

# THE INNOVATOR

Optimizing Combat Casualty Care



## Inside This Issue

- 2 Commander's Corner
- 3 9A Proficiency Designator
- 4 Holiday Party Photos
- 6 Meledeo Presents
- 7 TBSS Holiday Luncheon
- 8 OT More Than a Job
- 10 Safety/Health News
- 11 Burn Skills Fair
- 12 Promotions and Reenlistments
- 13 NCO/Soldier of the Quarter and Month
- 14 Around the ISR
- 15 Warrant Officer Program
- 16 Celebrating Science
- 17 Science Poster Winners
- 18 Halloween Photos
- 20 AWT Photos
- 22 In the Spotlight/Hero of the Quarter

Vol. 9 No. 4

4th Quarter 2021

## Happy Holidays!



Col. (Dr.) Mark Stackle, USAISR Commander, right, and Sgt. Maj. Larry White, USAISR Senior Enlisted Leader at the 2021 Holiday Party on December 17 wishing all staff members a Happy Holiday season.

The Official Newsletter of U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research

## CDR's Corner



Col. Mark E. Stackle, MD  
Commander

### "Optimizing Combat Casualty Care"

Hello Team ISR,

Welcome back. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and took some much deserved time off to celebrate with family and friends. I especially would like to thank those team members who sacrificed your time by continuing to work during the holiday season in order to allow your coworkers to have some time off. That was a noble gesture and much appreciated by your coworkers and the ISR leadership.

I realize that the current COVID posture in our area and throughout the United States put a damper on many of your holiday plans. The number of positive COVID cases continue to rise throughout the country and has also affected the number of positive cases at our Institute. I ask each and every one of you to continue being vigilant and continue practicing all of the safe measures that will keep you and your families safe during this COVID surge.

As we welcome the promise of a new year, we also anticipate potential changes coming to us at the ISR. For those of you who attended the virtual Town Hall last month, you are aware that our institute may transition from

Army Futures Command to become a part of the Defense Health Agency (DHA) later this year. While a final decision about our future has not yet been made, I think it worthwhile to provide a brief summary of how we got to this point and what to anticipate in the coming months.

I'd like to start by providing some brief historical background. In several recent National Defense Authorization Acts, Congress directed that all elements of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Medical Command (MRMC), now known as Medical Research and Development Command (MRDC), migrate to the DHA by the end of this fiscal year.

As they processed the impact of this Congressional directive, many senior leaders within the Army became concerned about potential negative outcomes to the service if some or all of MRDC is transferred to the DHA, specifically the impact it will have on the Army's current modernization efforts as well as the impact on the operational force (e.g. Army medical logistics was previously a part of MRMC, and CL VIII (medical supplies) are fully integrated with the other classes of supply on the battlefield, so what happens if DHA became responsible for all CL VIII?).

Over the past several years, key stakeholders from all the involved organizations have been involved in discussions with how to meet Congressional intent without jeopardizing important Army support requirements. Over the past month, the DHA and the Army have come to an agreement on a way forward that would balance all of these competing perspectives. The Office of the Secretary of Defense has also indicated support for this negotiated agreement. The next step is that this agreement needs to be proposed to Congress to see if they will approve the plan or whether they continue to require the transfer for all parts of MRMC to the DHA.

With all of those important caveats

out of the way, here are the key points of the current negotiated agreement between the Army and DHA. All medical logistics elements will remain with the Army and not transfer to the DHA. Four of the six MRDC labs, including the ISR, will transfer to the DHA and the Burn Center will remain part of the ISR and not broken off to become part of Brooke Army Medical Center as previously considered.

The remaining two MRDC labs, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine and U.S. Army Aeromedical Research Lab, will remain with the Army due to their more Army specific focus areas. The U.S. Army Medical Materiel Development Activity which oversees medical product development and acquisition will split between the Army and DHA to continue providing support to all of the research labs.

The other big proposed change will be with the MRDC Headquarters staff. Currently, a small portion of the MRDC staff would remain with the Army while bulk of personnel would transition to DHA to continue

**CDR Continues on Page 9**

## THE INNOVATOR

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Col. Mark E. Stackle, MD  
Commander

Sgt. Maj. Larry D. White II  
Senior Enlisted Leader

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# USAISR Officers Earn Prestigious Designator



**Col. (Dr.) Jay B. Baker**



**Lt. Col. Jonathan D. Stallings, PhD**



**Lt. Col. (Dr.) Kevin R. Gillespie**

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

Three officers at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, received the U.S. Army Medical Department's (AMEDD) 9A Proficiency Designator. Col. (Dr.) Jay B. Baker, Lt. Col. (Dr.) Kevin R. Gillespie, and Lt. Col. Jonathan D. Stallings, PhD, received the prestigious designator from the Army Surgeon General, which recognizes the highest level of professional achievement within each AMEDD Corps' specialty.

Col. (Dr.) Mark E. Stackle made the announcement to the USAISR staff via email in late October. In the message, Stackle stated, "This is one of the highest honors an AMEDD officer can receive and is only bestowed upon those officers who have distinguished themselves with the highest level of professional excellence in the Army Medical Department."

Baker is an emergency physician and the Prolonged Casualty Care Capability Area Manager. He entered active duty in 2004 after graduating from emergency medicine residency and joined the ISR in August 2021. When asked what earning this designator

means to him, Baker said, "Excellence in military and emergency medicine."

Gillespie is a periodontist and the Program Manager of the Engineering, Technology, and Automation Combat Casualty Care Research Team. He has been in the Army for 17 years and has served at the ISR since September 2020. Gillespie believes earning the designator is the culmination of a career dedicated to honing his clinical skills to optimize patient care; contributing to the body of knowledge through research; sharing that knowledge and skills with colleagues, dental residents, and the profession at large; and the sustaining efforts to support the U.S. Army Dental Corps mission.

"I could not have done this without the support of my loving family and the efforts of many supporting leaders, colleagues, dental staff members, and most of all, God who makes all things possible," said Gillespie.

Stallings is a biochemistry officer and the Deputy Director of the Research Directorate. He has been in the Army for 21 years and has been at the ISR since July 2020.

"Throughout my career in the Army Medical Department, as enlisted or officer, I've been blessed to work with, be mentored by, and be commanded by some of our Nation's greatest Med-

ical Corps and Medical Service Corps officers," said Stallings. "I'm forever grateful for their guidance, patience, and encouragement."

All three officers are proud to have received this accolade. Said Stallings, "As with the Order of Military Medical Merit, the '9A' signifies the accomplishments over a career, and there is a sense of pride that naturally extends from that."

Baker summed it up with three words, "Happy to serve."

## From the Career Counselor



**As of October 1, 2021:**

- The 15 month reenlistment opportunity window (ROW) has changed to 12 months.
- NCO Career status program (AKA INDEF) has reverted back to 10 years. It was previously 12 years.

# Holiday Party

The ISR Events Committee coordinated the ISR Holiday Party at the Fort Sam Houston Community Center on Dec. 17. The evening consisted of an Ugly Sweater contest, photos with Santa, games and activities for kids, door prize drawings, and much more. Most of all, the party was held to promote esprit de corps among all employees and families.



Sofia and Dacian Roberson



Col. (Dr.) Mark Stackle, with son Adam, wife Melinda and daughter Abigail.



Col. (Dr.) Mark Stackle and Sgt. Maj. Larry White judge the Ugly Sweater contest.



Sgt. Yuliesia Tello welcomes party attendees to the celebration.



Layla and Lance White play games during the Holiday Party.

# Holiday Party cont.



Sgt. Maj. Larry White with wife Janice, daughter Layla and sons Larry and Lance.



Capt. Lauren Johnson and daughter Emily.



Cpl. Jamie Wilson, Pfc. Kaylee Letoile and Cpl. Tabitha Rodriguez.



Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Augustin and Emerson Newsome.



Master of Ceremonies, Maj. Robert Hainline presents Sgt. 1st Class Adam Henderson a door prize.

# Meledeo Presents at Prominent Conference

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

A blood researcher at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, was invited to present his research at a prominent conference. Adam Meledeo, PhD, a research scientist on the USAISR Blood and Shock Resuscitation Combat Casualty Care Research Team, presented at the 63rd American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting and Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia, on December 11-14. More than 20,000 hematologists and other health care professionals from all 50 states and more than 100 countries around the world attended this year's conference.

"The American Society of Hematology annual meeting is the premier meeting for hematology, and this meeting covers everything from coagulation disorders to hematologic malignancies," said Meledeo, who presented virtually at the conference. "It is a rare opportunity for trauma and casualty care research to be invited for presentation at this meeting, and this is a unique chance to share what we are doing in service of our combat wounded to a much broader audience."

According to James Bynum, PhD, chief of Blood and Shock Resuscitation, the acceptance rate for an oral presentation at ASH is low and extremely competitive.

"Dr. Meledeo's selection to present at this meeting highlights the importance of his work and the implications of the findings to the broader community," said Bynum.

Meledeo's presentation focused on a study that was predicated on what he considers one of our most precious resources—plasma samples collected from wounded Warriors in Afghanistan.

"We were able to look over the first 24 hours after injury and observe



Adam Meledeo, PhD, a research scientist at the USAISR since 2009 presents his research at the 2016 Military Health System Research Symposium. Meledeo was invited to present virtually December 13 at the 63rd American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting and Exposition.

how changes in the different proteins reflected the injury conditions of each patient," Meledeo said. "The results are foundationally informative as we prepare for the next innovation in damage control resuscitation which is already underway in our engineered plasma and engineered whole blood lines of effort."

Meledeo added that the long term goal for these projects is to drastically increase the availability of blood products at every step including up to the point of injury in order to maximize the ability of combat surgeons and medics to provide life-saving

resuscitation to those who need it most desperately. He believes that presenting at a prominent meeting like ASH will benefit his team's research.

Bynum agreed and said, "Presenting military-relevant research at national and international meetings such ASH allows both civilian and military researchers the opportunity to leverage their efforts towards creating novel strategies for treating combat casualties, which often translates to future civilian care."

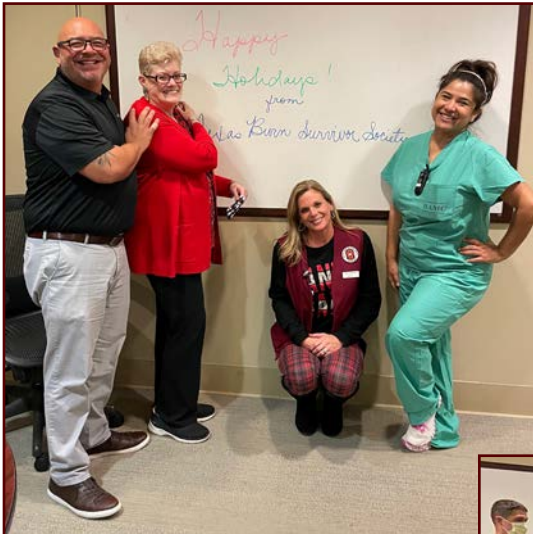
Meledeo was proud to present his research at this conference and admits he was nervous when he learned that he was invited to present.

"When I was informed that I would be presenting, it was initially very nerve-wracking as I will possibly be speaking to a very large and very well-educated audience," he said. "But being invited to present at the American Society of Hematology is truly an honor, and I was and am extremely grateful to the team here who contributed to the work that will be shared."



# Holiday Luncheon

The Texas Burn Survivor Society provided a Holiday Luncheon December 15 for the ISR Burn Center clinical staff. TBSS provides care, comfort, and services to the critically burned and their families and promulgates burn prevention and fire safety education. Top left photo: Brent Sabatino, the ISR Burn Outreach Coordinator and Burn Intensive Care Unit (BICU) nurse, Sue Dodson, TBSS Executive Director, Paula Davidson, BICU Volunteer Coordinator and Sandra Montelongo, Burn Rehabilitation Department occupational therapist wish the clinical staff a Happy Holidays.



# Working at the Burn Center more than just a job for an occupational therapist

By Dr. Steven Galvan  
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

In June 2018, Sandra Montelongo, a Registered Occupational Therapist at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research Burn Rehabilitation Department at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, was named the 29th Annual Military Volunteer of the Year by The United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County for her volunteer work at the Burn Center. At that time, she was a full-time graduate student at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, where she was earning a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy.

Montelongo's goal was to spend that summer doing fieldwork rotation at the John S. Dunn Burn Center collocated with Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center in Houston, and from there complete all requirements for her masters by December. After that, her goal was to get a job at the USAISR Burn Center. She completed that goal last October when she was hired as a contract employee in the Burn Rehabilitation Department.

"I chose to be an occupational therapist because I have a keen interest in helping others recover [from an injury] especially the burn population," she said. "I grew up a burn survivor and can relate to some challenges experienced by our burn patients. I also like the creative aspect of my job finding ways to help our patients achieve greater independence in their valued ADLs [activities of daily living]."

Montelongo also has a Master of Arts in Public Communications and Media Studies from Fordham University in New York. She worked full-time for many years across the U.S. in cities like New York and Miami for the National Basketball Association,



the National Football League and the music video channel MTV while never missing a chance to volunteer at various burn survivor community organizations.

Scott Dewey, chief of the Burn Rehabilitation Department, heard about Montelongo's interest in working as an occupational therapist at the Burn Center well before her arrival due to her volunteer work on behalf of burn survivors.

"You can always tell when someone wants to work at a location versus has to work somewhere," said Dewey. "As soon as you meet Sandy, there is no question she wants to work with burn patients."

Dewey added that it is very important to relate to patients and Montelongo's experiences help build rapport and share unique perspectives with patients.

"She brings such positive energy to the workplace and the people around her benefit so much," he said.

Montelongo assesses and treats burn patients in both the Burn Intensive Care Unit and the Progressive

Care Unit. Her responsibilities include assessing a patient's current functional abilities and their ability to participate in activities of daily living. The performance skills that she assesses include range of motion, strength, swelling, pain, and location of the burn wounds to prevent contractures.

"Range of motion, positioning and mobility are very important," she said. "With any deficits noted or if a patient is post-op with skin grafting, they may require temporary immobilization with positional devices or custom splints to protect their grafts. I continually update their plan of care based on their current medical status shared in our daily rounds and current level of function. I incorporate a home exercise plan and recommend adaptive equipment as needed to increase their independence and safety at home."

Dewey said the Burn Center patients and staff are fortunate to have Montelongo on board because she is extremely passionate about what she does and takes great ownership of her responsibilities.

"She genuinely cares for her patients and her colleagues," said Dewey. "She is very reliable and extremely dedicated to our mission. She is a tireless worker and the energy she exudes rubs off on others."

As a volunteer at the Burn Center, Montelongo saw firsthand the excellent burn care all patients receive from the medical team and she knew that she wanted to be a member of the team.

"I wanted to be a part of it [burn team] on a full-time basis so I too could provide that excellent care," said Montelongo. "All the staff in the burn center that I came into contact with was very pleasant and knowledgeable in their respective areas, and so I had a number of people I knew and looked

**OT Continues on Page 9**

## OT Continued from Page 8

forward to working with someday.”

Montelongo has an intimate knowledge of what burn patients experience during recovery. She and her sister were burned during their childhood. Her sister did not survive. She feels that her experiences and loss of her sister have shaped her into who she is today.

“I remember some names, but all the faces of my surgeon, nurses and therapists who played an instrumental role in my recovery,” she said. “They inspired me to continue their mission, and in honor of my sister, I turned tragedy into purpose. Therefore, I feel blessed to work here at the ISR Burn Center.”

Montelongo’s involvement with burn patients goes beyond her work at the Burn Center. She continues to volunteer at organizations that spon-

sor and support burn patients and their families. She has also attended the World Burn Conference hosted by the Phoenix Society for seven years and has grown her network of burn survivors from a small group of burn survivors to a large international one.

“Because I have lived in different cities across the U.S., I got involved serving as counselor at pediatric burn camps, facilitating support groups, to securing sponsorships and organizing fundraising events in support of burn survivors and their families,” Montelongo said. “I would also like to continue to implement and grow burn prevention and awareness programs for our local communities.”

Prior to joining the burn team, Montelongo worked with neurology, orthopedics and burn populations for pediatric and adults for about three years. She has also the opportunity

to co-author a published research abstract and the subsequent poster accepted to present at the annual American Burn Association conference.

Montelongo says she looks forward to working at the Burn Center for years to come and contributing to the care of burn survivors in the San Antonio area. She also wants to contribute where she can, on and off the job.

“Because I was deeply involved in burn committees at another hospital, I’ve recently introduced certain key aspects that worked well, such as providing bilingual and useful materials for families, and getting important messaging out into the community in creative ways,” she said. “I’m already involved as an intermediary establishing relationships and opportunities with local organizations and businesses.”

## CDR Continued from Page 2

providing support to the labs. While there are still a tremendous number of details to work through, the MRDC leadership has reassured all of us that they are committed to make the transition process as smooth as possible. As you can imagine, the entire situation continues to be fluid, but I will do my best to provide you with all of the relevant updates as they occur. Meantime, we will continue moving forward with our critical mission of “Optimizing Combat Casualty Care.” Thank you for all that you do every day. I couldn’t be more proud to be part of the ISR Team.

COL Mark Stackle, MD  
USAISR Commander

“Forge the Future”



## Happy Retirement



Col. (Dr.) Andre Cap, Director of Research, left, and Lt. Col. Johathan Stallings, Deputy Director of Research, present Thomas Walters, PhD, with a Shadow Box during his retirement ceremony October 29. Walters, served as a transformative scientific leader for the US military medical community over a 20 year career in government service. During his tenure, Walters was at the forefront of combat casualty care research and is an internationally recognized expert in tourniquet use for hemorrhage control and muscle injury sequelae. His research efforts have resulted in great strides in military battlefield medicine and have paid off in the most important criterion of success: lives saved both on the battlefield and in civilian trauma victims.

## Safety Notes

By Stephanie L. Truss  
Health, Safety and Environmental Manager



Safety is the responsibility of everyone, everywhere. All jobs have hazards, so in order to make the workplace safe and prevent or reduce hazards both the employer and the employees must follow safety procedures. Just like the attached photo states “Our Team has Safety in Every Position”. No matter what roles you play in the ISR’s three Directorates.

- Act as safely at work as you would elsewhere, if not more so.
- Use the tools available to you to maintain a safe environment.
- Educate yourself on hazards, safety practices, and rules.

- Communicate about unsafe practices and conditions.
- Identify and lower your Level of Acceptable Risk (LOAR).
- Remember that following safety rules and regulations isn’t optional – it’s the law.

Occupational Health and Safety Administration’s General Duty Clause states, “Each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued according to this Act which is applicable to his own actions and conduct.” This means that, by law, employees must follow the OSHA rules and regulations while performing work operations. People go to work every day expecting not to be injured. As an employee, you have a right to a safe and healthful work environment, but employers are not the only ones responsible for your safety – you are, too. By accepting these six employee safety responsibilities, you are making your workplace a safer place for both you and your co-workers.

## Health News

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



Happy New Year!

Wishing you and your family continued health and safety. As we start this New Year we continue to have our unwelcomed friend “COVID” with a different last name this time: Omicron. Many of us finally traveled to see distant family and friends and some have encountered ourselves with illness. We must continue to be vigilant and think safety first! I want to echo Col. Stackle’s message from December 30, 2021:

1. I need all staff members in the organization to double-down on the use of masks and social distancing both at work and outside.
2. If any staff member feels ill with symptoms consistent with COVID, please stay home in order to protect your fellow staff members.

3. Additionally, we will follow the updated CDC guidance published earlier this week with regards to quarantine and isolation guidelines. If you are not familiar with the updated guidance, please review them at the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

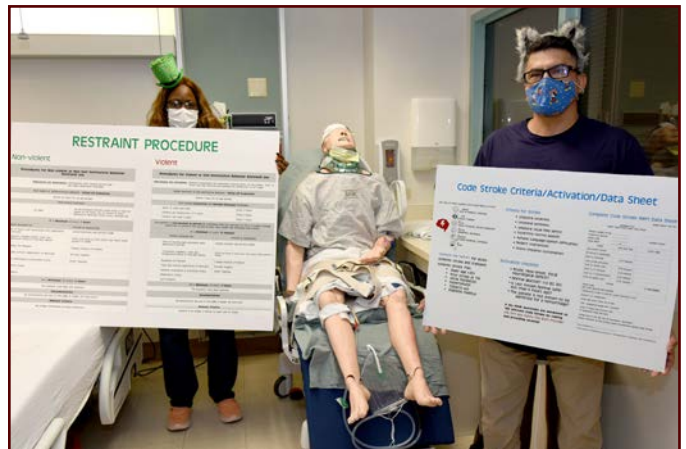
- There is additional information for Health Care Setting:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>

Become informed. Read the guidelines. If you still have questions on vaccinations, there are many USAISR team members available to assist you. Our leadership is working very hard to keep everyone safe. Our Safety Manager states: “Act as safely at work as you would elsewhere, if not more so.” Do your share.

In the meantime: Wash your Hands, Wear your Mask, and Watch your Distance.  
To Health and Safety!

# TIPTOP Burn Center Skills Fair

The Burn Center Clinical Nurse Specialist Cell coordinated a Burn Skills Fair on October 25-29 and was conducted by the Burn Center TIPTOP Preceptors from Nursing, Rehabilitation and Respiratory Therapy. The TIPTOP Preceptor Coordinators (all disciplines) attended a 2-day 8-hour Simulations Course for professional development and to give them the tools to create the simulations/learning scenarios. These scenarios/simulations were then presented to all Burn Center Preceptors for review. Topics for the simulations came from required core competencies, high risk nursing skills, patient safety report trends, national patient safety goals, and suggested topics from Burn Center Staff. The purpose of the Burn Skills Fair was to ensure ongoing competency for high risk nursing skills and burn wound care, and emergency response.



# Promotions/Reenlistments



Col. (Dr.) Andre Cap, Director of Research, left, administers the Oath of Office to Lt. Col. (Dr.) Ronnie Hill during his promotion ceremony December 13.



Capt. Lauren Johnson, Company Commander, left, administers the Oath of Enlistment to Cpl. Julie Hale during her reenlistment ceremony December 9.

## Promotions

Col. Mary Maran

Lt. Col. Michael Elie

Lt. Col. Ronnie Hill

Master Sgt. Dakota Wingerter

Sgt. First Class Wilfredo  
Velezizarry

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Augustin

Staff Sgt. Vincent Enriquez

Staff Sgt. Joseph Stansberry

Sgt. Hannah Boshart

Sgt. Kristine Gentz

Sgt. Alvaro Rodriguez

Spc. William Aiken

Spc. Nicholas Curl

Spc. Jasmine Rice

## Reenlistments

Staff Sgt. Alexander Pee

Sgt. Myquail Watts

Cpl. Julie Hale

Cpl. Ryan Lennon

Spc. Peyton Perino

## Congratulations to the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter



NCO of the Quarter  
Sgt. Alvaro Rodriguez



Soldier of the Quarter  
Spc. Caleb Page

## Congratulations to the December NCO/Soldier of the Month



NCO of the Month  
Sgt. Jennifer Crews



Soldier of the Month  
Spc. Lizeth Lopez

### November

Soldier of the Month  
Spc. Caleb Page

### October

NCO of the Month  
Sgt. Shnightdine Aristil

Soldier of the Month  
Spc. Nikolas Henderson

# Around the ISR



Top left: Theo Thomas, Combat and Casualty Care Team 1 (CRT1) Operations and Finance Manager gives a brief October 22 on blood and blood products being researched at the ISR to foreign military officers attending the US Army Medical Center of Excellence Medical Strategic Leadership Program.

Center left: Brent Sabatino, the ISR Burn Outreach Coordinator and Burn Intensive Care Unit nurse, teamed up with the San Antonio Fire Department December 15 to provide a Holiday Celebration for residents at the San Antonio Housing Authority.

Bottom right: Col. (Dr.) Andre Cap, Director of Research, right, briefs members of the University of Texas System December 1 on combat casualty care research programs at the ISR.

Bottom left: Master Sgt. Dakota Wingerter, right, gives Gen. David Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps a tour of the Burn Center October 20.



# Blum Selected for Warrant Officer Program



Col. (Dr.) Mark Stackle, USAISR Commander, left, and Sgt. Maj. Larry White present Sgt. Jason Blum with the Army Achievement Medal December 8 at the December Awards Ceremony for his selection as the NCO of the Quarter.

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

A Medical Laboratory Sergeant and Orderly Room Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas has been selected for the Army Aviation Warrant Officer Program. Sgt. Jason P. Blum will be attending the Warrant Officer Candidate School as a Rotary Wing Aviator.

“Since joining the Army, I have made many efforts to challenge myself to develop into a better Soldier and leader,” said Blum. “I believe my strengths and attributes are ideal for making greater contributions to the Army and this Nation. My goal is to become a Warrant Officer and Rotary Wing Aviator to fly Medevac [medical evacuation] operations in support of my fellow Soldiers.”

Blum has been in the Army for five-and-a-half years and reported for duty at the USAISR a year ago. He has been

assigned to lead the Orderly Room at the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, where he has excelled and earned the NCO of the Month award, as well as the NCO of the Quarter award.

“I believe I was selected to attend the Warrant Officer Candidate School as a direct result of my integrity, perseverance, and attention to detail,” he said. “I look for opportunities to better myself every day, and my thirst for knowledge has made me an adaptive leader. As a future Warrant Officer, I can be useful when changes to the environment, equipment, personnel or technology take place.”

Blum said that he has a mixed emotions about his selection to Warrant Officer Candidate School—ranging from feeling overwhelmed to relief and, of course, happiness.

“It’s overwhelming in the sense that I will no longer serve as a Noncommissioned Officer and join the Warrant Officer Corps,” said Blum. “I will never forget my time as an NCO and I’m

proud to have earned the rank I currently hold and to have served with the Soldiers, NCOs, and Officers during my tenure. I’m relieved from the stress of the unknown in regard to the selection results. Lastly, I’m happy since I can utilize my skills and knowledge to continue guiding and mentoring our Soldiers in a new role. In the end, as long as I can continue to help our Soldiers, I will always be happy.”

As a Warrant Officer, Blum hopes that his first assignment will be to Fort Carson, Colorado, or Germany, but said that he’ll be happy wherever he’s assigned. He credits his family as the foundation for his success in the Army so far, and knows they’ll support him in whichever route he chooses. Some of his short-term goals are to earn his Air Assault badge, finish his bachelor’s degree and graduate flight school as a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot. He is also looking at earning a Master’s in Industrial Hygiene and Environmental Science and earning a position in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment as an MH-60 DAP pilot.

Blum’s advice for anyone who is looking to apply to Warrant Officer Candidate School as a Rotary Wing Aviator is simple: start networking early.

“Start reaching out to the people around you so you can find a good contact in the Aviation branch,” he said. “Warrant Officers are innovative integrators of emerging technologies, dynamic teachers, confident warfighters and developers of specialized teams of Soldiers. Start challenging yourself now and learn how you react to stressful situations. Start developing your leadership skills now by working in uncomfortable scenarios. If you are unfamiliar with a program or mission, seek guidance. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Overall, as long as you are driven and have a positive mindset, you will be successful.”



# Celebrating Science



In this section we endeavor to celebrate the dissemination of generalizable knowledge in the form of manuscripts, posters, presentations and abstracts. One of our core missions is translation of knowledge gained through pre-clinical and clinical experiments in an effort to optimize combat casualty care. It is important to acknowledge and recognize the collective work of our investigators during this process. Hence, we plan on “celebrating science” on a regular basis.

Manuscripts submitted for publication: 16

Submitted to:

BMC Neuroscience

Molecular Oral Microbiology (formerly called Oral microbiology and immunology)

Prehospital Emergency Care

Biomaterials Journal

Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery

PLOS One

U.S. Army Medical Journal

Anesthesia Journal

Journal of Burn Care & Research

Perfusion Journal

Science Translational Medicine Journal

Critical Care Medicine Journal

Abstracts: 26

To be presented at:

San Antonio Postdoctoral Research Forum

2021

Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) 2022

Boswick Symposium 2022

Special Operations Medical Scientific Assembly 2022

2021 Innovations in Wound Healing

Wound Healing Society 2022

Experimental Biology 2022

American Surgical Association 2022

Association for Research in Vision and

Ophthalmology (ARVO) 2022

International Society for Cell & Gene Therapy Annual Meeting 2022

Pain Summit-State of the Science (SOS) for Battlefield Pain Research 2022

Posters: 42

To be presented at:

American Association for Laboratory Animal Science National Meeting 2021

Southern Region Burn Conference 2021

San Antonio Postdoctoral Research Forum 2021

Military City USA Trauma Collaborative Research Conference 2021

Presentations: 23

To be presented at:

Military City USA Trauma Collaborative Research Conference 2021

Southern Region Burn Conference 2021

Michigan Technological University Physiology Department Presentation (Virtual)

American Society of Hematology 2021

ORISE Virtual Career Fair

San Antonio Postdoctoral Research Forum 2021

University of Phoenix Lecture

Pediatric Dental Grand Rounds

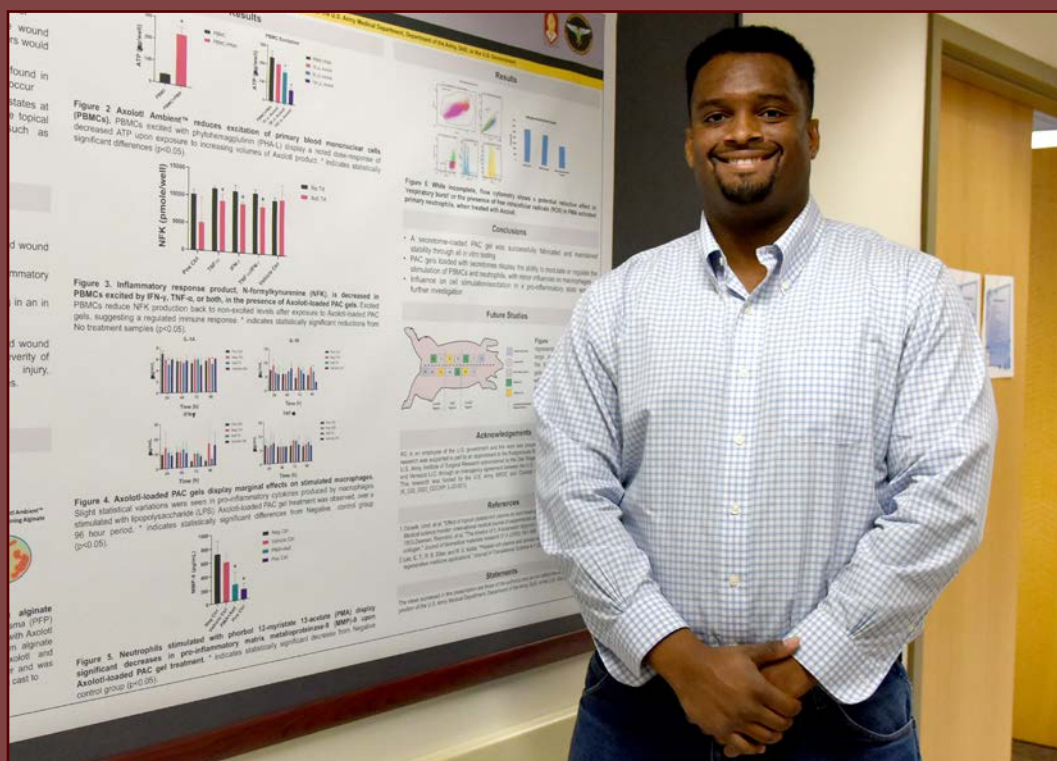
Pain Summit-State of the Science (SOS) for Battlefield Pain Research 2022

Book Chapters: 1

Submitted to:

American Burn Association's Core Curriculum for Burn Nursing: Injury Prevention to Rehabilitation (textbook)

# Congratulations Poster Winners



Marc Thompson, PhD, won First Place in the 2021 Military City USA Trauma Collaboration Research Conference poster competition held October 20-21 in San Antonio.



Three postdoctoral researchers at the ISR took the top honors in the 9th Annual San Antonio Postdoctoral Research Forum poster competition held December 6-7. Left to right: Robert Moritz, PhD, First Place; Michael Whitely, PhD, Second Place; and Marc Thompson, PhD, Third Place.



# HALLOWEEN



# COSTUMES



# HALLOWEEN DOOR DECORATING CONTEST



**1ST PLACE**



# NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Competition

Three NCOs and two Soldiers competed in the unit's 4th Quarter Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier Competition at Camp Bullis November 18-19. The competitors faced their peers in a rigorous competition that consisted of six events: a modified Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT), Army Warrior Tasks (AWT) scenario, an obstacle course, a day land navigation course, a nine mile road march and an oral board. The competitors were evaluated on their physical fitness, endurance, tactical skills and Army knowledge.

The five competitors were:

Sgt. Alysa Jose

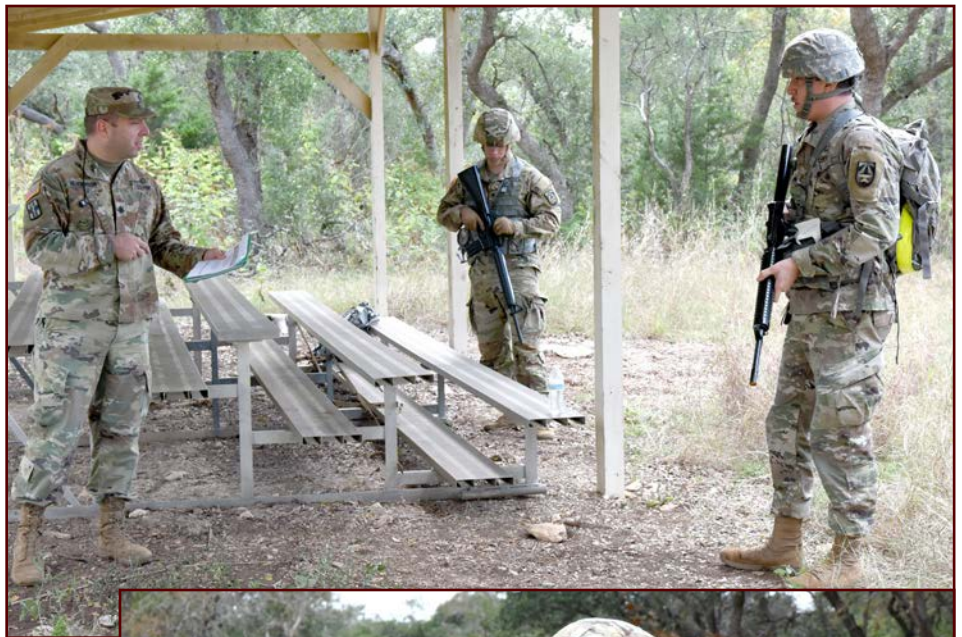
Sgt. Alvaro Rodriguez

Sgt. James Koon

Spc. Nikolas Henderson

Spc. Caleb Page

The winners of the 4th Quarter NCO/Soldier of the Quarter are on Page 13.



# NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Competition cont.



# In the Spotlight

Laura Scott, PhD, MPH, MS, GStat

**Job title:** Statistician

**How long have you worked at the ISR?** 2 years at the Joint Trauma System (when JTS was a component of ISR) and 4 years at ISR.

**What or who has been an inspiration to you in your work?** My dad. He is a US Army veteran who served two tours of duty in Vietnam.

**What is your favorite part of your work?** Finding solutions to challenging problems.

**What is your proudest achievement?** Earning my PhD.

**Short- and long-term goals:** Short-term goal is to establish bio-statistics working group comprised of statisticians from across MRDC. Long-term I would like to develop a full epidemiology and biostatistics program at the ISR composed of staff who have a variety of backgrounds (i.e., clinical, Bayesian statistics, etc.).

**Hobbies:** Traveling, spending time with friends, trying new foods and restaurants.

**Favorite book:** Any book by David Sedaris.

**Favorite movie/TV show:** Any TV show based on the writings of Neil Gaimant.

**Favorite quote:** "If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything." – Ronald Coase, and "If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?" – John Wooden



## Hero of the Quarter



Sgt. Alyssa Jose

Sgt. Alyssa Jose is the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit Noncommissioned Officer in Charge and hails from Parsippany, New Jersey. She is married to Victor Villamora who works at Brooke Army Medical Center. She is the proud pet parent of three four-legged children (dogs). Prior to this duty station, she was in Korea, and has plans for future overseas assignments. She has been at the ISR for two years and was previously assigned to the Burn Intensive Care Unit before being assigned to her current position. Sgt. Jose has already established a reputation as a hard worker who goes above and beyond the call of duty to complete the mission. She is a great team player, possessing robust people skills. She has already proven to be a great colleague and an adept problem solver; assisting to fine-tune the Burn Center Patient Pre-authorization Process, which has significant impact across the Burn Center product service lines. She just "gets it." She understands the vital importance of solving these kinds of problems. She's a great staff and patient advocate, who also has a servant leader's heart. Embracing the Performance Triad, Sgt. Jose enjoys hiking, culinary arts and spending time with her four-legged children. We are fortunate to have her on our team!