



Surgeon General of the United States  
Washington, DC

October 20, 2010

Dear Commissioned Officers,

Please join me in welcoming the newest members of our Immediate Office Leadership Team. I believe these dedicated officers will play a vital role implementing our new structure and our “new focus on our mission”.

Deputy Surgeon General

**RADM Boris D. Lushniak, MD, MPH**

Chief of Staff

**RADM Christopher G. Halliday, DDS, MPH**

Aide-de-Camp and Special Assistant

**LT Christine Collins**

Aide-de-Camp and Special Assistant

**LTJG Cody Thornton**

I have included biographical information and photos so that you may get to know each of them as they begin their transition.

As we move forward, I am confident these officers will serve our mission well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Regina Benjamin".

Regina Benjamin, MD, MBA  
VADM, USPHS  
Surgeon General



**RADM Boris D. Lushniak, MD, MPH**, currently serves as the FDA's Assistant Commissioner, Counterterrorism Policy and Director of the Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threats within the Office of the Commissioner. RADM Lushniak was introduced to the USPHS in 1983 as a senior medical student when he completed an elective with the Indian Health Service in Winslow, Arizona. He began his USPHS career in 1988 as a Lieutenant, entering the service as part of the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and initially was stationed with the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in Cincinnati, Ohio where he

conducted epidemiological investigations of workplace hazards. In 1990 he was accepted for CDC's long term training program and completed a 3 year residency in dermatology at the University of Cincinnati after which he established an occupational skin disease program at NIOSH. During his time at CDC he also served on special assignments and disaster response activities in Bangladesh, St. Croix, Russia, and Kosovo, was part of the CDC/NIOSH team at Ground Zero (World Trade Center) and part of the team investigating the anthrax attacks in Washington, DC. In 2004 he transitioned from CDC to FDA as the Chief Medical Officer of the Office of Counterterrorism and was appointed Assistant Commissioner in 2005. While at FDA he was deployed after Hurricane Katrina to serve as the DHHS representative in San Antonio and also served as the FDA Deputy Incident Commander for the 2009 pandemic response. He was promoted to Rear Admiral, Lower Half in 2006 and attained the rank of Rear Admiral, Upper Half in 2010.

RADM Lushniak was born in Chicago to post-World War II immigrants from Ukraine. He was admitted to the six-year Honors Program in Medical Education at Northwestern University and completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Sciences in 1981 and obtained his medical degree (MD) in 1983. In 1984 he completed the Masters of Public Health (MPH) degree at Harvard University. He completed a residency in family medicine in 1987 at St Joseph Hospital in Chicago. RADM Lushniak maintains board certification in dermatology and preventive medicine (occupational). He serves as a staff physician in dermatology at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda and is adjunct professor of dermatology at the Uniformed Service University of the Health Sciences.

RADM Lushniak serves as the co-executive director of the USPHS Music Ensemble and is a member of many professional organizations including the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Academy of Dermatology, the American Dermatological Association, the American Contact Dermatitis Society, the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS), and the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America. He has received numerous USPHS awards including two Outstanding Service Medals, a Commendation Medal, and two Achievement Awards. In addition he has received the AMA Dr. William Beaumont Award in Medicine and the AMSUS Sustaining Member Lecture Award as well as DHHS Secretary and FDA Commissioner awards. He resides in Rockville, Maryland with his wife Dr. Patricia Cusumano and two daughters Larissa (13) and Stephanie (11).



**RADM Christopher G. Halliday, D.D.S., M.P.H.**, Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS) Division of Oral Health and the former Chief Professional Officer of the Dental Category of the United States Public Health Service (USPHS), is an Assistant Surgeon General and holds the rank of Rear Admiral in the Commissioned Corps of the USPHS. As the Director of the Division of Oral Health, he is the advisor to the Director of the IHS on all matters concerning the oral health status of the American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people, and as the Chief Professional Officer of the Dental Category of the USPHS from May 2006 to May 2010, he was responsible for providing leadership and coordination of the USPHS dental professional affairs for the Office of the Surgeon General. A recipient of numerous PHS and IHS awards and special honors, Dr. Halliday has received a hazardous duty award, an Isolated Hardship Award, several Unit Citations, a Commendation Medal, an Achievement Medal, an Outstanding Service Medal and the Surgeon General's Exemplary Service Medal.



**LT Christine Collins** is the Lead Clinical Nurse of the Outpatient Department, Adult Walk-in Clinic, Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, Tuba City, Arizona. The Adult Walk-in Clinic provides support to the Indian Health Service Mission through medical and public health care to all members of federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Natives.

Leading and directing her 13-member team, LT Collins strives to promote and improve care given to the 15,700 patients seen annually within the clinic. LT Collins is committed in serving as a health care advocate for the Navajo people. She upholds the goal in raising the health status to the highest possible level for the community in which she serves.

LT Collins has over 14 years of military experience, 10 of which she served with the Air Force Security Forces and 4 years as an Air Force nurse officer. She provided clinical expertise as a critical care nurse and trauma war nurse. Her multifaceted experience has lead LT Collins to be a strong leader within the Adult Walk-in Clinic.

LT Collins was born in Miami, Arizona, on December 19, 1973. She attended Grand Canyon University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 2004 and her Master's degree in Business-Organizational Management from University of Phoenix in 2003. Lieutenant Collins received a direct commission into the Air Force nurse corps on August 19, 2005 and on December 7, 2009 commissioned with the United States Public Health Service. She began her United States Public Health Service nursing career specializing in providing acute care in the outpatient department as a lead clinical nurse stationed at Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, Tuba City, AZ.

LT Collins is married to Clinton and they have three daughters, Kennedy, Taylor and Reagan.



**LTJG Cody Thornton** is a Health Services Officer, Public Health Generalist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service at the Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education, Food Safety Education Service.

He holds an Associate of Health Science in Medical Laboratory Technology, a Bachelor of Health Science in Medical Laboratory Technology and a Master of Public Health and is pursuing his Master of Business in Public Administration. More than 5 ½ years in the Navy, he supervised multiple laboratory sections as a Hospital Corpsman, Laboratory Technician. He obtained his commission with the U.S. Public Health Service after separating from Naval active duty service.

LTJG Thornton has enjoyed his time in the uniform services, promoting a positive atmosphere through mentorship, volunteerism, and service. He values the importance of health care and the people it inherently serves. His goal is to never lose his ambition and leave everything better than he finds it.

An active lifestyle is a major part of his life and while any physical activity will do, he is passionate about soccer. He led the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center soccer team to a second place standing in the West Coast Navy/Marine Annual Regional Tournament in 2007.