

## Deputy Navy Surgeon General Retires after 42 Years of Service

By: Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

BETHESDA, Md. -- After 42 years of service in the U.S. Navy, Rear Adm. Thomas Cullison, deputy Navy surgeon general, retired during an official ceremony Aug 6 held at the National Naval Medical Center.

“During his time in uniform, he has served in everything from the riverines to submarines to the Marines,” said Navy Surgeon General Adam M. Robinson, Jr. during his keynote speech at the ceremony. “Tom Cullison has served is a hero who evokes admiration and respect for all he has worked with throughout his career.”

Cullison said that the Navy has provided him so many opportunities during his more than four decades of service.

“It’s been a tremendous ride,” said Cullison. “I’ve always tried to focus on doing the right thing for our men and women in uniform and their families. I hope that I’ve been able to leave the service just a little better than when I was commissioned.”

A native of Plymouth, Ind., Cullison graduated from Hanover College and received his commission through Officer Candidate School in 1968. He earned his medical degree in 1979 from the Indiana University School of Medicine. After completing a surgical internship and orthopedic surgery residency at the Naval Medical Center San Diego, he reported to Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton in 1984, where he served as the Chief of Orthopedic Surgery in 1986. Cullison held several positions while stationed at Naval Medical Center, San Diego, from 1987-95 including Assistant Chairman of Orthopedic Surgery, Director of Sports Medicine Service, Surgeon General Specialty Leader for Orthopedic Surgery, and Director of Surgical Services.

He served as Deputy Commander, Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Va., from 1995-98, Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune from 1998-2001, and Fleet Surgeon, U.S. Pacific Fleet from 2001-03 and Command Surgeon, U.S. Pacific Command, from 2003-04. Medical Officer of the Marine Corps from 2004-2005. He served as Commander, Navy Medicine East, Commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth from 2005 - 2007. Has he been Deputy surgeon general since 2007.

Cullison had many significant accomplishments during his tenure as the deputy surgeon general including overseeing noteworthy improvements to the electronic health records program and managing the complex logistics requirements for fielding the Navy medicine response to the humanitarian response mission to Haiti after a 7.0 earthquake killed more than 230,000 people in January 2010. In less than 76 hours, Cullison coordinated the identification and transportation of more than 1,000 Navy medical personnel from Navy hospitals throughout the United States to Haiti to provide a cornerstone of the U.S. humanitarian assistance mission.

“Providing quality healthcare to our people around the world, as well as, helping those in need has been very satisfying,” said Cullison. “I believe the mark of success is to continue to try your best, no matter the situation or condition you are confronted with.”

Cullison's personal awards include the Legion of Merit with three gold stars, Bronze Star with Combat V, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon.

Cullison will be retiring to North Carolina with his wife, Marilyn who is a registered nurse. The couple has four daughters, a son, and five grandchildren.