“Optimizing Combat Casualty Care”

First of all, I want to begin by thanking you for the wonderful Change of Command ceremony. Your true professionalism and pride in being a member of this Institute was evident during the entire process.

Second, I want to say that my family and I are extremely happy to be here and are honored to be part of this command. The remarkable work that is done for our combat wounded is second to none. I look forward to circulating to your workspaces and meeting you in person and learn about your task areas.

Lastly, I would like to thank Col. Weber for leaving me this fine-tuned Institute and for his leadership in making this the best command at MRMC.

For those of you who could not attend the Change of Command ceremony, I would like to share some excerpts from the outgoing commander:

“My 26 year Army journey took me to many places and there isn’t enough time to recognize and thank everyone. However my journey would not have been possible without the love and support from my parents. My wife and children have served right along with me and I am grateful for their sacrifices. My son enlisted in the Marine Corps and graduated from boot camp in June. He is graduating from MCT today. My daughter is completing her summer semester studies in government and macroeconomics.

My career was shaped by many leaders, coaches and mentors and I have been blessed with many opportunities. When I was a platoon leader, my company commander Brian Lindamood, my 1SG and my platoon sergeant taught me a great deal about leadership at the tactical level. When I became a medical service corps officer and started over as a 2LT, I was fortunate to have CPT Diane Renz as my company commander and CPT Evan Renz as an instructor in military medicine.

My medical corps career was shaped by General Hutton who was a vascular surgeon and President Reagan’s physician, Dr. Craig Shriver, and Dr. Sean O’Donnell. They all worked to give me the judgment and skill to enjoy a successful career as a vascular surgeon. I was the commander of the 555FST (Triple Nickel) and we were assigned to 2BDE 3ID and supported then COL David Perkins during Thunder Run and the follow-on Peace and Stability Operations. That experience taught me a lot about the operational level of war. During my second deployment to Iraq, I served as a surgeon at Ibn Sina, and as BG Caravalho’s theater consultant for vascular surgery. During the years that followed, MG Caravalho encouraged me to approach problem from the strategic level…to set the future conditions for future success for a team from which I may have even retired.

I am truly blessed to have worked with such a talented group of leaders. Commanding the ISR was a great privilege. As I PCS to Saudi Arabia, I am excited about the future and the miracles that are developed here so that the miraculous may be routine throughout the Military Health System. Serving to Heal Honored to Serve.”

Col. (Dr.) Michael A. Weber
ISR Commander
July 2012-July 2014
Our Change of Command Ceremony was executed with great professionalism, keeping with time honored Army tradition. Thank you to Sgt. 1st Class Alan Moloy and Staff Sgt. (P) Christopher Coats (Noncommissioned Officers in Charge of the Change of Command) and to every Soldier and staff member that made it a great success. Maj. General Joseph Caravalho and Command Sgt. Maj. Cy Akana were pleased. I wish Col. Michael Weber and his family the best as they embark on a new adventure. Welcome to the ISR family Col. Michael D. Wirt.

We look forward to your leadership. I want to take this time to thank all of the Soldiers, civilians and contractors of the ISR for your support and dedication. The past few months have been fast and furious as your acting Sgt. Maj. It’s because of you and your support that we are able to carry out every mission in a timely manner and to standards. Sgt. Maj. Quinton J. Rice will be here later this month and I am sure that he will be proud of the Soldiers, civilians and contractors just as I am. Just always remember that we are truly one team and family with the same goals and mission.

A leader does not “choose” the best or most opportune time in which to lead. A good leader takes the challenge whenever and wherever it presents itself and does the best he or she can.

Wirt takes command of CCC research

Col. (Dr.) Michael A. Weber relinquished command of the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (ISR) to Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt II, during a change of command ceremony on July 30 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Wirt took command of the ISR when he received the Institute’s flag from Maj. Gen. Joseph Caravalho Jr., Commander, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and Fort Detrick, Md. and host of the ceremony.

During his remarks, Caravalho praised Weber’s success and the support of his family for his “unprecedented levels of scientific productivity.”

“The ISR is a phenomenal research unit with an incredibly rich and storied past,” Caravalho said. “ISR’s innovative, life-saving research and organizational evolution are related directly to its incredible leaders. It has been a pleasure working with you. Thank you for all of your efforts, expertise and leadership.”

Caravalho went on to say that during his tenure, Weber led the ISR to unprecedented levels of scientific productivity. Since July 2012, the ISR conducted nearly 400 scientific projects across the entire spectrum of combat casualty care research and fielded many of these innovations. This included full Food and Drug Administration approval and full-rate production of the Burn Navigator—a decision support tool that helps non-burn surgeons optimize complex fluid resuscitation of burn patients.

“Additionally, the ISR Burn Center treated more than 1,200 burn patients, some of whom represent the most severely injured patients with the Military Health System,” added Caravalho.

“Colonel Wirt, if my comments make it sound like you have big shoes to fill, that's because you do,” continued Caravalho. Welcome to MRMC and ISR. You come to us well prepared.

Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt address the ISR Soldiers, staff and guests during the Change of Command Ceremony July 30.

Left to right: Col. (Dr.) Michael A. Weber, Maj. Gen. Joseph Caravalho Jr., Commanding General, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and Fort Detrick, Md., and Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt salute during the singing of the National Anthem by Staff Sgt. Christopher Sadler, A Company, Warrior Transition Battalion, during the Change of Command Ceremony July 30.
Welcome to the ISR family: Col. (Dr.) Leopoldo Cancio and wife Jill welcomed a son, Lucas on July 26. All are doing well.

Congratulations to Spc. Samuel Gatitu on his selection as the Soldier of the Month for July. His photograph will be on display in the company area.

Please congratulate Staff Sgt. Daniel Zimmerman and Sgt. Elizabeth Lacey on their promotion effective August 1.

Also, please congratulate the NCO and Soldier(s) of the Quarter:

**2nd Quarter**
NCO of the Quarter: Sgt. Danny Girela

**3rd Quarter**
Soldier of the Quarter: Spc. Micah Korff

**Congratulations to Spc. Samuel Gatitu on his selection as the Soldier of the Month for July. His photograph will be on display in the company area.**

This month we observe Women's Equality Day. According to The National Women's History Project at www.nwhp.org, “At the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), in 1971 the U.S. Congress designated August 26 as “Women’s Equality Day.” The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world’s first women’s rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

The observance of Women's Equality Day not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also calls attention to women’s continuing efforts toward “full equality."

We will honor Women's Equality Day on August 22 at the San Antonio Military Medical Center Medical Mall at 1100. More information will follow from our Equal Opportunity Leaders. Thank you for all that you do!
West Point cadet learns combat casualty care

By Steven Galvan
USAISR Public Affairs Officer

As upcoming future U.S. Army commissioned officers, West Point cadets are educated and rigorously trained through drills designed to shape them into topnotch leaders. Cadets like third-year Cadet Sgt. Matthew P. Altamirano is becoming a leader of character who will someday inspire and motivate the Soldiers he will be in charge of. The long hours of drills, physical training and education will serve the cadet well when he graduates from the academy. But the knowledge and experience that he has gained does not only come from within the boundaries of West Point. Every summer the cadets spend a few weeks to get some “real Army” experience throughout Army commands around the world.

This year the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (ISR) at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, hosted Altamirano where he got some hands on experience in combat casualty care research—specifically on tourniquets. Altamirano spent his time at the ISR under the mentorship of retired Col., Dr. John F. Kragh, an orthopedic surgeon/tourniquet researcher and a 1985 West Point graduate. Kragh said that the experience and exposure that cadets get during the summer is invaluable in many ways.

“West Point is great at training cadets on Army stuff,” he said. “They have to go out and experience first-hand what is available for them once they leave the academy so that they can determine what career path they want to follow.”

When Altamirano graduates from West Point he will have earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering. He agrees with Kragh and said the experience he has gained at the ISR has given him a new perspective on what career path he’d like to follow.

“I’ve learned a lot about tourniquets and the research process,” said Altamirano. “I had no idea how important combat casualty care research is and how it’s all conducted for the combat wounded. I am now considering the medical corps when I’m active duty.”

The New Mexico native said he decided to attend West Point to serve his country and follow his dad’s footsteps. “It’s exciting to think that when I graduate I will be leading Soldiers,” he said. “My family is very proud of me.”

Altamirano left the ISR in late July to commence his junior year at West Point. He said he was grateful for the experience and training that he received while at the ISR. After spending about three weeks learning about tourniquets and how they work, he feels confident that he will know how to apply one if ever needed in the future.

“I had very little exposure to tourniquets before coming here,” said Altamirano. “It’s good to know how to apply them and how they work. It has been an awesome experience.”
OPTIMIZING COMBAT CASUALTY CARE

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER
I SAVE LIVES

SGTLUDESCHER ANDREW
6-YEAR ARMY VETERAN
OPTIMIZES COMBAT CASUALTY CARE
AS BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
USAISR

LTJRoberT stubbs
16-YEAR NAVY VETERAN
OPTIMIZES COMBAT CASUALTY CARE
AS ASST. RESOURCE MGMT. DEPT.
NAMRU-SA

MSGTMariSSA galvin
18-YEAR AIR FORCE VETERAN
OPTIMIZES COMBAT CASUALTY CARE
AS NCOIC, TECHNICAL EVALUATIONS
USAF DECS
from your recent tour in Afghanistan. In fact, you have served in a number of assignments in forward surgical combat environments, which will give you a great perspective as you come in to set the course for ISR and its critical work in combat casualty care.

Wirt comes from the U.S. Army Medical Department Activity at Fort Campbell, Ky., and recently returned from a deployment where he served as the Officer-in-Charge of the U.S. contingent at the Bastion Role 3 Hospital at Camp Bastion, Helmand Province Afghanistan.

“I can't tell you how excited my family and I are to be here in San Antonio and to be taking command of this high-performing organization,” said Wirt. “General Caravalho, I appreciate your trust and confidence in allowing me to assume command of this talented group of professionals. Colonel Weber, you have done a remarkable job with this command and I look forward to continuing the great work that you have accomplished.”

Weber, who has served as the ISR commander since July 2012, will transfer to the Middle East where he will be the assistant program manager at the Health Affairs Division of the Office of the Program Manager, Saudi Arabian National Guard Modernization Program.

Top right: ISR NCO of the Year, Sgt. Andrew Ludescher presents Col. (Dr.) Michael A. Weber’s wife, Noelle, with some red roses during the Change of Command ceremony.

Middle right: ISR Soldier of the Year, Spc. Daniel Wendorff presents Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt’s wife, Kristina, with some yellow roses during the Change of Command ceremony.

Bottom right: Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt passes the Institute colors to 1st Sgt. Natasha Turrell to signify that he has take command of the ISR during the Change of Command ceremony July 30.

More Change of Command photos on page 9
The official party arrives for the Change of Command ceremony July 30. Left to right: Col. (Dr.) Michael A. Weber; Maj. Gen. Joseph Caravalho Jr., Commanding General, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and Fort Detrick, Md.; and Col. (Dr.) Michael D. Wirt.


In the Spotlight

Michael “Mica” Barba

Job title: Registered Nurse, 4E

How long have you worked at the ISR? 8 years

What or who has been an inspiration to you in your work? I find inspiration and energy all around me. Our patients are a great source of inspiration to me because in the face of some of the most difficult obstacles, they maintain optimism and push themselves toward recovery. My peers and the selfless sacrifices they make on a daily basis provide a powerful source of encouragement for me as well.

What is your favorite part of your work? I enjoy working in a military setting because it is rich in diversity. There are so many people with interesting stories to tell and wonderful senses of humor to tell their stories with. Laughter is important for sanity in this line of work.

Your proudest achievement? Sometimes, just being able to get through my fourth consecutive 12 hour shift and drive myself home is an achievement!

Short- and long-term goals: Now that my kids are a little older, I’m ready to shake things up a bit and concentrate on improving myself. I have applied for graduate school and am in the process of submitting my packet to join the Navy Reserve Nurse Corps. If for some reason those plans don’t work out, I want to dedicate my free time to visual art and perhaps pursue opportunities within its capacity. Overall, I suppose my goal is to keep moving forward, give my best, and have fun while I’m doing it.

Hobbies: Painting, reading, socializing

Favorite book: It depends on what mood I’m in.

Favorite movie/TV show: Forest Gump

Favorite quote: “They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who only dream by night.” Edgar Allan Poe

SAFETY continues on page 11
The Innovator

Health News

By Maria G. Dominguez, R.N.
COHN-S/CM
Occupational Health

Hope everyone has had a pleasant and safe summer so far. Now it’s time to change gears and start thinking going back to school, fall and cooler weather. Traditionally we think of August as “back to school” month and immunization awareness. As we think about all the to do's, you may want to add to the checklist; Children’s Eye Health and Safety Month; Kid’s Eat Right Month; and Family Meal Month.

As the back-to-school preparations continue underway for parents and students, let’s begin with nutrition. August is Kids Eat Right Month. This is a new nutrition education, information sharing and action campaign created by Kids Eat Right. This is an initiative of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Foundation. In order to eat healthy we need to shop smart and cook healthy. Stock up with time saving foods and involve your little helpers. Combing Kids Eat Right and Family Meal Month will help you get started in the right direction.

Farmers markets continue to rise in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm as people increase their health awareness. The USDA statistics show a 3.6 percent increase from 2012. Farmers markets allow consumers to have access to locally grown, farm fresh produce. It also enables farmers the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with their customers and cultivate consumer loyalty with the farmers who grows the produce.

The first full week in August is National Farmers Market Week. Perhaps you may wish to get ready to participate in a farm to school program if one is available in your area. If there is not one, then start one! How can you as a parent be a part of this change? Ask the principal or school nurse if your child’s school has a School Wellness Council and ask other parents or community members to become involved.

On another note, according to The American Academy of Ophthalmology more than 12.1 million school-age children, or one in four, has vision impairment. To help give children a great head start to a successful school year, they need good eye sight. Add a Back to School vision screen to your checklist.

“No Shots No School!” That’s the local back to school slogan in San Antonio. August is National Immunization month. But did you know shots aren’t just for kids? Preteens need to get their shots too! And all adults need a tetanus booster shot every 10 years. Adults age 65 and older need to get a shot to prevent pneumonia and shingles. Talk to your doctor or nurse to make sure that everyone in your family gets the shots they need.

The San Antonio Metro Health District is providing free 2014 Back-to-School Immunization Clinics at various locations. There are multiple clinics being held around San Antonio and surrounding locations including the weekends for the month of August. Get the kids, and you, motivated and back on schedule. Celebrate National Exercise With Your Child Week August 3-9. Exercise enables children to improve their overall wellbeing, to maintain a healthier weight and to reduce the risk of hypertension and cardiovascular disease. Do you remember when you last played Hopscotch? Threw a freesbie or jumped rope?

Fun things you can do with your child are: ride a bike; roller skate at the park; swim at the pool; hoopla-hoop while listening to music; dance; play tennis; rock climb indoors; toss a football; or kick a soccer ball.

Good News! The first week in August is National Simplify Your Life Week. It’s a week to get organized and declutter for a more stress-free lifestyle. The Ohio State University Extension suggests that you do something each day of that week to reduce the stress in your life and start enjoying life more. Think of something that would be a total “waste” of your time. Then do it!

Last but not least, in August we also celebrate Happiness Happens Month. Happiness is watching a child or pet do something that amuses us. Happiness is being able to recognize more of the happiness that’s already happening. Happiness is around us and it’s up to us to recognize it!

It’s time to slow down and start savoring life—it’s not as hard as you think. And if “life gives you lemons” make pink lemonade! Sip and enjoy!

SAFETY continued from page 10

rescues each year.

Stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio for the latest statements, watches and warnings concerning heavy rain and flash flooding in your area. The National Weather Service will issue a Flash Flood Watch when heavy rains may result in flash flooding in a specific area. In this case you should be alert and prepare for the possibility of a flood emergency which will require immediate action. A Flash Flood Warning will be issued when flash flooding is occurring or is imminent in a specified area. If your locale is placed under a warning, you should move to safe ground immediately.

Campers/hikers should always determine if local officials, such as park rangers, post local cautions and warnings.
Top left: Col. (Dr.) Anthony Johnson, right, present Sgt. Billie Durrett with her Certificate of Promotion June 30.
Top right: Lt. Col. Jonathan Lundy has his new rank pinned on by his mother Bonnie during his promotion ceremony July 2.
Center right: Capt. Rebecca Morrell, left, administers the Oath of Reenlistment to Sgt. William Vidal during his reenlistment ceremony July 1.
Bottom center right: Maria Serio-Melvin demonstrates the function of the Burn Navigator to members of the Scripps Research Institute July 17.
Bottom right: Capt. Mollie Christiansen gives a tour of the Burn Center to fiction author Tracey Cramer-Kelley July 23.
Center left: Staff Sgt. John Newton gives a tour of the Burn Center July 17 to students attending the Captain’s Career Course.
The Innovator

Around the ISR continued


Top right: Maj. Mary Turbiak is pinned her new rank by Capt. Ryan Staab during her promotion ceremony July 1.

Bottom right: Staff Sgt. William Vidal is pinned his new rank by Sgt. 1st Class Rosalba Rodriguez July 2 during his promotion ceremony.

Bottom left: Col. (Dr.) Booker T. King gives a tour of the Burn Center to international officers attending the Military Student Leadership Course July 17.

Can you guess who this ISR staff member is? This photo was taken in 1979 when he was in junior high. He enlisted in the Army in 1988.

Submit your “Back When” photo to the PAO for publication in the upcoming issues of *The Innovator.*

Last Month’s Answer:

Charles “Kelly” Thompson
Physician Assistant

July Awards Ceremony

Meritorious Service Medal
Lt. Col. Richard Williams

Army Achievement Medal
Sgt. Danny Girela
Spc. Mark Anthony Cua
Spc. Silvia Matchinske

Army Good Conduct Medal
Spc. Austin Frye

Certificate of Achievement
Capt. Ronald Woodbury
Sgt. David Corey
Sgt. Jamar Daniels
Spc. Austin Frye
Spc. Silvia Matchinske

Civilian of the Quarter
Stephanie Truss

Commanders Award for Civilian Service
Bonnie Jackson
Anya Kuylen

Achievement Medal for Civilian Service
Michael Shiels

Library News

By Gerri Trumbo
Library Manager

Late in July we announced the addition of *Journal of Visualized Experiments.* This is a video journal that is indexed in PubMed. We have a subscription to the following sections: Biology, Immunology and Infection, and Neuroscience. We hope this new material is beneficial to research and study here at the ISR.

Also a reminder to register here at the library so that you can create a MyAthens account. MyAthens will allow offsite and non-government computer access to all of our electronic holdings. The patron registration form is found on our Intranet page under “Forms and Publications” and can be downloaded from there. We also have hard copies in the library for your convenience. You MUST register here to be approved for MyAthens, so please make sure you follow these instructions.

Since we are nearing the end of the fiscal year, please send any suggestions for new electronic content and/or journal subscriptions to the library for consideration. This is the best time of the year to bring your ideas and needs to our attention.

We have some new books ready to check out on the “New Book” cart at the front of the library. Stop by and look them over at your convenience.

Thank you for using the ISR Library!