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Salus Populi Suprema Lex Este

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Every Officer a Recruiter

Dear COA and Foundation Friends,



Jerry Farrell
Executive Director

The new year is off to a fast start and 2008 promises to be even more exciting than last year and not only because it has one more day – a leap year. Presidential election years are always fascinating, and this election appears to be on track as one of the most fascinating ever – with historic candidates in Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

As I follow the primary process, I am intrigued by the international interest this year. To be sure, much of the rest of this world has some passing interest in U.S. presidential elections, but the primaries this year are drawing unprecedented foreign attention. I know this first-hand from correspondence with relatives overseas who have commented on the candidates and the closeness with which they are following the election news from the states.

As much as we may be bored by the never-ending politics in this country, what really grabs my interest is the lesson our process provides the rest of the world – especially the

(See Executive Director, page 22)

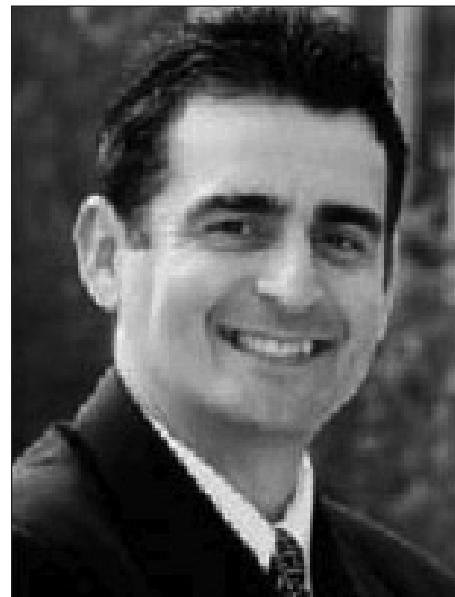
Former PAHO Deputy Nominated as ASH

Washington, DC, 17 January—President George W. Bush has nominated Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA, a former Deputy Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to be the Assistant Secretary of Health (ASH) in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). If confirmed by the Senate, Dr. Garcia would replace Dr. John O. Agwunobi as ASH. Dr. Agwunobi resigned last year after only 18 months in office to take a senior position with Wal-Mart.

The ASH leads the Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS) in DHHS and is the Surgeon General's immediate supervisor. The President has also nominated Dr. Garcia to be a Medical Director (Captain) in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service. This is a legal pre-requisite to further appointment as a full admiral (O-10) upon Senate confirmation as ASH.

In 2005, Dr. Garcia served as the presiding official for the PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation's first *Global Health Summit* in Philadelphia.

Earlier in his career, Dr. Garcia served as Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health. He received his degree in pre-medical studies from the University of Puerto Rico, his MD from the Ponce School of Medicine and his MBA from the University of Hartford. Dr. Garcia is currently employed as Senior Vice President and Senior Medical Advisor at MAXIMUS Federal Services, Inc. MAXIMUS Federal Services is a private corporation providing national independent review services for external reviews of Medicare



*Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA – nominated as
Assistant Secretary of Health*

managed care denials under contract to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Dr. Garcia's nomination will be considered by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee which will then vote on whether to send the nomination to the full Senate with a recommendation for confirmation. The President nominated Dr. James Holsinger to be Surgeon General on May 24, 2007 and a Senate HELP Committee hearing on Dr. Holsinger's appointment was held in July; but the HELP Committee has yet to schedule a vote on the nomination.

If confirmed by the Senate, Dr. Garcia will be able to serve until the end of President Bush's term in January, 2009 unless held over by the new Administration.

PHS Officers Lecture on Safety at Local Elementary Schools

By LCDR Sheryl Gunther and CDR John Quinn

Beginning in October, the Public Health Working Group of the Pharmacist Professional Advisory Committee (PharmPAC) organized a group of lectures on Safety and Injury Prevention for over one thousand children, at ten elementary schools, in three states and the District of Columbia. The course that was presented has been posted to the internet so that any Officer can access it to lecture at his or her local elementary school.

The Public Health Working Group has traditionally been active in a number of community outreach activities. This has included visits to nursing homes to talk with residents about their medications and health issues; setting up drug information booths during Pharmacist Week; visiting community colleges to talk with students and faculty concerning health topics; and providing health information, with cholesterol and blood pressure screenings, to minority communities at their churches, or various health fairs. Outreach efforts change each year, as new ideas and opportunities arise.

After discussion, the PharmPAC workgroup decided to create a course on safety for young children. Our talk included a brief



Farmland Elementary School, Rockville, MD, October 29

CDR Michelle Dillahunt, LT Dat Doan, LCDR Peter Chen, LCDR Jeanne Skanchy, LCDR Jinhee Jahng Lee, CDR John Quinn, LT Doan Nguyen, LCDR Melanie M. Shin, LCDR Sadaf Nabavia. Not pictured: LCDR Thuyanh (Ann) Vu and CDR Sammie Bean (photographer).

introduction to the U.S. Public Health Service, to explain who we are as Officers, followed by school bus, bicycle and street safety; concussions in youth sports; poison prevention; home fire safety and Halloween safety.

PHS officers contacted principals at elementary schools, and found many very open to a lecture to the students, on safety issues. This was especially true in cases where the officer had a child attending the school. Originally this idea was targeted to the D.C. area, but as word of this project spread throughout the PharmPAC list serve, Officers in other states took the initiative to become involved. Several Officers made presentations at several schools in New Jersey and Oklahoma.

At this time, the Public Health Working Group is busy developing a new presentation for elementary and middle-school students on Childhood Obesity. This topic has been articulated by the Surgeon General, and other healthcare spokespersons, as a chief national concern and healthcare priority. A copy of this presentation will be posted to the PharmPAC website soon. We hope you'll

take an opportunity to view it.

The PharmPAC believes that these community outreach activities will have a positive impact at the community level. Pharmacists are trained as healthcare professionals, and are experts in disease state awareness. Pharmacists welcome ways to disseminate their knowledge into the broader community. Through visits to nursing homes and schools, PHS pharmacists are able to provide a much-needed service to the local community, and make a difference.

Internet Sites

Pictures from the schools and copy of the courses

<http://www.hhs.gov/pharmacy/phpharm/school1.html>

Other Public Health Activities that have been done

<http://www.hhs.gov/pharmacy/phpharm/activities.html>

PharmPAC programs and resources

<http://www.hhs.gov/pharmacy/phpharm/contents.html>



*LCDR Annemarie Bodnar at Mount Pleasant Elementary School in West Orange, NJ October 24
CDR Deborah Nixon (Nurse category) and LT Dawn Wydner (Nurse category) (not pictured)*