



December 2011

# THE COURIER

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, Va.



Midwinter Masquerade — Page 8

## Psychology Internship Program Earns Rare Accreditation

STORY AND PHOTO BY MC1 ELIZABETH ST JOHN  
NMCP Public Affairs

The Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP) Psychology Internship Program earned the accolades of mental health professionals throughout Navy Medicine Dec. 8 after a recent announcement that the American Psychological Association had given the program a full and long-term accreditation.

The accreditation is rare in the fact that not many first-year programs gain this type of endorsement.

NMCP is the only Navy medical treatment facility to have an accredited internship program and post-doctoral fellowship, making it the largest training program in Navy Medicine for clinical psychologists.

“Your success in creating these programs and getting them accredited is arguably the most important accomplishment in the Navy psychology community over the past decade,” said Capt. John Ralph, deputy commander for behavioral health, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

“A few short years ago, Portsmouth had no psychology training programs,” he continued. “Portsmouth is now the Navy’s primary training site for psychologists. The fact that the crew there has accomplished these feats in the midst of one of the busiest times ever for military mental health is unbelievably impressive.”

The psychology department’s post-doctoral fellowship pro-



**Dr. Thomas Kupke, left, is surrounded by fellow Psychology Training Program members as he holds his Plankowner Certificate representing he is part of the initial crew of the newly accredited Psychology Internship Training Program. With this accreditation, NMCP is now the largest training program in Navy Medicine for clinical psychologists.**

gram received full accreditation from the APA last year.

“Wow! Talk about touchdowns,” said Capt. David Jones, special assistant for TBI and Wounded, Ill and Injured, Navy Medicine East.

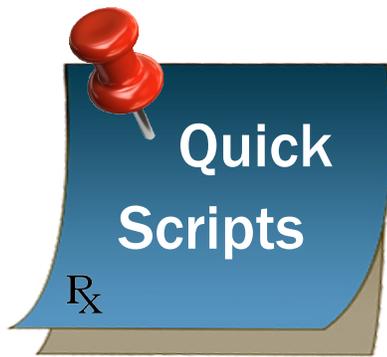
— See **INTERNSHIP**, Page 11

## Fall Frocking

**Rear Adm. Elaine Wagner, NMCP commander, and CMDCM (SW/SS) Carl Morgan presided over the frocking ceremony Nov. 30 in the auditorium where 48 staff were awarded the right to wear their new ranks.**



Photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Steven J. Weber



## Million Dollar Sailor Course

NMCP Command Financial Specialist Team has invited Ms. Karen Melvin from Fleet and Family Support Center to facilitate the two-day "Million Dollar Sailor" course Jan. 19 – 20 in the back half of the auditorium.

Enlisted should route special request chits, and once approved, should be submitted to HM1 Joseph Lynn in person at General Surgery, 953-2557, or scan and email the approved chit. Officers can submit an email with evidence of approval from their chain of command to Lt. Cmdr. Lorena Griffin with subject title "Million Dollar Sailor."

This course helps service members develop the financial management skills to actually become a "Million Dollar Sailor." This course will also give sailors the skills to increase financial awareness and help develop skills in managing their personal finances.

The course covers a variety of topics, including the need for personal financial management; understanding military pay and allowances; car-buying strategies; insurance; creating a spending plan; savings and investment basics; Thrift Savings Plan; how to be a smart consumer (predatory lending); establishing and maintaining credit; and understanding credit reports/scores.

## Celebrate New Year's Eve with Beat the Ball 5K

MWR will host at NMCP a healthy alternative to those passé New Year's Eve parties! Come celebrate the new year by getting a head start on those resolutions and run in the "Beat the Ball 5K".

The 5K race which is open to the public begins at 11:35 p.m. Father Time will start the event and be in the pace vehicle. Times Square celebrations will be broadcast at the finish line. Runners will be

treated to post-race festivities and those who finish before midnight will receive commemorative keepsakes.

Registration may be completed by going to <http://bit.ly/uKanob>.

## Blood Donations Still Needed During the Holidays

Everyone is encouraged to support the Armed Services Blood Program as the needs at the warfront do not recognize the holidays.

Please "Donate then Celebrate!"

For more information, visit [www.militaryblood.dod.mil](http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil) or email [Ralph.peters@med.navy.mil](mailto:Ralph.peters@med.navy.mil).

## Oakleaf Club Open to New Members

The Oakleaf Club of Tidewater is open to medical, dental, nurse, and medical service corps — active and retired — officers and their spouses in the Hampton Roads area. The club is a social and benevolent organization and are always happy to welcome new members.

For membership information, email [tidewater.oakleaf@gmail.com](mailto:tidewater.oakleaf@gmail.com).

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<http://twitter.com/NMCP1>

## NMCP Ombudsman Team Pre-Deployment Brief

The NMCP Ombudsman Team is here to help those attached to NMCP or its branch health clinics when you or a family member are preparing to deploy!

The monthly pre-deployment brief is held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel.

Email us to join our Ombudsman email tree and learn the latest news.

[NMCPombudsman@med.navy.mil](mailto:NMCPombudsman@med.navy.mil)  
or  
(757) 953-1973

## THE COURIER

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The Courier is an authorized publication of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, 620 John Paul Jones Circle, Portsmouth, VA 23708, and is published monthly by the Public Affairs Office.

The Courier provides an avenue to circulate all newsworthy information the NMC Portsmouth staff has to offer.

Those who wish to submit an article or news information for publishing should contact the Public Affairs Office by calling 953-7986, by fax at 953-5118, or by emailing the PAO, Deborah Kallgren, at [deborah.kallgren@med.navy.mil](mailto:deborah.kallgren@med.navy.mil).

Submissions should be in Word format, with photos submitted separately from the document and in jpeg, bitmap or tiff format.

The Public Affairs Office is located in Bldg. 1, 3rd Deck, Rm. C308.

# Santa Visits Peds During Operation Bright Light

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MC3 (SW) ANNA ARNDT  
NMCP Public Affairs

Santa and about 85 members from five area motorcycle organizations arrived at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth bearing gifts on Dec. 11, bringing presents to pediatric patients during the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Operation Bright Light. The record number of participants had collected more than 200 presents and visited two dozen sick kids in the Emergency Room, Pediatrics Ward and Pediatrics Intensive care Unit.

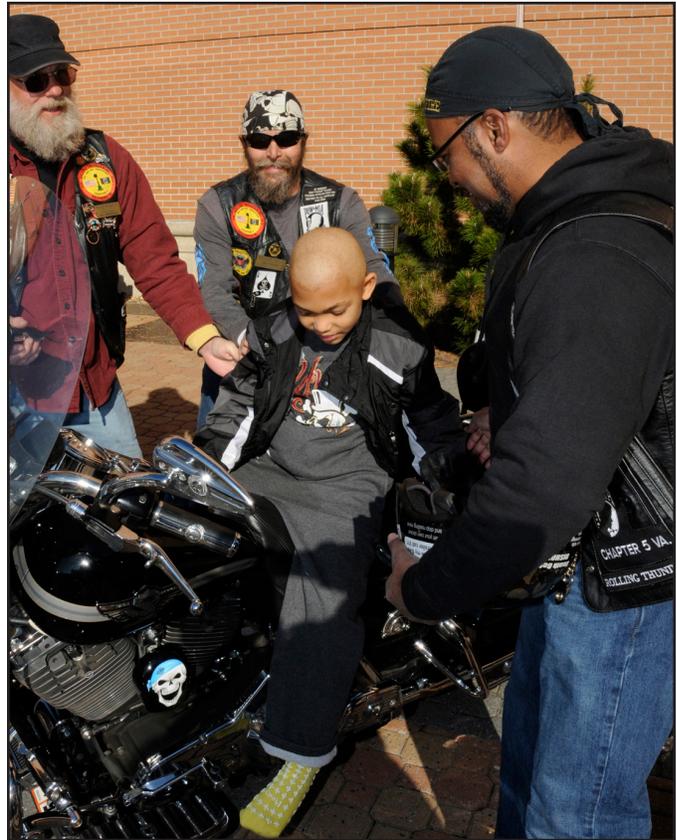
Members of Rolling Thunder (Chapter 5) were joined by the Christian Motorcycle Association's "Wings of Eagles" and "Beacon Chapter"; American Legion — Chapters 284, 146, and 368; Veterans First, and first-time participants Sons of Poseidon.

Operation Bright Light is one of two annual visits by Santa and the motorcyclists — they also distribute presents to pediatric patients during Christmas in July.

"We collect toys for about six months from everywhere," explained Gyle Hamrick, vice president of Rolling Thunder (Chapter 5). "Different organizations donate them. In winter, we don't expect this big of a turnout because it's cold. But we had a good turnout this year, so we ended up with about 50 bikes."

"When Santa and the group comes around, at first the kids are a little shocked and surprised, but soon they are at ease and having a good time," said Chris Brogan, NMCP child life specialist. "Even after the group leaves, the kids are still excited from seeing Santa and that carries benefits in a hospital. It makes the kids happier, and when they're happier, they are more likely to take their medicine and report accurately how they feel."

— See **BRIGHT LIGHT**, Page 11



**Brandon Grier, a pediatrics patient, is able to meet with members of Rolling Thunder outside and check out one of their motorcycles during the 13th annual Operation Bright Light.**



**Padme Henshaw agrees with Santa Rick's assessment of how pretty she is before a member of the Rolling Thunder motorcycle club gives her a present during the 13th annual Operation Bright Light.**

**Below: Hilde Erikson, a member of the Rolling Thunder motorcycle club, gives a present to Ben Gilley, the sibling of a Pediatrics Ward patient.**



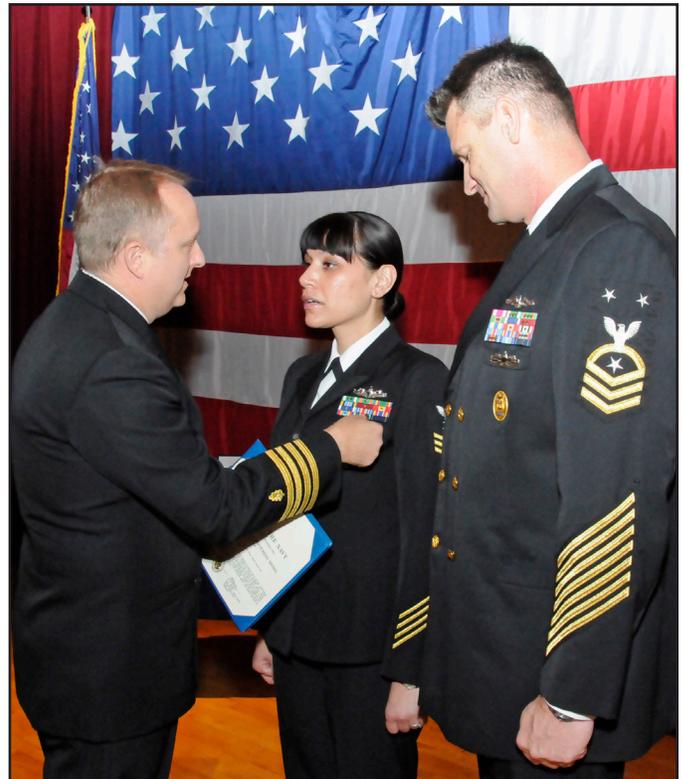
# Sailor of the Year Ceremony Recognizes Excellence



The Sailor of the Year ceremony was held Dec. 1 in the auditorium with Capt. Darin Via, NMCP deputy commander, and CMDMCM (SW/SS) Carl Morgan in attendance as well as co-workers, friends and family. From left: Blue Jacket of the Year is HM3 Lilibeth Hunton, Sailor of the Year is HM1 (SW) Decena Taylor and Junior Sailor of the Year is HM2 (SW) Cheryl M. Kivlehan.



Photos by MC1 Elizabeth St John



Capt. Darin Via and the CMC award HM1 (SW) Decena Taylor with a Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal (Gold Star in lieu of third award) during the SOY ceremony Dec. 1 in the auditorium.



The Sailors of the Year receive congratulations after the ceremony from all in attendance, including Cmdr. David Collins, director for administration (above left) and Capt. Rick Freedman, director for primary care/branch health clinics (left).

# Santa Visits Peds Hematology/Oncology Christmas Party

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
MC1 (SW/AW) STEVEN J. WEBER  
NMCP Public Affairs

Santa and Mrs. Claus made an appearance at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth to visit children during the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Clinic's Christmas party on Dec. 9. The annual party gives chronically ill children and their families a fun respite during the holidays with others who understand the challenges of what they are going through.

"This party provides a way for families to celebrate the opportunity for treatment and to bond with others on a similar path," said Chris Brogan, NMCP child life specialist.



**Each child got the opportunity to sit on Santa or Mrs. Claus' lap and receive a gift specially selected by Santa.**

A festive atmosphere permeated the party's activities, which included Meade Stith of Tidewater Arts Outreach, who played children's Christmas and other songs on his guitar. Juggler Tim Nolan

entertained the partygoers with juggling and jokes. Nolan is a Guinness record-holding juggler for solo lift bounce of 11 bounce balls for 11 catches.

Then Santa and Mrs. Claus joined the party, inviting each child to sit on Santa's lap. The Christmas couple spent time talking with each child before giving them a present and a candy cane. Their photos were taken for a family keepsake. The families also enjoyed snacks and holiday treats throughout the event.

The party a way to reinforce positives for families who deal with continuous illnesses. It's also an opportunity to step out of their disease management and find support in knowing they are not alone in their struggle.

"The annual Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Christmas party is a celebration of children," Brogan said. "We celebrate patients currently undergoing treatment and their siblings whose routine and family cohesion is drastically altered. We talk to and assist patients and their families with adjusting to their 'new normal,' but they are the ones who have to live it."



**A mother and child hang a red ribbon on the Christmas tree during the Christmas party to honor survivors and patients currently undergoing treatment.**

During the party, a large red ribbon was hung on the Christmas tree to honor survivors and patients currently undergoing treatment. Every sick child was invited to place a red ribbon on the tree for them and their families to signify their own struggle.

Siblings were then asked to hang silver ribbons in recognition that battling a disease affects all of the children in a family. A large gold ribbon was placed on the tree in memory of patients who have passed. Then families who had lost a child placed small gold ribbons on the tree in their memory.

"We take time to remember and honor those children and teenagers who did not survive their battle," Brogan said. "While their numbers are few, we all share in the pain of loss and the need for emotional healing. We want these families to know that we were honored to care for their children and that they and their child are not forgotten."

## 2nd Annual IDC Conference Jan. 10, 2012

*Six  
Speakers  
Scheduled!*

*"Caring for our Patients through the Continuum of Deployment"*

7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Featuring John "Doc" Hutchings,  
corpsman in Vietnam and author of  
"The Names Not on the Wall"

*Save  
the  
Date!*

Register on the NMCP Homepage

POC: Lt. Matthew Moore, MC, USN

matthew.moore@med.navy.mil

# Norfolk Admirals Hockey Players Visit Wounded Warriors, Compare Injuries

STORY AND PHOTOS BY REBECCA A. PERRON  
NMCP Public Affairs

Six hockey players from the Norfolk Admirals visited the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Detachment at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth Dec. 1, beginning a partnership with the detachment and the Navy Wives Clubs of America Portsmouth chapter that includes the hockey team.

The hourlong visit started with the hockey players and more than a dozen Marines chatting about their hometowns and the Marines' experiences on the battlefield, also telling jokes and sharing stories of injuries. The six then toured the Wounded Warrior Patriots' Inn, a wing of the hospital set up like a hotel to accommodate those who have been discharged from inpatient care, but are not mobile enough for a barracks room.

"When they get here, we remind them they are a Marine first," said Melissa Marshall, Marine Corps liaison for the Portsmouth detachment, as she showed off an empty room. "Their job is to be a Marine and to get better. We promote a family atmosphere and support them as they transition back to full duty or to civilian life."

While touring the inn, they spoke with a Marine in a wheelchair and another who had recently received a prosthetic leg, asking questions about their injuries and recovery process and thanking them for their service. The six hockey players made it a hat trick after visiting with the detachment and the Patriots' Inn by heading to the Orthopedics Ward and talking to two Marines still hospitalized.

The idea for the NWCA partnership began in the summer, when leadership on both sides met to discuss the Portsmouth chapter "adopting" the Marine unit and the Fisher House

on base where patients' families can stay. The chapter kicked off the Fisher House partnership the week prior by providing Thanksgiving dinner for their guests.

"They have just come from war, and we want to give them what support we can," said Paige Brown, the local chapter's chairman. "With the Marines, our first idea is to coordinate visits from professional teams, and provide supplies they are in need of, or fun stuff, like cookies or DVDs.

"We are working on other events, and want to also work with spouses and families to support them — that's where the Fisher House comes in," Brown added.

Another visit by the Admirals is planned for the spring, and the Wives Club plans to take the Marines to an upcoming hockey game.



**Above: Members of the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Detachment and Norfolk Admirals hockey team in front of the Christmas tree in the 7th floor waiting room.**



**Left: Melissa Marshall, Marine Corps liaison for Portsmouth detachment, explains to the hockey players how the wounded Marines stay there to have easy access to medical care after they are discharged.**

# Spouses Club Decorates Peds Ward for the Holidays

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MC3 (SW) ANNA ARNDT  
 NMCP Public Affairs

 Fifteen members of the Civil Engineering Corps Officers' Spouses Club spent their morning Dec. 1 decorating the Pediatrics Ward at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth with snowflakes and paintings of snowmen, following this year's theme — It's Snow Fun.

The group has been decorating the ward annually for at least a decade. The decorations help patients and their families feel more at home in the hospital during the holidays.

"It is always difficult to be in the hospital as a pediatric patient and as a family member," said Chris Brogan, NMCP child life specialist. "It is especially difficult during the holidays with all the added stress and excitement."

Along with boosting morale, the decorations also help patients bond with the staff.

"This is one way that hospital staff can bridge the gap between being a stranger to being a trusted caretaker," Brogan said. "This helps the patients relax more around the staff, which gets them to be more open and give more accurate information on things like how they are feeling."

In addition to the decorating, the group donates various



**Mary Butrym, a member of the Civil Engineering Corps Officers' Spouses Club, puts up decorations in the NMCP Pediatrics Ward on Dec. 1.**

gifts to the ward for use by the patients. They include items like digital cameras and DVDs to entertain patients.

"It's one of our favorite service projects we do as a group," said Jill Brady, a member of the club. "We start planning in the summer with our theme and paper colors, and we start making the decorations in September. We love doing it because it brings a little holiday cheer and comfort to the patients."



**Above: Fifteen members of the Civil Engineering Corps Officers' Spouses Club prepare to decorate the Naval Medical Center Portsmouth Pediatrics Ward on Dec. 1. The group started in September making decorations by hand to help raise the spirits of patients and their families during the holidays.**

**Left: Nancy Bowers adds a snowman decoration to the window of an office door in the Pediatrics Ward.**

 IT'S SNOW FUN! 

# Midwinter Masquerade



Photos by MC1 Elizabeth St John



NMCP staff, friends and family came out Dec. 2 to the Norfolk Waterside Marriott to enjoy the annual holiday party. The “Midwinter Masquerade” was attended by 500 NMCP family members donning masks of all types and sizes.

Rear Adm. Elaine Wagner, NMCP CO, and CMDCM (SW/SS) Carl Morgan welcomed guests to an evening of food, fun and dancing before the festivities got underway. Many great door prizes were given away during the evening including a LCD TV, Kindle, XBOX Kinect and many gift cards as well.





*Who  
Do You  
Recognize?*



## *Navy Medicine Says Farewell to Top Doctor*

# 37th Navy Surgeon General takes the Helm

U.S. NAVY BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The top doctor for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps stepped down from the position of the Navy surgeon general and chief of the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery during a change of command ceremony at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center-Bethesda, Nov. 18.

Vice Adm. Adam M. Robinson, Jr.'s four years of service as Navy surgeon general was the twilight of a naval career that spanned 34 years.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert was the keynote speaker for the ceremony and detailed many of Robinson's achievements.

According to Greenert, Robinson will leave a lasting legacy including the development of a new comprehensive care model focused on patient and family-centered care that expertly balanced the dual mission of providing readiness for thousands of Sailors and Marines deployed to war zones while maintaining world class care at home.

"Robinson served those who served," said Greenert. "His profession is very critical to our primary mission of warfighting. He's ensured that our Sailors, our Marines and their families are ready for that fundamental responsibility of warfighting."

Greenert said the impact of Robinson's service can be measured in the lives saved in places like Haiti and Afghanistan where there is the lowest battlefield mortality rate in history and in care he ensured was provided every day to Sailors, Marines, and their families around the world.

"The innovations he brought forward in the continuum of care and for medical readiness has brought us to the point where 98 percent of those wounded survive in combat today," said Greenert.

Upon taking the podium to a round of applause, Robinson thanked Greenert for his inspired leadership and his lasting support to the men and women of Navy Medicine.

"The men and women of Navy Medicine are the essence and heart and soul of Navy Medicine," said Robinson. "I have been incredibly privileged and honored to lead them, and I have enjoyed every moment of that experience and I thank you all for the opportunity."

Robinson reaffirmed his commitment to providing quality healthcare not only for the military servicemen in uniform today but the importance of taking care of the nation's wounded warriors for many years to come.

"We as Americans must pledge our undying assistance to help our wounded warriors and their families reintegrate to the mainstream of our community," said Robinson. "Not as men and women to be pitied, but as Americans who have given much to secure our freedom and have much more to contribute."

Robinson said wounded veterans deserve not only quality health care today and tomorrow, but they must be offered career opportunities as they transition out of the military.

"Our wounded warriors know how to serve," said Robinson. "Let them. Our country's character will be strengthened and will help define us as a great nation that both honors and affirms the men and women who have given service to our country."

Greenert also welcomed Vice Adm. Matthew Nathan as Naval Department's new top uniformed medical officer.

"You are exactly the kind of leader with the right background to lead this community forward," said Greenert.

Nathan, the newly appointed 37th Navy surgeon general and chief of Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, took the podium after Robinson, thanking him for his long trend of always putting service above self.

"I can't thank you enough for the great shape you left Navy medicine in and for all you've done for your shipmates," said Nathan. "You've been a tireless advocate for the troops, for our own people and for me. You have my undying gratitude."

Nathan provided an overview of his vision for the future of Navy Medicine which included a focus on warfighter support, taking care of the caregiver, readiness, harnessing information management systems and joint operations.

"We must look at the value of all we do measured by quality times capability, all divided by cost," said Nathan. "We cannot predict the future, but we can be ready for it."

Navy Medicine is a global health care network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries.



Photo by Sarah Fortney

**Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations, left, promotes Rear Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, commander of Navy Medicine for the National Capital Area, to Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy during a ceremony at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.**

**INTERNSHIP** — *Cont. from page 1*  
full seven-year accreditations from the APA in back-to-back years is an unprecedented achievement in Navy Medicine," added Jones.

NMCP's Psychology Department was created in 1990, specifically to train interns. The program had been discontinued in 2005 but was restarted in 2010 because of the growing need for active-duty mental health providers.

"This is quite an accomplishment for a brand new program," said Dr. Thomas Kupke, Psychology training director. "It's similar to the types of accreditations that your medical residency programs receive, which is essentially an endorsement of quality. Indeed, we were granted the longest tenure they provide, which is seven years."

The extensive internship program accreditation process, which began last year, involved submitting a 500-pages application.

"We applied during our first training year in August 2010," Kupke said. "We then were given permission to schedule a site visit where representatives of the APA

came on site to review the program. That occurred Aug. 15 and 16. At the October meeting of the APA Commission on Accreditation, we were approved and just notified."

Kupke said it is very unusual to get a site visit the first year, to even have the opportunity to have the first year accredited.

"The head of the accreditation division said for the first time you are applying the application has to be nearly perfect to be accepted for a site visit," he said. "She described us as being one of the rarer ones."

This rare accreditation translates into improved access to mental health care for service members, some of whom may have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

"What this does here at NMCP is increase our capacity to treat patients because our trainees are clinical trainees and they are providing services that are monitored very closely by their clinical supervisors," said Kupke. "So we expand our ability to treat our beneficiaries by having this training program here.

"Above and beyond that, Navy Psychology is growing where many communities are shrinking," he continued. "We need to supply the psychologists. We need to provide that flow of qualified folks into the Navy psychology community. When they leave here, they're providing services throughout the world to Navy beneficiaries — including deployments to war zones."

The accreditation is crucial, because without it, graduates would have been limited as to where they could serve.

"The stakes were high for our initial trainees," Kupke said. "They were taking something of a risk. Had we not had this accreditation there would have been some limits in terms of the job prospects for our graduates in the future."

Four new interns began the one-year program in August. They will complete four clinical rotations including inpatient psychiatry, outpatient psychology, psycho-diagnostic assessments and the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program. The department's goal is to graduate seven interns per year.



**Santa Rick talks to a patient waiting to be seen in the NMCP Emergency Room while Santa and the group passed out presents during the 13th annual Operation Bright Light.**

**BRIGHT LIGHT** — *Continued from page 3*

The first stop was the Emergency Room, where Santa Rick and his "elves" gave presents to children in the waiting room. They handed out toys to five children who were being treated in patient care area of the ER.

Santa Rick then surprised 11 patients and their siblings in the Pediatrics Ward. The last stop was the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

"It made me feel really good," said Tina Grier, the mother of Peds patient, Brandon. "My son got to sit on one of the motorcycles and that made him really happy. Their visit was good, because it got him out of the room for a little while. We really enjoyed it!"

"This is probably the most rewarding thing I do," said Santa Rick. "We bring so much joy to the kids and also their families and the staff. I will be doing this until I can't show up anymore. It is an awesome experience."

After visiting the children, the group gathered in the galley for refreshments, which was hosted by NMCP's First Class Petty Officers Association and the Junior Enlisted Association.

The toys that remained after the event will be distributed by members of NMCP's Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Detachment to new pediatric patients.

"We have the wounded warriors hand out the presents to help integrate them back into having tasks to do while they are doing rehab," said Brogan. "This improves the morale of the kids and the wounded warriors so it's a win-win situation."

# Santa, Mrs. Claus Bring Holiday Cheer to Marines

BY MC1 ELIZABETH ST JOHN  
NMCP Public Affairs

The holidays began a little early when Santa Claus, clad in a Navy working uniform suit, and Mrs. Claus visited Marines from the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Detachment at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth on Nov. 22. The mood was bright despite the rain and the unseasonably warm weather as the tree-lighting ceremony began in the waiting room on the 7th floor of Bldg. 3.

The jolly couple had decorated the white tree with red, white and blue ornaments and lights. The tree skirt was the original cape worn by Mrs. Claus many years ago.

"We're here to welcome these guys home," said Santa Claus. "We just want to get them back to normal."



**Mrs. Claus and the Virginia Destroyers' cheerleaders decorate a tree in the Orthopedics Ward.**

"Some of them haven't had a Christmas for three years," Mrs. Claus said. "We want to let them know they are loved."

Cheerleaders from the Virginia Destroyers United Football League team and students from the Suffolk Fire and Rescue firefighters academy joined the festivities and brought along lots of homemade cookies for the warriors — about 40 dozen.

"Sometimes we are called heroes, but these guys are our heroes," said Lt. W.M. Copeland, Suffolk Fire and Rescue training officer. "They put their life on the line for us, they deserve all the accolades."

After the tree lighting, Santa, Mrs. Claus, the firefighters and cheerleaders decorated a tree in the Orthopedics Ward and visited Marines who were patients in the ward, handing out homemade stockings filled with goodies. The festivities concluded with lunch courtesy of Firehouse Subs.



**The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Department brought cookies, and Firehouse Subs provided subs and cookies for lunch. In all, 40 dozen cookies were brought to the affair.**



**Santa and Mrs. Claus kicked off the holidays with a tree-lighting ceremony for the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East Detachment Nov. 22.**

# Candle Lighting Service Helps Families Cope during Holidays

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MC1 (SW/AW) STEVEN J. WEBER  
NMCP Public Affairs

For the second year, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Bereavement Team invited families who had experienced the death of an infant to join them for a Candle Lighting Remembrance Service in the Chapel. The Dec. 16 service was open to families who had lost infants through miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillborn death and newborn death, hoping to help them cope with their loss during the holidays.

The interfaith service included music, words of encouragement and a moment of remembrance for each infant as candles were lit in their memory. The service also included prayers, readings and the singing of "Amazing Grace" and "It Is Well With My Soul."

"Grieving parents need additional support and special care during the holidays," said Sharon Evans, an NMCP bereavement advocate nurse. "We believe this type of memorial is paramount, especially at Christmas, and want our military families to know we care, that they are not alone and that we are thinking about them and remembering their babies.

"These little lives have touched us all very deeply," Evans continued. "Parents desperately long to celebrate Christmas with their child. They imagine what it would have been like buying presents, pictures with Santa and showing off the new baby during holiday meals and festivities. Experiencing the joy of living with and loving a baby at Christmas with friends and family is so important."

Approximately 50 attended the service; a member of each

family lit a candle for each child and said the name of their child. Some spoke about their loss during or after the ceremony.

"I feel like the more I talk about this, the more I share what happened to me. I feel I am doing something for others, helping them to be able to understand that other people have had the same loss and pain," said Sinita Leung, a bereaved parent who gave the closing remarks at the service. "It is comforting to talk about it because it makes an awareness of your child — that your child did exist."



**Chap. Jerry Shields leads the service in prayer during the Candle Lighting Remembrance Service in NMCP's Chapel on Dec. 16. The service was for the parents who had experienced the death of an infant, hoping to help them cope with their loss during the holidays.**

The bereavement team began holding the services again last year after a 10-year absence.

"I missed last year's service. I just could not make it, it was still too fresh," said Erica Herrera, who lost two children to stillbirth. "I came this year just to remember them. Especially around the holidays, it is helpful.

"I hope other people realize they are not alone," Herrera added. "There are others out there who have been through this who are a support system."



**Sinita Leung, a bereaved mother, gives the closing remarks, while her husband, Christopher, stands behind her during the Candle Lighting Remembrance Service in NMCP's Chapel.**



Photos by MC1 Elizabeth St John

## Sailor in the Spotlight

**HM2 Chad Cash**

**Hometown:** Shelby, N.C.

**Years of Naval Service:** 6 years (2 years at NMCP)

**Job:** Facilities Manager, Naval Dental Clinic, Norfolk

**What do you like most about your job?** I think what I like most about my job is the command that I am assigned to. This command has a fun and friendly environment with a great mixture of both military and civilian personnel.

**What do you do in your off duty time/hobbies?** Spending time with my wife and kids, playing the guitar and attending college.

**Favorite Movie:** Star Wars

**Favorite Food:** Spaghetti and meatballs.

**Why was he nominated as Sailor in the Spotlight?** “Petty Officer Cash is an extremely versatile and talented Sailor who gets the job done,” said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF/AW/SW) Joycelyn M. Hodge, senior enlisted leader, Director Dental Services. “He is clearly committed to excellence and is truly a valuable member of this health care team.”

## Civilian in the Spotlight

**Jacqueline Moran**

**Hometown:** Virginia Beach

**Years of Naval Service:** 16 years (16 years at NMCP)

**Job:** Advisory Dental Hygienist, Health Promotions Coordinator, Naval Dental Clinic, Norfolk

**What do you like most about your job?** I appreciate working in the largest dental clinic in the Navy. There are constant opportunities to both learn and mentor in this environment.

**What do you do in your off duty time/hobbies?** Currently, I am a full-time student working on an MBA in Healthcare Management. In addition, I play drums with Tidewater Pipes and Drums.

**Favorite Movie:** Hunt for Red October (I grew up around submarines.)

**Favorite Food:** Frozen yogurt

**Why is the member nominated as Civilian in the Spotlight?**

“Mrs. Moran is an outstanding hygienist, educator and health promotions expert,” said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF/AW/SW) Joycelyn M. Hodge, senior enlisted leader, Director Dental Services. “She consistently contributes to this command’s mission as she effectively manages the Registered Dental Hygienist and Health Promotion programs.”



## DECEMBER AWARDS

### MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Cmdr. Amanda Sierra  
HMCS Anthony Carotenuto

### NAVY & MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL

Cmdr. Shirley Russell  
Lt. Cmdr. Christina Carmody  
Lt. Tobijah Griffin  
Lt. Robin Bennett  
Lt. Annette Hemphill  
Lt. Ian Waugh  
Lt. j.g. Jessica Belz  
Lt. j.g. Marisa McCullers  
MAC (SW/AW) Vanessa Henderson

### NAVY & MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Sellers  
Lt. Christina Bologna  
Lt. Igenea Butler  
Lt. Sheila Phillips  
Lt. j.g. Kathryn Barger

Lt. j.g. Natalie Green  
Lt. j.g. Marc Juarez  
HMC (SW/FMF) Amanda Gentry  
HM1 Alyssa Batista  
HM1 (AW/AW) Niel Calpo  
HM1 (SW/AW/FMF) Norris Cason  
HM1 (FMF/SW) Joseph Sousa  
HM1 (SW) Maria Decena Taylor  
DC1 (SW) Breanna Witherspoon  
HM2 (AW) Shaneka Cromartie  
HM2 (SW) Mara Gonzales  
HM2 Santresia Harrison  
HM2 Lilibeth Hunton  
HM2 Joseph Ichull-Ingya  
HM2 Sulayman Jobarteh  
HM2 (FMF) Alan Louis  
HM2 (SW) Cheryl Kivlehan  
HM2 Lakesha McLeod  
HM2 Stephanie Morlock  
HM2 Kenneth Yearout  
HM3 Jeromin Basco  
HM3 Laranda Holt  
HM3 Danielle Moore  
HN Randall Hemmingway



Photo by MC3 (SW) Anna Arndt

Rear Adm. Elaine C. Wagner, NMCP commander, addresses awardees in the base gym after the award ceremony Dec. 9 where 63 staff members received awards, with one receiving two awards. They included one Meritorious Service Medal, six Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, 17 Navy Achievement Medals, 24 Good Conduct Medals, three civilian years of service awards (10, 25 and 30 years), eight Flag Letters of Commendation and five Command Pillar Awards.

## SHIPMATE OF THE MONTH



Photo by MC3 Anna Arndt

HM3 MICHAEL S. PASCUAL  
 HN VINCENT FRANKS  
 HN ERIN MALDONADO  
 HM 3 MICHAEL HASHEK  
 HM3 ALICE COOPER  
 HM3 RAFAEL RAMIREZ

HN DANIEL SHANAHAN  
 HM2 JAMES ASH  
 HN VALLER GALANG  
 HM3 ANGELA WINTRODE  
 HN GARETT FRALIX

## National Handwashing Awareness Week Observed

**Lt. Cmdr. Sandra Myers accepts a survey as HMC Jannine Tobler stands ready to dispense hand sanitizer to staff members before they enter the galley on Dec. 6.**

**The Infection Control Team set up a handwashing station outside the galley on Dec. 6 to educate staff and patients about the importance of washing their hands during National Handwashing Awareness Week Dec. 4 – 10. The station was set up Dec. 7 near the Navy Exchange and at the pharmacy on Dec. 8.**



Photo by MC3 (SW) Anna Arndt