 13 translators on board *Comfort* who help patients and medical personnel overcome the communication barrier.

"I'm in a great position to be part of this mission and to be able to

bring help to its people," said Torres.

*Comfort* will spend 10 days conducting civil-military operations with the people of Guatemala.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet (COMUSNAVSO/C4F) support U.S. Southern Command joint and combined full-spectrum military operations by providing principally sea-based, forward presence to ensure freedom of maneuver in the maritime domain, to foster and sustain cooperative relationships with international partners and to fully exploit the sea as maneuver space in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American regions.

For more news from U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command & U.S. 4th Fleet, visit [www.navy.mil/local/cusns/](http://www.navy.mil/local/cusns/).

## GATES

### Continued from 1

and the nation's efforts in Afghanistan needed a new focus, Obama said, Gates helped the administration devise the strategy that put al-Qaida on a path to defeat.

When institutional inertia kept funding systems the troops didn't need, the president said, Gates launched a war on waste, ". speaking hard truths and saving hundreds of billions of dollars that can be invested in the 21st-century military."

Gates "made it his mission to make sure this department is serving our troops in the field as well as they serve us," Obama added.

"We see the lifesaving difference he made in the mine-resistant vehicles and the unmanned aircraft, the shorter medevac times in Afghanistan, [and] in our determination to give our wounded warriors the world-class care they deserve," Obama said of Gates.

Gates' greatest legacy, the president said, may be "the lives you

saved and the confidence you gave our men and women in battle," who knew there was a secretary of defense who had their backs, loved them and fought for them, and did everything in his power to bring them home safely.

Gates' willingness to serve under presidents of both parties is a measure of his integrity, Obama said, and "a reminder, especially to folks here in Washington, that civility and respectful discourse and citizenship over partisanship are not quaint relics of a bygone era."

As commander in chief, Obama said he is determined that the U.S. armed forces, despite the need to make hard fiscal choices, will always remain the best-trained, best-led, best-equipped fighting force in history.

"In an uncertain world that demands our leadership, the United States of America and our armed forces will remain the greatest force for freedom and security that the world has ever known," the president said.

"This is the America, strong and confident," Obama said, "to which Bob Gates has devoted his life."

For more news from  
other bases around  
the Washington, D.C. area,  
***visit [www.dcmilitary.com](http://www.dcmilitary.com)***

# New Emergency Codes Coming Soon

The Joint Task Force (JTF) National Capital Region Medical recently published new policy guidance for Emergency Code standardization for the North and South Campuses.

How will this directive affect staff at Bethesda?

There will be minor changes to the current Emergency Code Colors used by the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC).

1. "Code Yellow" will now be used for hospital lock-down instead of "Code Security Alert."

2. "Code Purple" will be a new code used to alert staff of a lost person on base.

3. "Code White" will alert staff of an active shooter on base.

Within the next few weeks, staff will receive replacement Emergency Code cards, which will include the changes outlined above. In the interim, all staff are required to post the new codes in personal workspaces and staff bulletin boards.

For additional information, please contact the NNMC Office of Emergency Management at 301-295-5202.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CODES			
Read each code thoroughly and UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE			
CODE & Purpose	ACTION / Instruction		
<b>Code Red:</b>  <b>Fire</b> Code is used whenever there is a real or suspected fire.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Fire Department will respond</b> <b>Any staff member in vicinity of event: Remember "RACE"</b> "R" REMOVE patients/people from immediate vicinity of fire. "A" ALARM Pull nearest alarm. "C" CLOSE all doors to the space containing the fire. "E" EXTINGUISH fire if possible.  <b>NOTE:</b> Use extinguisher appropriate for type of fire. Never use a water-based extinguisher on an electrical fire! Know the location of the nearest fire alarm, fire extinguisher, and two fire exits in your workspace. <b>FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE Remember "PASS"</b> "P" PULL lever. "A" AIM at the base of the fire. "S" SQUEEZE handle. "S" SWEEP over the fire.		
<b>Code Orange:</b> <b>Hazardous Materials</b> Code is activated to handle a hazardous material spill or release within the facility or on the grounds.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Fire Department will respond</b> <b>Any staff member in vicinity of event:</b> 1. COVER/CONTAIN if possible without exposure. 2. EVACUATE the area. 3. INFORM supervisors. 4. KNOW location of Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). 5. PROVIDE MSDS to pre-designated response Teams. 6. KNOW hazardous materials in your work area.		
<b>Code Black:</b> Code is activated in the event of bomb threat/suspicious package.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Security Department will respond</b> <b>All Others:</b> Return to work station and await further instruction.		
<b>Code Blue:</b> Cardiac or Respiratory Arrest Code Blue is activated to get equipment and specialized staff to the location of a suspected cardiopulmonary arrest.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 2px;">Inpatient Units <b>CALL: 666</b></td> <td style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 2px;">All other areas <b>CALL: 777</b></td> </tr> </table> <b>Activate Pre-designated Response Teams</b> <b>Any staff member in area of event:</b> 1. Call for help and activate Code Blue. 2. Know the location of the nearest resuscitation equipment in your area. <b>All Others:</b> Carry out plan of the day.	Inpatient Units <b>CALL: 666</b>	All other areas <b>CALL: 777</b>
Inpatient Units <b>CALL: 666</b>	All other areas <b>CALL: 777</b>		

CODE & Purpose	ACTION / Instruction
<b>Code Purple:</b> Code is activated when there is an elopement or lost person.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Security Department will respond</b> <b>All Others:</b> 1. Be on the lookout for person matching the description. 2. Return to work station and await "All Clear" notification.
<b>Code Pink:</b> Code is activated whenever someone is attempting to abduct an infant or child from the hospital.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Activate Pre-designated Response Teams and Hospital Lockdown Plan</b> <b>All Others:</b> 1. Report suspicious activity. 2. Return to work station and await "All Clear" notification.
<b>Code Yellow:</b> Code is activated when there is an undetermined threat to the general safety and security of the Command grounds.	(Same as Code Pink)
<b>Code Gray:</b> Code is activated to manage a violent or combative person with or without a weapon.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Security Department will respond</b> <b>All Others:</b> Return to work station and await "All Clear" notification.
<b>Code White:</b> Code is activated when there is an Active Shooter.	<b>CALL: 777</b> <b>Security Department will respond</b> <b>All Others:</b> Shelter-in-place, take cover and await further instruction.
<b>Code Green:</b> Code is activated in an internal or external mass casualty event.	<b>Activate Pre-designated Response Teams</b> <b>All Others:</b> Return to work station and await further instruction.
<b>IMPORTANT NUMBERS:</b>	
Emergency	777
Security/Non-Emergency	295-1246
Command Duty Office	295-4611

# Four More Paws on Deck at Bethesda

By Cat DeBinder  
Journal staff writer

The National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) has a new four-legged member in its pet therapy squad.

Naoma, a five-year-old "Goldador," cross between a Golden and Labrador retriever, recently joined the ranks with Laura-Lee, Bobbie and Archie. All four furry professionals were brought to the hospital by Southwestern Guide Dog Program, Paws for Patriots Division, which trains dogs to be companion guides to wounded service members, spending their days visiting patients, family members and staff.

"Therapy dogs have a positive effect on people," said Army Sgt. Maj. Daniel Thompson, Naoma's caretaker who works on the Joint Staff for Warrior and Family Support at the Pentagon.

For dogs who go through the program's training to become guide dogs, but ultimately don't meet the stringent requirements because they may be predisposed to hip dysplasia or have other disqualifying factors, Southwestern Guide Dog presents the dogs to organizations and individuals who can use them as therapy dogs, said Patricia Barry, secretary to the deputy commander for surgical services at NNMC and the caretaker of Laura-Lee.

"Guide dogs have to be perfect in every way," said Barry. "When they are disqualified from being a one-on-one guide dog, they are put into what they call a 'career change.' That is how we ended up with our therapy dogs at NNMC."

Naoma, who also frequents Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) will be coming to NNMC about five times a month to bring cheer to troops, family members, staff and visitors, Thompson said.



(photo by Cat DeBinder)

From left to right: therapy dogs Bobbie, Laura Lee, Naoma, and Archie. The newest therapy dog at Bethesda, Naoma, also regularly visits patients and staff at other military hospitals, including Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Since she arrived at Bethesda, Naoma has been getting along well with Laura Lee and Bobbie, both Golden Retrievers, and Archie, a German shepherd.

Amy O'Connor, a NNMC Healthcare Resolutions Specialist, who is Archie's caretaker, said even though the dogs are career changed from one-on-one guide dogs, they are still amazing, well-trained

and smart.

"These dogs are gentle, obedient, trustworthy, funny and loving," she said. "They provide so much happiness and comfort to our patients and staff members."

For more information on Southwestern Guide Dogs, visit [www.guidedogs.org](http://www.guidedogs.org).

# Sun Screen: Safeguarding Your Skin

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dion Dawson  
Journal Staff Writer

The National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) and Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) encourage everyone to be aware of the risks associated with exposure to high levels of sunlight for a long period of time.

"Everyone needs to wear sunscreen," said Marguerite Mcguigan-Shuster, a family practice and sports medicine physician with the internal medicine department. "People don't understand the severity of not wearing sunscreen. I've had a sister with sun poisoning and a sister-in-law with Melanoma, a tumor of melanin-forming cells, typically a malignant tumor asso-

ciated with skin cancer. It disappoints me because, as a command, we try our best to get the word out about proper skin health. I don't like to see people suffer. I don't want people to wait until it is too late. What if someone close to you receives skin damage? You realize at that point that there were ways to prevent it."

When using sunscreen, the form of application is just as important.

"There are multiple ways a person can apply sunscreen, including a moisturizer or makeup for women and an aftershave for men," said Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Bingham, director for dermatologic surgery at NNMC. "For both men and women, we recommend the daily use of a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. The per-



son should include their face, ears, forearms and the back of

the neck and hands.

Bingham stressed that if a person knows they will be outside for extended periods of time, whether it involves physical activity, gardening or work, seek a sunscreen with a higher SPF and cover all areas of exposed skin.

"You should apply the sunscreen about a half hour before activity and exposure to sun," said Bingham. "After the initial layer is applied, reapply sunscreen every two hours while outside. This is allowing a person to practice good self protection habits. One of the biggest misconceptions about sunscreen is the amount of times it should be applied."

Sunscreen is always recommended, as it can prevent serious health risks.

"This allows your skin to be

protected from horrible harmful ultraviolet rays and radiation from the sun, which we know can cause skin cancer. We also know that ultraviolet (UV) radiation accelerates the natural aging process. Some people even have pre-existing conditions that can worsen, such as Lupus, an autoimmune disease where the body's immune system becomes hyperactive and attacks normal, healthy tissue." Bingham admitted.

Mcguigan-Shuster said going outside and being active is highly encouraged, but while doing so, properly protect yourself and exercise good health habits.

For more information on proper sunscreen habits, contact your Primary Care Manager (PCM).

# Diabetes Clinic Helps Patients Cope

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John K. Hamilton  
Journal staff writer

In 2010, 1.9 million Americans, ages 20 and older, were diagnosed with diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), and at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), the Diabetes clinic is working to combat this disease and educating patients on how to manage their symptoms.

"Diabetes is a disease that occurs when a person's body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use insulin properly," said Olalekan Akintomide, a nurse in NNMC's Diabetes clinic. "Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose for energy."

There are two types of diabetes — type one, often referred to as juvenile diabetes, occurs when the body's pancreas doesn't produce any insulin, and type two is when the pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin, or the body's cells ignore the insulin, said Akintomide.

Those who have diabetes may experience unexplained weight loss, extreme hunger, fatigue, blurred vision, slow-healing sores and frequent infections. To help patients manage their diabetes, the clinic offers several referral-free classes, including a four-hour multidisciplinary survival skills class, designed to teach nutrition, proper use of medication, exercise, health maintenance, sick day



management, and pathophysiology, how the body changes as result of disease.

In addition, the clinic's self-management education program covers the same topics as the survival skills class, but in greater detail, over the course of three four-hour sessions. Focusing on lifestyle medications, physical activity and nutrition, the clinic also offers a pre-diabetes class.

"The pre-diabetes class we offer is for individuals with the onset of diabetes. This is the time where we can do something about it and hopefully prevent the disease before it gets to

the point where it's unmanageable," said Akintomide.

Diabetes can increase your risk for other health problems, but with the right treatment and recommend lifestyle changes, many diabetics are able to prevent or delay the onset of complications.

The clinic also offers shared medical appointments where patients can discuss with one another how they cope with diabetes.

"A shared medical appointment is like a regular appointment. The only difference is during a shared medical appointment, we have three to six

patients sharing a common diagnosis of diabetes. We take their vital signs, look at their medications. Then, they have the opportunity to share their experiences, and what they do to deal with situations caused by the disease. It's a way for our patients to realize they are not in this fight alone and, at the same time, they can learn from other patients' experiences," said Akintomide.

For more information on the Diabetes clinic, class schedules and share medical appointments, call 301-295-3037.

# TRICARE Joins Campaign to Increase Medication Adherence

Nearly three out of four Americans do not take their medications as directed, a problem known as medication non-adherence. TRICARE beneficiaries near Baltimore, Birmingham, Ala., Cincinnati, Providence, R.I., Raleigh-Durham, N.C. and Sacramento, Calif., should look out for messages from the Script Your Future campaign encouraging them to take their medications as directed. TRICARE is a governmental partner organization in the campaign.

According to the National Consumer League, one in three Americans never fills their prescriptions, and a third of hospital admissions are linked to poor adherence. This is especially true for people with chronic health conditions that can worsen quickly without proper medication use. In addition, the NCL reports that up to \$290 billion a year in



medical costs can be attributed to poor medication adherence.

The Script Your Future campaign's primary goal is patient education and awareness, focused on patients with three serious chronic conditions — diabetes, respiratory disease and cardiovascular disease. Messages include:

- Proper use of medication and medical devices, like asthma inhalers
- Strategies for making it easier to remember to take medications
- Communication with their doctor and pharmacist about all their over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Negative health effects of poor

medication adherence

"The least effective and most expensive pill TRICARE provides is the one a beneficiary never takes," said Rear Adm. Thomas J. McGinnis, chief of TRICARE Pharmacy Operations. "Following the labeled directions for prescription medications is one of the easiest ways to help protect and improve overall wellness. Read the instructions carefully and contact a doctor or pharmacist with any questions."

On May 11, 2011, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin headlined the Script Your Future kick-off event. A video of her speech is online at [www.scriptyourfuture.org/?page\\_id=87&eid=18](http://www.scriptyourfuture.org/?page_id=87&eid=18). Also on the website are tips and tools to help individuals improve adherence. These include a "question builder" to help patients start conversations with their doc-

tor, printable lists to keep track of medications and worksheets to help build a plan to take medication as prescribed.

The campaign includes outreach and paid advertising in the Baltimore, Birmingham, Cincinnati, Providence, Raleigh-Durham and Sacramento. TRICARE beneficiaries living near these cities should watch for these messages and make every effort to take their medications as directed. Their health depends on it.

The Script Your Future campaign is online at [www.scriptyourfuture.org](http://www.scriptyourfuture.org). You can learn more about TRICARE Pharmacy at [www.tricare.mil/pharmacy](http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacy).

To sign up for TRICARE e-mail updates, visit [www.tricare.mil/subscriptions](http://www.tricare.mil/subscriptions).

To connect with TRICARE on Facebook and Twitter, visit [www.facebook.com/tricare](http://www.facebook.com/tricare) and [www.twitter.com/tricare](http://www.twitter.com/tricare).

## DOD Launches Military Spouse Employment Partnership

By Elaine Sanchez  
American Forces Press Service

Top government and military officials unveiled the Military Spouse Employment Partnership program during a ceremony at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C., June 29.

The partnership encompasses more than 70 employers who have committed to expanding career opportunities for military spouses worldwide, and to recognize the skills and talents they bring to the employment table.

In remarks at the event, Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, lauded military spouses for their service and sacrifice as they juggle households, children, volunteer work and jobs — many times in the midst of deployments.

Due to their ability to thrive despite multiple challenges and demands, she noted, military spouses possess the qualities highly sought after by employers, such as dedication, flexibility, a strong work ethic and "endless energy."

"If you're looking for hard-working, highly skilled and educated, dedicated employees, our military spouses are precisely the employees you need," Biden said. "Every day our military spouses are giving back to our country. While their loved ones are called to serve, they serve right alongside them. Now we must serve them as well as they serve us."

Deborah Mullen, who was accompanied to the event by her husband, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, acknowledged the difficulties military spouses face in finding jobs. Many spouses, she noted, are turned away for jobs, not due to their qualifications or training, but due to the frequent moves their service member spouse is required to make.

"More than one spouse has told me, 'All I wanted was to get in the door to be able to be judged on my merits, my qualifications and my strengths.'"

Deborah Mullen said in many cases they are unable to even score an interview.

"They aren't asking of rules to be broken or regulations to be cast aside," she said. "They know the

economy is tough out there ... This isn't about entitlement for them; this is about opportunity. Military spouses just want the same shot as everyone else."

She said 1 percent of the nation serves, comprising about 2.2 million service members, and about half of them are married to someone seeking a job. Most of those job seekers are women, she noted, "educated resilient, serious women who possess strong values and even stronger work ethic."

The partnership signifies a positive step toward employing these highly skilled spouses, Biden said.

"We're making it a little easier for them to find work, and perhaps a little less frightening for new employers to take that gamble and find the talent so resident in our ranks," she said.

But the work is just beginning, Biden noted. Today, the Defense Department launches the partnership, she said, and "tomorrow, we must make that partnership work."

Dr. Clifford L. Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, lauded the partnership, noting that programs like this didn't exist when he joined the Marine Corps in the 1960s. He recalled a time when he and his wife had to watch their spending, unsure of whether or not she'd have a job at the next duty station.

Today, there's an abundance of programs aimed at supporting military families, and their welfare is taken into consideration at every level of command, Stanley said. The partnership is a significant commitment toward that military family care and, he added, "a big deal" for spouses and employers.

The event also marked the inclusion of 15 new employers who signed onto the partnership. Leaders from each company stepped forward to sign a statement of support, signifying a pledge to:

- Increase employment opportunities for military spouses, while maintaining employment for relocating spouses;
- Provide career promotion opportunities for military spouses who are excelling at their jobs;
- Ensure pay equity for military spouses commensurate with their level of training, work expe-

rience, accomplishments and credentials; and

- Spread the word about spousal support throughout the military and corporate America.

Partners also are pledging to post job opportunities on the Military Spouse Employment Partnership Web portal located on [OurMilitary.mil](http://OurMilitary.mil) at [www.ourmilitary.mil](http://www.ourmilitary.mil).

The partnership program evolved from the Army Spouse Employment program, through which more than 100,000 military spouses have been hired since 2003, explained Robert L. Gordon III, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy.

"As [this program] continues to grow, just think about what this partnership can do for our spouses, for our military," he said.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Gary Profit, senior director of military recruiting for Walmart, one of the program's partners, noted the importance of caring for military families in all sectors of society.

"As a retired Army officer, and with a spouse that followed me around the world for 31 years, it's an opportunity to give back to those with whom we had the privilege of serving," he said of the partnership. "It's an important public and private partnership we have to honor the service and sacrifice of military spouses who have served very much as their uniformed member serves."

Military spouses also voiced their approval of the program.

"It will make our lives as military spouses so much easier, because right before you move there's that ramp up of getting that resume ready and all that on top of moving," said Kristi Hamrick, an Air Force spouse who has moved 11 times in 17 years. "If you can get a job where you have another job waiting on the other end ... that would reduce so much stress."

"I'm overwhelmed," said Jennifer Pilcher, wife of Navy Cmdr. Eddie Pilcher. "I truly think it's the first time in history that the military spouse has been recognized. To sit here and hear the program is for us is overwhelming and exciting."

# Navy Lodges Offer Guests Eco Friendly Bath Products

## A Navy Lodge release

The Navy Lodge Program is now offering eco-friendly personal amenities to its guests. Guests will find eco-friendly shampoo, conditioner and soap in all Navy Lodges worldwide.

"We want to do our part to decrease landfill volume and reduce our carbon footprint on our Installation and within the community," said Michael Rabideau, manager of the Navy Lodge at Bethesda. "The Navy Lodge Program believes that minimizing our environmental impact is the right thing to do. We are confident that our guests will appreciate a quality product that is also eco-friendly."

Products offered are made with organic ingredients and are packaged in 100 percent recycled paper. The shampoo and



conditioner containers also feature eco-friendly additives which react to the combination of oxidation and biodegradation processes by completely

disintegrating the plastic into organic compounds. In addition, all of the printing used on packing consists of soy based ink.

To make a reservation for any of the 40 Navy Lodges worldwide, call toll-free at 1-800-NAVY-INN or log onto [www.navy-lodge.com](http://www.navy-lodge.com).

For other military lodging options, go to [www.dodlodging.com](http://www.dodlodging.com).

To make a reservation with Bethesda Navy Lodge call 301-654-1795

# Try Going for "Spin" to Get Fit

**By Mass Communication  
Specialist Seaman  
Dion Dawson  
Journal Staff Writer**

Promoting healthy living and healthy choices, Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB)'s Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) office is encouraging service members, civilians, contractors and dependents to utilize spinning classes offered weekly at the Comfort Zone.

Spinning classes are aerobic classes done in a fitness studio on spinning bikes, with various light and music settings to create an energized atmosphere. Instructors guide participants through workout phases while participants control resistance on their bike to make the pedaling as easy or difficult as they choose. Constant adjustment is normal.

"Spin is amazing," said Angela Buford, a full-time structural engineer with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Rockville, MD. "I have been doing spin for more than two years. It is really good for your heart. It's a really beneficial cardiovascular workout. It builds endurance, while helping you focus and stay motivated. Some participants are motivated from the workout itself, some are motivated from the instructor and some are even motivated from the music. The most important thing is that you are motivated and you use it to get through the workout. Even though you want to stop, you fight to the finish line."

Buford, also a part-time aerobics instructor for MWR with NSAB, said she comes into a session with a lot of stress and tension, and when it's finished, she leaves feeling relaxed, relieved and accomplished.

"As the instructor, I want to take my class on a ride," said Buford. "I don't want them to feel as if they are just moving their legs on a bike. We, as a class, go on a journey to get fit, relieve stress and accomplish personal goals. You are doing the same exercise, but you are adding different sets of speed and resistance. We want that person who doesn't know about spin to come out and give it a try. I think they will be surprised at the atmosphere, the challenge and the benefits."

Wendy Tompkins, MWR Recreational Director for NSAB believes that the success of the class and its credit goes hand-in-hand with MWR's mission.

"We are here for people to get fit and healthy," said Tompkins. "We try to make working out and exercising fun and interesting. When it is interesting, there is more participation and more enjoyment involved in the process."

Tompkins has seen the positive effects of the spin classes first hand.

"We have a lot of members that have lost significant amounts of weight," said Tompkins. "We also have had constituents who have lowered their blood pressure or minimized the amount of medicine they consume as a result of the class. It feels good to help. If I can help a

person reach a desired fitness level, then my job has been done."

NNMC's Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA) Chief Hospital Corpsman Leah Alanders has been amazed at the effectiveness that spin has had on her body, physically and mentally.

"It makes me happy knowing that I can work out in more ways than just running or conventional exercises," said Alanders. "Since I started spinning more than a year ago, I've toned up my legs, arms and everything else. This is a total body workout that keeps my muscles in shape and burns a lot of calories. Spin is major stress reliever. I think that spin was one of the easiest things I started in my life. It is adjustable to everyone. Even if you are injured, you can just adjust your workout to your limitations. It's great."

With a high number of participation in spin, the new sports facility is a welcome addition.

"Right now, the spin room in the new facility is twice the size of the current facility and I have complete faith in our ability to fill that class," said Tompkins. "I have faith in everything that is offered to the installation. Try the spin classes once and see how inspiring, unique and valuable the spin experience is."

For more information on spinning classes, contact the MWR comfort zone at 301-295-2450 or visit MWR on the web at [www.bethesda.med.navy.mil/visitor/morale\\_welfare\\_recreation](http://www.bethesda.med.navy.mil/visitor/morale_welfare_recreation).

# TRICARE Informs Beneficiaries About ID Card Changes

## A TRICARE Release

TRICARE beneficiaries should make sure they have their Social Security number (SSN) committed to memory. It won't be found on new Department of Defense (DoD) ID cards.

As of June 1, 2011, SSNs are no longer printed on new ID cards issued to members of the Uniformed Services, retirees and family members. The new cards will look basically the same, but will have a unique DoD Identification number in place of the SSN. For those eligible for benefits, such as health care, a DoD Benefits number (DBN) will be on the back.

The elimination of visible SSNs is a DoD response to the increasing need to protect the privacy and identity of ID card holders, but it may raise questions when it



comes to obtaining health care or pharmacy benefits. Health care providers have always used social security numbers to check TRICARE eligibility and file claims.

For TRICARE beneficiaries, the DBN is most important. Many systems can accept it already, but beneficiaries using the Military Health System and TRICARE

should be prepared to state their SSN (or their sponsor's) when accessing health care, pharmacy and dental benefits.

The change to new IDs for all members and families is expected to take about four years. Existing ID cards are good until they expire; including retiree cards marked "INDEF." Beneficiaries who want a new ID without their SSN are advised to make an appointment before making the trip to an ID card facility.

TRICARE beneficiaries and providers can get more information, see ID card samples and view frequently asked questions at [www.tricare.mil/ssn](http://www.tricare.mil/ssn).

General information about the removal of SSN from ID cards can be found at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/smartcard](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/smartcard).

# United We Serve Offers Sailors One-Stop Resource For Volunteer Opportunities

## From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

In its ongoing effort to encourage active, reserve and retired Sailors to volunteer in support of their local communities, the Navy announced on June 30 a one-stop, web-based resource that assists in identifying volunteer opportunities.

According to NAVADMIN 191/11, United We Serve provides a search engine that enables Navy advocates and supporters looking for volunteer opportunities to enter a city and state location and get a list of organizations that are seeking volunteers.

United We Serve is a nationwide service ini-

tiative that helps meet growing social needs resulting from the economic downturn. The website provides volunteers an online resource for not only finding volunteer opportunities in their community, but also posting their own.

The site allows users to narrow searches to match the type of organizations or activities they desire to support.

"Sailors want to volunteer, but they want to make sure the organizations they are supporting are legitimate," said Fleet Master Chief Petty Officer Scott A. Benning with the Chief of Naval Personnel. "United We Serve is a great resource to help our Sailors make a positive impact in their local communities."

The NAVADMIN also advises activities desiring to post volunteer opportunities on the United We Serve site to consult OPNAVINST 5380.1A and seek guidance from their command's or region's legal counsel to ensure the services desired are appropriate for volunteers to perform.

"The contributions made by active and reserve Sailors as well as the volunteers from the retiree community continue to have an enormous impact within the Navy and local communities," said Benning.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, visit [www.serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov). For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel, visit [www.navy.mil/local/cnp/](http://www.navy.mil/local/cnp/).

## STRESS

### Continued from 3

is in fight or flight mode — a state of hyperarousal, she said. Under stress, it's also easier to succumb to your vulnerabilities, Johnston also noted, be it eating more unhealthy foods, not eating enough or not exercising regularly.

It's important to stay on top of your stress and recognize its negative impact, as it can exacerbate chronic conditions, such as asthma and hypertension. Exercising can help lower stress, as well as social support. Surrounding yourself with friends and loved ones, added Gilbert. It may seem challenging, but it's imperative to take a moment just to breathe, and find ways to incorporate a break, she said.

"When people are ramped up and they're moving quickly, it seems counterintuitive to slow down, so it does take practice," said Gilbert.

Among the many classes offered through Integrated Health Services, the Stress Reduction Group, an hour-long class held every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m., teaches stress reduction techniques, including ways to meditate, that can be used anytime, anywhere, said Johnston.

Most programs are drop-in and staff members are welcome to come as often as they're able, she said, although it's recommended they come frequently to make the most of it.

Throughout the week, Integrated Health Services offers various classes in the America building on the second floor, including several types of yoga — chair yoga and beginner yoga, expressive art classes, a self-care break class and a mind-body skills group, which teaches a number of techniques on how to cope with stress, such as medi-

tation and guided imagery, helping direct your thoughts, allowing you to reach a relaxed, focused state of mind. Guided imagery is also used to help patients focus on healing and well being, Johnston added.

"It's amazing to be able to offer all [these classes]. We're trying to make it convenient so people can drop in," she said.

It's easy to become stressed due to our everyday concerns, but the techniques taught by these classes can help offer relief, she said. It's especially important for those who work in a hospital setting to take care of ourselves and manage stress to be able to provide the best care, she added.

"Our focus is on mitigating the effects of stress, [and] finding ways to purposefully [find balance]," said Johnston.

For more information on the Integrated Health Services classes, call 301-295-0105.