

FOREWORD

Everyone deserves to know about the Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service. So much of our country's public health—from just before the turn of the 20th century until the present day—has been impacted by this relatively small but mighty force of uniformed service officers.

In 2014, during the worst Ebola outbreak in documented history, the Commissioned Corps was called upon to respond. In arguably the most visible mission, the White House and National Security Council tasked the Corps to deploy to Liberia and create the Monrovia Medical Unit (MMU), staffing it with providers until Ebola was stopped at its source. It was a rare opportunity to help prevent a potential global pandemic and truly showcase our varied expertise and adaptability in an austere environment outside our nation's borders. It was also one of the first times in history where we as a uniformed service were able to function more independently as equal partners at the table with other essential stakeholders. In addition to the MMU, the Corps was involved in other Ebola-related missions that spanned both domestic and international responsibilities. Multiple missions required complex planning and coordination led by the State Department and the three host countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. Partners included the Department of Defense, the World Health Organization, non-governmental organizations, and our colleagues in the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Commissioned Corps Ebola response and the specific skill sets inherent to our Health Services Officers (HSOs) across all missions illuminated the bridges they can build with expertise in so many areas. Their ability to be nimble and flexible in response, to demonstrate resilience, to be culturally fluent, and to exemplify sheer passion amidst limited resources and training was admirable.

This collection of personal accounts represents a critical part of a larger team effort. These accounts should be treasured. I literally trusted many of them with our lives and personally relied on so many of them to fill essential roles. Because of their individual and collective courage and resilience, hundreds of new providers and responders followed into key areas of Liberia, which helped turn the tide of the Ebola response in West Africa. To each of the HSOs that successfully deployed, and to all the other officers that contributed directly (and indirectly) to the response, . . . bravo zulu! You will go down in our Corps' history with pride and distinction.

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