

# MEDICAL NEWS

Volume 31, Number 4

www.militarymedical.com

April 2024

## Doctor reunites with medical student he delivered decades ago

By Curtis Hill

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

A military medical student at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton was reunited with the doctor who delivered her into the world more than two decades ago.

Ensign Hannah Ortiz is currently in the middle of her family medicine rotation as part of her medical education through the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU).

Retired Navy Capt. William Roberts was an active-duty family medicine physician at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton in 2000 when he delivered young Hannah Ortiz, the daughter of a Marine stationed on the Marine Corps Base.

"I began delivering babies in 1982 and have delivered or supervised the delivery of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of babies over my career," said Roberts. "I've had patients who told me that I had delivered them, but this is the first time I've heard that from one of our medical students."

Ortiz knew who had delivered her because her mother would speak often about the wonderful doctor she had for the birth of her daughter, and this wasn't the first interaction between the two.

"My mom raves about him to this day," Ortiz added. "We saw him in either 2012 or 2013 at the old hospital when my dad was stationed here on Camp Pendleton again," Ortiz said. "My mom introduced me to him when she saw him during a medical visit to the hospital."

Hannah will only be here for her five-week rotation; however, the opportunity to reunite with the wonderful doctor who brought her into the world was too good to pass up.

"When I got here, I asked if Dr. Roberts happened to still work here," she said. "I thought maybe he had retired. He had, but he still works here as a civilian doctor!"

Although she often heard of the doctor who delivered her, a career in medicine was not an obvious choice.

"The first thing for me was military service. My family has a long history of

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## Inside the 908th Flight nurses – saving lives miles high

By Maj. John Stamm

908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

When severely injured, wounded or sick service members require transportation via airlift, medical care can't stop mid-flight.

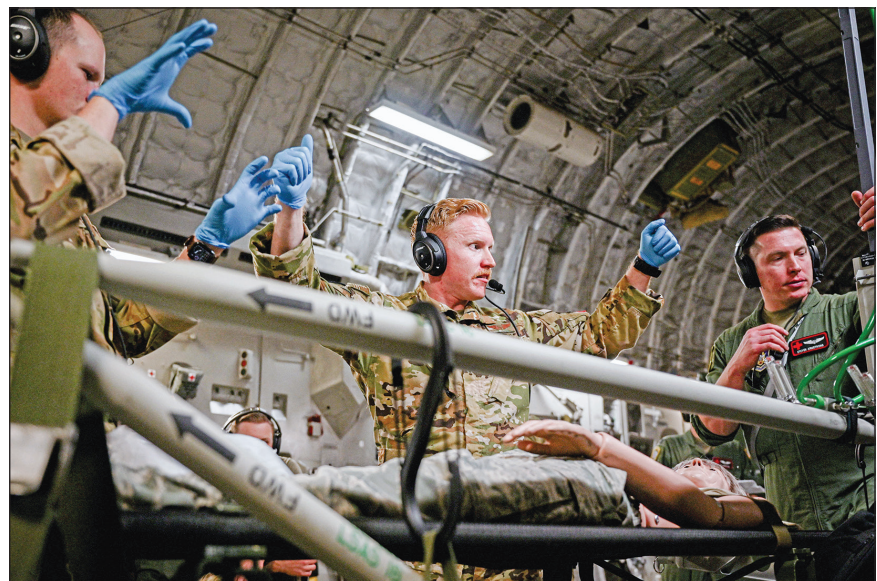
As senior members of aeromedical evacuation teams, it's the responsibility of U.S. Air Force flight nurses, Air Force specialty code 46NXF, to provide life-saving emergency and pre-hospital care to servicemembers up to 30 thousand feet in the sky.

From planning a mission to disembarking the aircraft, flight nurses function as members of a critical care transport team and provide comprehensive care during aeromedical evacuation missions. Responsibilities incorporate patient assessment and triage, stabilization, critical care intervention techniques, intensive care monitoring and advanced surgical skill procedures that include neonates through geriatric age groups.

Flight nurses may also be expected to execute independent judgment to deliver appropriate care when contact with a medical command physician is not possible.

"It's like you are in a flying emergency room, but you don't have the same resources," said Capt. Christopher Bennett, 908th AES flight nurse. "You've got to be very resourceful and find innovative ways to compensate."

Responsible for advanced emergency care patient management



U.S. Air Force photo Senior Airman Juliana Todd

**Capt. Chris Bennett, middle, a flight nurse with the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, prepares to demonstrate a medical procedure on a simulated patient Dec. 8, 2023, during a training flight from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, to St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The hands-on simulation enhances the team's preparedness for potential real-world situations.**

during air transport of the critically ill or injured from the scene or outlying sites to participating secondary and tertiary care institutions, becoming a flight nurse requires experience and education beyond that of a typical registered nurse.

"You can't just take an ER nurse and put them on an aircraft; it's a bit more complicated than that," said Capt. Kristian Taylor, 908th AES flight nurse. "It all starts with having a four-year degree, and

then it's a two-to-three-year process [of additional military training] after that."

It also is a physically and emotionally demanding profession that has more elements of danger than working in a traditional stationary hospital.

"That's why, when we conduct our training missions, we throw in increasing levels of stress where we can control it, so we know our

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# 55th Dental Squadron gives kids free smiles

By Dana Heard  
55th Wing Public Affairs

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, Neb. — The 55th Dental Squadron held a free dental day for children at the Ehrling Bergquist Clinic March 8.

The dental clinic welcomed children of active-duty service members as part of a community outreach program.

The event allowed the dental clinic to give back to the community and dental residents gained valuable experience working with young children.

"This is a beneficial event not only for the children in the community but also for ourselves here at the 55th Dental Clinic," said Master Sgt. Kalen Sanchez, 55th Dental Squadron dental residency flight chief.

A variety of services were offered to children from 6 months to 13 years old. Some of the younger patients received their very first dental exam while others received x-rays, fluoride treatments and

cleanings. All patients went home with free dental supplies.

It was a good turnout. Some laughed, some cried, and others just sat still for their treatment.

Capt. Hanna Hornsby, 55th Medical Group family medicine residency faculty physician, brought her son, Asher in for his first dental examination.

"I greatly appreciate the free dental day. I was having difficulty scheduling my son to be seen for his first dentist appointment in the community," said Hornsby. "The dentists here provided great care for my son!"

It was an opportunity for dental residents to see pediatric patients since their primary duty is to see active-duty adult patients.

"It benefits the families, it benefits the active dentists, including our residents, and it's just a win-win situation and a really great event," said Maj. Coleman Christensen, 55th Dental Squadron deputy director, advanced education general dentistry residency.

Hygiene instructions were given along with parental guidance, and they promoted the Tricare program for those unfamiliar with it.



U.S. Air Force photo by D.P. Heard

**Capt. (Dr.) Justin Peterson, (right) 55th Dental Squadron resident, applies fluoride to Sua Kim, daughter of Army Sgt. Duan Kim, at the free dental day offered by the 55th Medical Group at the Ehrling Bergquist clinic on March 8. The dental clinic welcomed children of active-duty service members as part of a community outreach program.**

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U.S. Air Force photo by D.P. Heard

**Capt. (Dr.) Benjamin Scarpino, 55th Dental Squadron resident (left), and Airman 1st Class Maria Kathlene Santa Maria, dental assistant, x-ray Caydee Suggs (center), daughter of Senior Airman Christian Suggs, 55th Security Forces Squadron, at the free dental day.**

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# MEDCoE soldiers volunteer, teach important skills to area scouts

By Erin Perez

U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence

SAN ANTONIO—U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence Soldiers volunteered to teach skills to more than 600 scouts during the annual Council Wide Campout for the Alamo Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America that took place March 1-3.

Nearly 70 Soldiers, including MEDCoE instructors in the Combat Medic Specialist Training Program at the Medical Education and Training Campus, on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, spent their Saturday teaching various medical skills from basic first aid and CPR to how to carry a stretcher through obstacles and Stop the Bleed training, all of which can contribute to earning different merit badges and prepare scouts of all ages for various emergency situations.

Cpt. Lamanda Jackson, MEDCoE Recruiting Task Force lead, volunteered her time at the event and saw it as an opportunity to show off a lot of the different occupations available within Army Medicine. “It [the event] emphasized the Army’s dedication to nurturing talent and fostering community collaboration,” Jackson said. “This event not only highlights future career opportunities but also cultivates leadership, innovation and service.”

Soldiers from U.S. Army North, the Army Medical Recruiting Battalion based in San Antonio, and the Institute

of Surgical Research and other local commands also participated in the day’s events. With a total of 17 immersive stations, area Soldiers provided hands-on training, interactive displays, and a chance for the scouts to experience what it is like to be an Army combat medic, veterinarian, public health officer and burn specialist. Of course, Soldiers weren’t the only volunteers who made it out to the event. Civil service employees from the different commands, many of whom have children in the local scouting program, also donated their time on Saturday.

Sgt. 1st Class John Bell, part of the MEDCoE Recruiting Task Force, worked with the local scout council to meet their needs while providing an opportunity for local Soldiers to volunteer in the community. Bell is a combat medic and a former instructor, and he understands the importance of sharing skills that can make a difference in an emergency, as well as giving back through volunteering.

“It’s always a great opportunity to use our technical and tactical strengths for community relations,” Bell said. “While events like this provide positive shaping operations for the future of recruiting, it also builds our ability to give back within communities.”

In addition to learning important skills, Boy Scouts who participated in the different stations completed requirements for a variety of merit badges.



Photo by Erin Perez

**Staff Sgt. Christopher Davenport, a U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence Soldier, demonstrates to a group of scouts how to splint a broken arm as part of a first aid skill demonstration at the Council-wide Campout that took place in San Antonio on March 2.**



Photo by Erin Perez

**U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence Soldiers, Master Sgt. Walter Hickman III, Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Sawyer and Maj. Joe Samudio, take questions from scouts during a Stop the Bleed demonstration at the Council-wide Campout that took place in San Antonio on March 2.**



# Honduran patient regains use of finger following successful operation by Navy Medicine surgeons

By Petty Officer 2nd Class  
Justin Woods

Naval Medical Center Camp Lejeune

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras – A Honduran man injured in an accident regained motion in his left index finger after two surgeons with Expeditionary Medical Unit (EMU) 10 G-Rotation 16 provided trauma care during a Global Health Engagement (GHE) at Hospital Nacional Mario Catarino Rivas.

On Feb. 27, U.S. Navy Capt. Bradley Deafenbaugh, an orthopedic surgeon with Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NRTMC) Portsmouth, and Capt. Jamie Fitch, a general surgeon with (NMRTC) Camp Lejeune, conducted an operation reconnecting 19-year-old Renaldo Muñoz severed tendon. Muñoz was injured in a work-related incident one week prior, which resulted in the immobilization of his finger.

“I was at work and accidentally cut my hand with a machete. We came to the hospital, and they gave me first response treatment,” explained Muñoz. “About half an hour after I was discharged, I realized my finger wasn’t moving. I thought it was just too swollen to move, but the next day I got worried.”

Muñoz came back to the hospital where Capt. Fitch scheduled an appointment with the EMU orthopedist to operate.

“Repairs of this kind are generally done by plastic surgery at their hospital,” Fitch said. “But because there is only one plastic surgeon, I was told he may have to wait several months to have the tendon repaired. Instead, we placed a splint on his hand to maintain neutral position and asked him to come back on Tuesday.”

After the successful operation performed by Deafenbaugh and Fitch, Muñoz had mobility in his index finger again.

“The specific injury was an index finger extensor tendon laceration, which we repaired,” added Deafenbaugh. “His recovery time should be about three months.”

Muñoz expressed his gratitude toward the EMU surgeons for being able to care for him so quickly.

“I’m glad the doctors were able to fix my finger,” he said. “Now that the operation is finished, I want to recover completely so I can get back to work.”

EMU 10 G conducted its first



Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Justin Woods

**Above: Reynaldo Muñoz, a 19-year-old Honduran resident, shows medical personnel that he can extend his left index finger on his own after an operation in the trauma bay of Hospital Nacional Mario Catarino Rivas mission on Feb. 27. EMU 10 G conducted its first GHE to enhance expeditionary core skills and knowledge exchange with Honduran healthcare professionals in a limited resource environment, Feb. 17-March 2. Right: Muñoz poses for a photo in the trauma bay. He was injured in an accident, but regained motion in his left index finger after two surgeons with EMU 10 G-Rotation 16 provided trauma care during a Global Health Engagement (GHE).**

GHE to enhance expeditionary core skills and knowledge exchange with Honduran healthcare professionals in a limited resource environment, Feb. 17-March 2, 2024. EMUs consist of health services and support personnel, and contains deployable medical materiel configured to provide flexible, modular, and scalable forward resuscitative care capabilities.

Navy Medicine — represented by more than 44,000 highly-trained military and civilian health care professionals — provides enduring expeditionary medical support to the warfighter on, below, and above the sea, and ashore.



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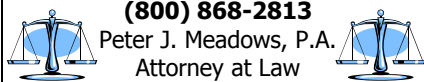
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## • 908th (Continued from front page)

limits and what we're capable of before we go operational," Bennett added.

Candidates for this career field must be between the ages of 18 and 47, possess a bachelor's degree in nursing from an accredited school and a valid U.S. or U.S. territory registered nurse license. They must also be medically cleared for flight, understand the principles of drug therapy and the effects of altitude, and be accepted by the medical unit commander and Air Force Reserve Surgeon General.

"It's worth noting that the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard execute 80% of all aeromedical evacuations for the Department of Defense around the world," said Bennett. "So, we get exceptional leadership opportunities and develop skills you won't learn in the civilian sector, which makes us even better civilian practitioners."

U.S. Air Force photo Senior Airman Juliana Todd  
**Crew members with the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron participate in a training scenario Dec. 9, 2023, during a training flight near St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The 908 AES trains on a regular basis to advance their capabilities and readiness for any operational missions.**



U.S. Air Force photo 1Lt. Lauren Rossman  
**Capt. Amber McKenzie, left, a flight nurse with the 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, supervises Tech. Sgt. Brittany Storey, center, and Staff. Sgt. Jakiya Randall, 908th AES aeromedical technicians, providing emergency medical care on a simulated patient Nov. 7, 2023, during a training flight from Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, to Key West, Florida. The crew simulated various scenarios to practice readiness when responding to a range of medical situations during evacuation missions.**

## Physician



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### PHYSICIAN – FAMILY MEDICINE

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# • Reunite (Continued from front page)

military service and that's why I wanted to attend the Naval Academy," Ortiz explained. "During my plebe year, I was undecided on what path I wanted to pursue, but I had an academic advisor who gave me great advice and inspiration that led to my interest in the Medical Corps. I applied to USU and here I am on my way to becoming a doctor."

The uniqueness of the situation was not lost on Roberts who now has accumulated nearly 50 years of service in Navy Medicine between his uniformed and civilian service.

"It very nice the way things come around. I'm so impressed with Hannah because she went to the Naval Academy, was accepted to USU, and is pursuing a career in Navy Medicine," he said. "I'm grateful and honored to have been able to play a part in the beginning of her life and now as she continues the military legacy of her family."

Roberts added one final thought, "Oh, and it makes me really feel old!"



Photo courtesy of Ens. Hannah Ortiz

**Right: Retired Navy Capt. William Roberts, a family medicine physician at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, poses with Ens. Hannah Ortiz, a Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences medical student on a family medicine rotation at NHCP. More than two decades ago, Roberts delivered Ortiz at the Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital and the two recently reconnected during the five-week rotation. Left: Ensign Hannah Ortiz as a toddler.**



Photo courtesy of Dr. William Roberts



## Physician



# PennState Health

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