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# Association of Army Dentistry (AAD)

## Spring 2021 Newsletter

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Spring offers rebirth and hope for a better year. With the miracle of Operation Warp Speed and the unprecedented development of multiple vaccines, that hope is alive as we prepare for a return to more normal days ahead.

At its 21 January 2021 virtual meeting, the following officers were reelected to their positions: COL (Ret) Ron Lambert, President and Chair of the Board; COL (Ret) Art Scott, Executive Officer; COL (Ret) John Storz, Treasurer; and COL (Ret) Robert Stieneker, Secretary. Newly elected board members include COL (Ret) Joseph Britton and COL (Ret) George Hucal. A complete list of board members is included on this page.

The board approved financial support for the annual Corps Chief's awards, which recognizes individuals in eight categories. Additionally, the board approved a donation of \$1,000 to the AMEDD Museum Foundation in honor of MG H. Thomas Chandler, the 19<sup>th</sup> Chief of the Army Dental Corps, who passed away last November. The mission of the AAD includes supporting morale, recruitment and retention, providing education, fostering an appreciation of Army dentistry, and providing a means of recognition of those who serve and have served our nation via Army dentistry.

I wish to thank all of our members for continuing their memberships and supporting our mission. Please reach out to colleagues who are not members and encourage their memberships.

Ron

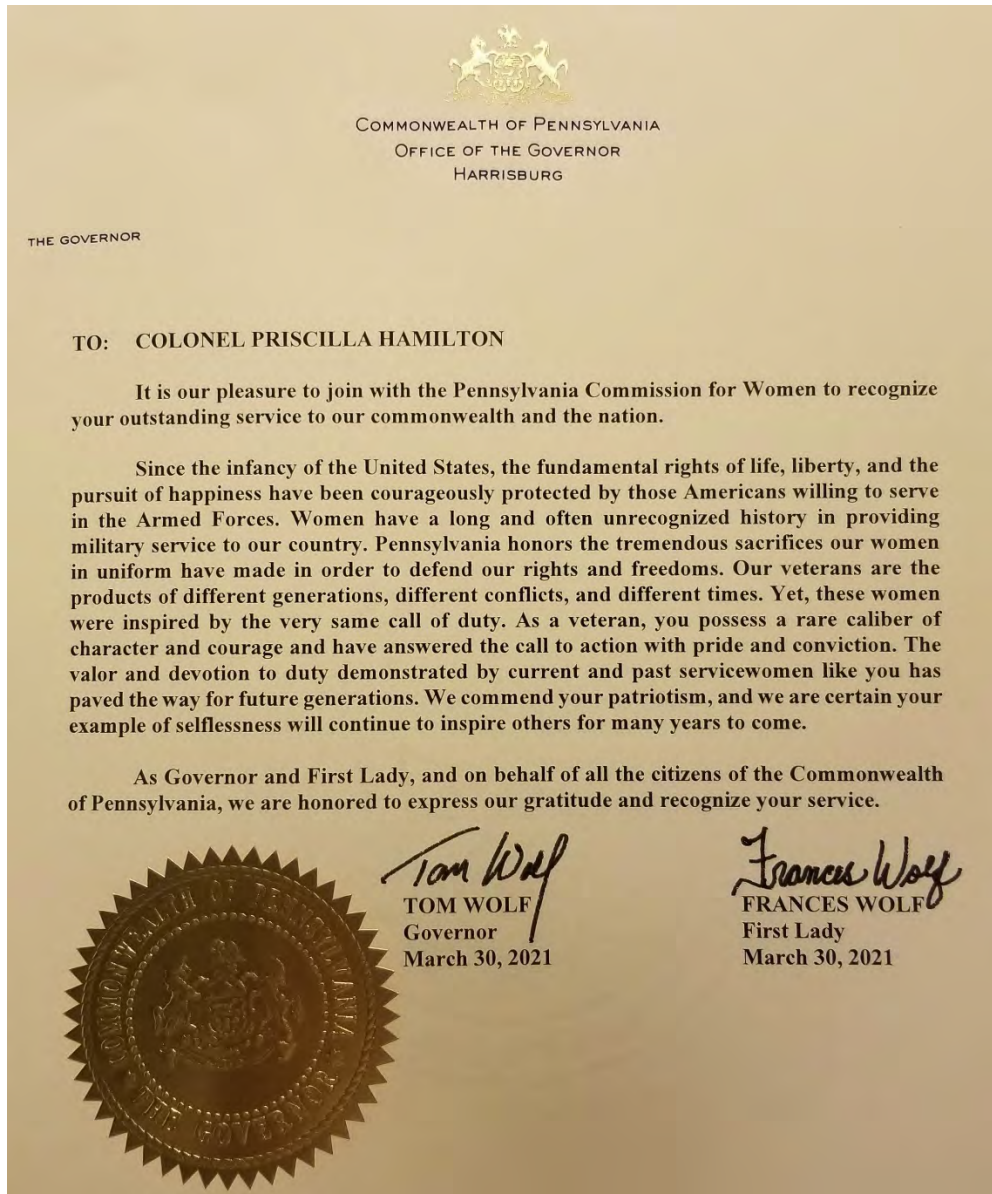
Ronald J. Lambert, COL, USA (Ret)

President and Chair, Association of Army Dentistry

# Membership

## Pennsylvania Female Veteran's Day Ceremony

AAD Board Member COL (Ret) Priscilla Hamilton was honored by Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Commission for Women at the Pennsylvania Female Veterans Day Virtual Ceremony on March 30, 2021. Congratulations Priscilla!



## Army Dentistry Monument

The AAD's monument to Army Dentistry at the Army Medical Department Museum at Joint Base San Antonio (Fort Sam Houston) is an ongoing special project to honor the service of all who have served in the Army Dental Care System. An upcoming special edition of the newsletter will feature progress on the Army Dentistry Monument.

# Active Component News

## 110<sup>th</sup> Army Dental Corps Birthday Message

The Corps Chief's Office released the following video celebrating the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the U.S. Army Dental Corps. In it, Senior Army Dental Corps Leaders wished the Army Dental Corps a Happy 110th Birthday. Participants included the 28th Chief of the Army Dental Corps - BG Shan K. Bagby; the Army Deputy Dental Corps Chief - COL Steve Tanner; the Army Dental Corps CSBPO (Corps Specific Branch Proponent Officer) - COL Pete Guevara; Director, MEDCOM G357 Dental Directorate - COL Tawanna McGhee; Chief, Dental Corps Branch, Human Resource Command - COL Brett Henson; and the Chief of Army Dental Graduate Education - LTC Michael Tucker.

FORT SAM HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES

03.01.2021

Courtesy Video

Brooke Army Medical Center Public Affairs

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/785496/110th-army-dental-corps-birthday-message?fbclid=IwAR1G8ljDpnFf4FeTz3FDrsL5dD4KqX1eF0ox5zWIUogjTcimQZ90z2-AQSo>

## **110<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration 3 March 1911 – 3 March 2021**

**25 February 1901** The first Army Board of Dental Examiners met in Washington, D.C., to begin examinations of eight candidates. Dr. Robert T. Oliver, D.D.S., of Indiana and Dr. Robert W. Morgan, D.D.S., of Virginia were the second and third contract dentists appointed and joined President John S. Marshall to complete the three-member board. By 21 December 1901, seventy-one dentists had been examined and twenty-eight of the thirty positions had been filled.

**3 March 1911** The **U.S. Army Dental Corps (DC)** of commissioned officers was established with the passing of H.R. 31237, Amendment 49, and President Taft's signing it into Public Law No. 453, *36 Stat. 1054*. This event followed many years of National Dental Association discourse, congressional hearings, and the failure of previous bills. The law provided that dental officers could be of no higher rank than first lieutenant. Contract officers with three years of experience were commissioned first lieutenant. New candidates who were board examined and accepted were appointed Acting Dental Surgeons for a period of three years before commissioning. Acting dental surgeons had the same status as contract dentists, received less pay than lieutenants, and could not be ordered to war. Civilian dentists immediately started lobbying efforts to upgrade the rank and pay to be more comparable with military physicians. The act of 3 March 1911 had a major impact on the civilian status of dentistry as a profession. Before the enactment of the military dental corps authorization, the

words "dentistry," "dental profession," and "dental surgeon" had no significance or recognition under the law. The United States government set precedent for the "official recognition" of dentistry as a profession.

## **Dental Corps Chief Video Message Season 2: Episode 4 Force Structure**

The fourth episode of Season 2 Dental Corps Chief's Video Message series addresses questions received from the field regarding the status on the reduction in personnel numbers anticipated for the Army Medical Department, the change from Combat Support Hospital to Field Hospital and the potential impact on DENTAC organization, and Security Force Assistance Brigades.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/786420/dental-corps-chief-video-message-season-2-episode-4-force-structure?fbclid=IwAR3OQa3ARx3ZI2bt9h-36HFxBrQSWb7qwkdLtVVsFYp8QDwH2hdzXs0hqTk>

## **Chief, Army Dental Corps AAD Liaison**

The AAD's primary conduit to the active component is through the Corps Specific Branch Proponent Officer (CSBPO) at the Corps Chief Office, US Army Dental Corps, Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. As the primary liaison with the Association of Army Dentistry, COL Peter Guevara attends AAD virtual board meetings as a non-voting member.

The *Dental Corps Bulletins* are added to our website when they are received, courtesy of MAJ Alyson Lasater, who serves as the Executive Fellow. The bulletins can be found at the following link or under the *Home* or *News* headers on the AAD website. The link provides access to both Dental Corps Bulletins and the AAD Newsletters.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/the-dental-corps-bulletin-2/>

Additionally, newsletters and bulletins are posted on the AAD's Facebook Page and sent to members through Constant Contact.

## The Army Medical Department Civilian Corps

### **The Army Medical Department Civilian Corps**

On March 26, 2021 the AMEDD Civilian Corps turns 25. Although this is the official anniversary date for the start of the Corps, the history of service for civilians supporting the Army through medical assistance dates back to 1775. Over the years their roles and responsibilities have altered, but their dedication has not wavered.



# Reserve Components News

## The Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Program

The Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) program is another opportunity for U.S. Army Reserve dentists to serve. The IMA Dental Corps program has 63 authorizations that mirror the Active Duty (AD) Dental Corps with a Dental Director, Chief of Staff and 4 Regional Commanders. IMA dentists are assigned to AD positions managed by Human Resources Command (HRC) and the Active Duty DENTAC or Command corresponding to their assignment to meet military manpower requirements in the event of military contingency, pre-mobilization, mobilization, sustainment and/or demobilization operations.

COL Adam K. Rich currently serves as the IMA Reserve Staff Officer for the Army Office of the Surgeon General in Falls Church, VA. Colonel Rich began his military career as a 2<sup>nd</sup> LT in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps at the completion of ROTC training in 1997. In 2001 after receiving his DMD from the University of Louisville and accepting the rank of Captain, he joined the U.S. Dental Corps. His prior assignments include Chief Dental Consultant to US Army Dental Command and Executive Officer (XO) of the Western Regional Dental Command. He was the Dental Officer in Charge (OIC) in Balad, Iraq, in 2009 and Dental OIC in Tal'Afar, Iraq, in 2003-2004, serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division at Forward Operating Base Fulda. From 2010 to 2018, he served on the Kentucky Board of Dentistry, as president and chairman of the Law Enforcement Committee. COL Rich completed his Advanced Education in General Dentistry from the University of Mississippi in 2002 and has practiced General Dentistry since that time, though his primary civilian employment is with United Health Care as Chief Dental Officer in Kentucky. He is strongly supported by his wife COL Michele Rich, who is also a reserve IMA dentist in the Pacific Regional Dental Command. Michele and Adam are honored to serve in the US Army Dental Corps.



# Dental Corps History

**MAJ Fernando E. Rodriguez, D.D.S.**

**An Army Dentist and Pioneer in Dental Research**

– Susan J. Allen



Over the years, the U.S. Army Dental Corps has benefited from a wealth of intelligent and innovative dental officers who have been committed to delivering the best quality of care to soldiers at home and abroad, in garrison and in the field. Curiosity among military dentists who have chosen to pursue dental research has led to new materials, equipment and treatments. While focused initially and primarily on military applications that improve dental readiness, the end products of Army dental research have frequently been translated into civilian use. Thus, Army Research has expanded the worldwide knowledge base and benefitted thousands more patients.

In the 1890s, Willoughby D. Miller was the first dental surgeon to propose the theory that bacteria in the mouth causes demineralization of tooth enamel and dentin. It was, however, an Army dentist a few decades later, CPT Fernando E. Rodriguez Vargas, who first identified lactobacillae as the specific group of bacteria causing caries.

Rodriguez was born in Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, in 1888. He earned his teacher's certificate from the University of Puerto Rico and initially worked as an Internal Revenue Service inspector and a Spanish translator for the U.S. War Department. In 1913, he earned his dental degree from Georgetown University and established a private practice in Washington, D.C.

Upon joining the U.S. Indian Medical Services in 1915, Rodriguez moved to Arizona, where he nurtured his propensity for research. He studied the stained and mottled enamel of the Pima Indians and theorized that it might be associated with their drinking water. It appears, however, that he may not have published his findings because there is little information available about his theory or his research.

Rodriguez was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Dental Reserve Corps in 1917, shortly after the United States entered World War I. In 1918, he accepted a commission in the Regular Army Dental Corps. After serving overseas – first in the United Kingdom and then in Puerto Rico – he was assigned to the Army Medical School in Washington, D.C., in 1919 and began pursuing what became his seminal research on the bacterial origins of dental caries as a newly promoted captain.

The December 1922 edition of *Military Dental Journal* carried his article entitled “Studies in the Specific Bacteriology of Dental Caries,” in which Rodriguez outlined his principal research findings into the etiology of dental disease. Through his research he had identified a specific group of three lactobacillae present in the deep layers of dental decay. This group of bacterium was tentatively labeled *Lactobacillus odontolyticus*, Types 1, 2 and 3.

At the time of publication, the journal proposed that the research by Rodriguez was “the most valuable advance made in the etiology of dental caries since Miller’s time.” (See above reference to Dr. Willoughby D. Miller) Additionally, the journal noted that there is an “urgent need in military dentistry for an agent that will arrest or retard the progress of dental caries in recruits and others stationed where dental service is not always available or those going into combat or on field maneuvers.”

His research protocols also included the development of analytics and the evaluation of the effectiveness of iodine and other chemical agents as oral disinfectants. On Sept. 28, 1928, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* published the results of his research into oral disinfectants. His dental caries research was also published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association*.

Rodriguez earned a second degree, Bachelor of Science, from Georgetown in 1924 and, for a time, was on the university’s faculty as an associate professor of bacteriology. During his career, Rodriguez was a member of the Committee of Dental Investigation of the National Research Council and the International Society for Dental Research, and a fellow of the American College of Dentists.

MAJ Rodriguez died from complications of pneumonia at Walter Reed General Hospital in 1932 at the age of 44. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The American College of Dentists and the Puerto Rico College of Dental Surgeons posthumously recognized Rodriguez Vargas for his groundbreaking research. Additionally, in 1944 the War Department renamed the hospital at Fort Brooke in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Rodriguez General Hospital. When the hospital closed in 1973 as part of the reduction in Army services in San Juan and the closing of Fort Brooke, the outpatient clinic at Fort Buchanan was



renamed Rodriguez Army Health Clinic. The achievements of this distinguished Army dentist were further recognized with a bust of his likeness that was installed in a place of honor in front of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

From an IRS inspector to Dental Corps officer and world-renowned Army dental researcher, MAJ Fernando E. Rodriguez Vargas, D.D.S., found his true calling pursuing his curiosity about dental disease and, in so doing, laid the foundation for future research into the causes and treatment of caries.

## References

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## **Vietnam War Veterans Day 2021**

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1973 the final round of U.S. troops were withdrawn from Vietnam. Forty-eight years later, we celebrate the fourth anniversary of National Vietnam War Veterans Day, which was established by the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017. Nearly nine million United States soldiers served during the Vietnam War Era, and today close to 3,900 Vietnam Vets are lost each week. This day, now etched onto the calendar by law, gives many Vietnam veterans the chance to receive the recognition they did not experience when they first arrived home.



**Photo Courtesy of COL (Ret) John King**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial stands as a symbol of America's honor and recognition of the men and women who served and sacrificed their lives in the Vietnam War. Inscribed on the black granite walls are the names of 58,178 men and women who gave their lives or remain missing. The Memorial is dedicated to honor the courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty and country of all who answered the call to serve during one of the most divisive wars in U.S. history.



## Healthcare Corner

### **US Army surpasses 500,000 COVID vaccines administered at medical treatment facilities**

By U.S. Army Public Affairs March 18, 2021

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Army has surpassed 500,000 COVID-19 vaccines administered at medical treatment facilities. As of March 18, 506,960 vaccinations have been administered at approximately 80 Army medical facilities to service members, veterans, Army civilians and dependents.

“I am incredibly proud of the hard work of our medical professionals in reaching this milestone,” said John E. Whitley, Secretary of the Army. “These efforts are crucial to safeguarding our people, mitigating risk to our operations and beating the COVID-19 pandemic in our communities and our nation.”

The Army’s efforts are aligned with the Department of Defense’s mission to aggressively and effectively administer vaccinations and follows DoD’s standardized, coordinated strategy for prioritizing, distributing and administering voluntary COVID-19 vaccines. This phased approach is contributing to the protection and readiness of active-duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, as well as all mission-essential civilian employees and other personnel performing mission-essential functions.

### **Social Media**

Please visit the AAD’s Facebook page to receive the latest posts and news from throughout the Army Dental Care System. LTC Mike Hoffman serves as the administrator of the page and does an incredible job of reporting news from throughout the Army Dental Care System and Army Medicine.

<https://www.facebook.com/AssociationofArmyDentistry>

# In Memoriam

- Michael B. Strobe, COL, USA (Ret)

5/13/1941 – 12/7/2020

The AAD received word of the passing of COL Strobe on December 7, 2020 at his home in Manhattan, Kansas. Mike entered the Army Dental Corps as a Captain in 1966 and retired as a Colonel in 1990. He joined an orthodontic practice in Manhattan upon his retirement. To read more of his distinguished military service and his life in retirement, please follow the link below.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Strobe%2C%20Michael%20B.%20COL%20USA%20Ret%205-9-1941%20--%2012%2007%2020.pdf>

- John E. Ailor, COL, USA (Ret)

10/22/1941 – 12/17/2020

After a distinguished 26 years serving in the U.S. Army Dental Corps, COL Ailor taught at the University of Maryland Dental School for 15 years. The link to his obituary is below.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Ailor%2C%20COL%20Ret%20John%20E.%2010-22-1941%20--%2012-17-2020.pdf>

- Ronald F. Pflipsen, COL, USA (Ret)

11/10/1944 – 2/13/2021

During a distinguished military career, COL Pflipsen served in clinical, education, and leadership positions. After retirement, he practiced in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, for eight years, before returning to Sierra Vista, AZ, where he worked part-time for the Gila River Indian Reservation before his full retirement. To read more of his full life experiences, please go to the link below.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Pflipsen%2C%20COL%20Ret%20Ronald%20Francis%2011-10-1944%20--%202-13-2021.pdf>

We post the obituaries that are brought to our attention; if there are others that you wish to share on our website, please forward them to the AAD. The link to all of the obituaries on our website is at the following web address:

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/about/in-memoriam/?loggedout=true>

## **Conclusion:**

If any of our members have input for the Board of Directors of the AAD or wish to share an article for the newsletter, please forward your recommendations or articles to the email address below.

The AAD would like to thank each of you for your continued membership and support of our charitable mission. If any of our members has an interest in serving on our board of directors or assisting in another capacity, please contact the AAD at [assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com](mailto:assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com)

Please keep our men and women in uniform in your thoughts and prayers throughout the year ahead - may God Bless America!

Ron

Editor AAD Newsletter, COL Ron Lambert, COL, USA (Ret)

# **AAD Officers**

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