

30 MARCH 2023 | ATLANTA COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



First and foremost...

Thank you for making the Atlanta Commissioned Officers Association great! We couldn't do the things that we do without your interest, service, and enthusiasm.

The Signal is here to raise up the voices of our members and the community. We want to hear from you! If you have a specific topic that you would like to research, a passion that you would like to highlight, an event you would like to share, etc., please reach out to ACOACommunications@gmail.com.

Inspiration Corner

**“When we give cheerfully
and accept gratefully,
everyone is blessed.”**
- Maya Angelou



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE ([HTTPS://ATLANTACOA.COM](https://atlantacoa.com)) FOR MORE INFORMATION

In Officio Salutis

President's Corner

It is with the utmost gratitude and enthusiasm that I write this message to you, ACOA members. I am beyond excited that we are now in a place where we can resume activities as “usual.” I know a lot has changed in the world of public health since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and I know many of you are exhausted from years of back-to-back deployments. Many of you have been personally affected by COVID-19 and you have my sincerest condolences for the negative impacts COVID-19 has had on your lives and your families. I want to thank you for the sacrifices you and your loved ones have made in the name of public health over the past few years. Thank you for serving our nation and thank you for your sacrifices. You are all public health heroes, and I am so grateful to serve alongside each and every one of you.

I know that it may have seemed like ACOA was somewhat dormant over the past few years compared to previous years, but safety was always the foremost consideration in deciding whether and how to host events. Since COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, your ACOA Executive Committee is eagerly looking forward to planning a variety of community service, social, and career development activities for you. Our goal for this year is to provide ACOA members with a wide array of interesting and enriching activities both in-person and virtually. We have several exciting events on the horizon, including the beloved ACOA Anchor and Caduceus Dinner, which will be held on Saturday, April 29th at the Druid Hills Golf Club. We hope to see you there!

I hope you will all join me in rebuilding ACOA into the amazing organization it was before the pandemic. We are actively seeking volunteers to help plan community service activities, assist with the Anchor and Caduceus Dinner, and serve on the Communications Committee. I encourage you to contact any of the subcommittees that sound interesting to you to find out how you can get involved.



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE ([HTTPS://ATLANTACOA.COM](https://atlantacoa.com)) FOR MORE INFORMATION

President's Corner

Please visit the ACOA website (<https://atlantacoa.com/>) for contact information for our various committees as well as the latest information about upcoming events.

- If you are not receiving emails through the ACOA listserv, please send an e-mail to ACOA Secretary LCDR Kristin LaBar at atlantacoa@gmail.com and ask that she add you to our listserv.
- Please also connect with us on Facebook at [Atlanta Commissioned Officers Association](#).
- If you have suggestions for how ACOA can better serve you and other Atlanta-area officers, I want to hear from you! Please feel free to contact me any time at atlantacoa@gmail.com.

This is going to be a great year for ACOA and I can't wait to see you all in person again!

Sincerely,



ACOA Executive Committee

2022-2023

President

CDR Rachael Cook
AtlantaCOA@gmail.com

Past-President

LCDR Jessica Tomov
AtlantaCOA@gmail.com

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Communications

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CDR Rachael Cook (Assistant Lead)
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Communications Committee

The Signal is back! After a three-year hiatus, the ACOA Communications Committee, led by LT Michtta Jean-Louis and assisted by CDR Rachael Cook and LT Charles Edge, is revitalizing and relaunching ACOA's signature publication. The Communications Committee is committed to providing articles of interest to officers, highlighting ACOA activities and membership spotlights, and we want to hear from you! Send in articles about ACOA activities, photos, and story ideas to ACOACommunications@gmail.com. All articles must be authored by ACOA members, and any officers highlighted by name must also be current ACOA members. If you're not already a member of ACOA, this is a great opportunity to sign-up now!

The Communications Committee and its team of editors and writers also submits select articles from *The Signal* to the monthly national COA publication, *The Frontline*. ACOA members interested in writing an article for *The Frontline* should reach out to ACOACommunications@gmail.com.

In addition to publishing *The Signal* on a quarterly basis and submitting articles to *The Frontline*, the Communications Committee also maintains the ACOA website throughout the year. Be sure to visit the site to learn more about upcoming events, opportunities to volunteer and participate in ACOA activities, and purchase USPHS merchandise from the ACOA Pride Store or donate lightly used uniform components to the ACOA uniform store.

Uniform Store Committee

Did you know ACOA has a Uniform Store? Did you know the ACOA Uniform Store offers used uniforms at 50% or more off of Navy NEX prices? If you're in need of new or gently worn uniform components, visit one of our pop-up events to get the uniform items you need at discounted prices. ACOA hosts quarterly pop-ups for officers to shop our inventory.

Retired? Promoted? If you have uniform and/or rank devices that you no longer wear or need, the ACOA Uniform Store accepts donations! Donations must be within regulation and in serviceable condition. You can also exchange your donation for the same item(s) in other sizes/ranks in the inventory.

You may contact the Women's Uniform Store by emailing ACOAWomensUniforms@gmail.com and the Men's Uniform Store by emailing ACOAMensUniforms@gmail.com.

Events Planning Committee

The Events Planning Committee manages official ACOA in-person events from planning to implementation. This committee is co-chaired by 1-2 Members-at-Large and 1 or more officers from the general membership.

The Events Planning Committee is responsible for the following logistics:

- Timeline
- Location
- Managing budget
- Catering of the event
- Speakers (if applicable)
- Invitations/Announcements for event
- Volunteers
- IT Service Requests
- Rehearsal

If you would like to get involved, contact CDR Tegan Boehmer and LT Alexis Roberts at ACOAEventsPlanning@gmail.com.

Professional Development Committee

The Professional Development (PD) Committee provides guidance to officers on proper uniform wear, personal grooming standards, career development, officer evaluation, promotion, professional training and education, leadership development and mentoring, understanding USPHS policies, and other relevant topics.

Thus far, the PD committee has planned the following events for 2023:

- Officer Portrait Sessions
- Clinical Practice Hours Lunch & Learn
- Lunch & Learn with the Producer of the USPHS Documentary
- Proper Uniform Wear Lunch & Learn

The PD committee hopes to engage as many Atlanta-area officers as possible with these and other professional development events.

The PD Committee is seeking 1-2 ACOA members to join the Committee. Please reach out to acoaprofessionaldevelopment@gmail.com if you are interested in joining.

Membership Committee

The goal of the Membership Committee is to increase and maintain active membership for Atlanta PHS Officers in ACOA. This can be achieved through highly visible events, membership recruitment drives, reinstatement of inactive members, and member recruitment through word of mouth. In addition to COA dues, local annual dues are required to maintain an active membership with ACOA. From the list of active members that is maintained by the committee, members will be contacted with reminders to renew their membership commitment, at least two months before it expires. This will give officers a chance for renewal before their membership lapses. The committee will follow up with friendly, bi-weekly reminders if the dues are not received so that officers don't inadvertently forget to maintain their membership.

The Membership Committee is also responsible for planning various events throughout the year to educate, engage and involve officers. We are responsible for maintaining a log of participants for the events that the ACOA conducts. In addition, we are responsible for sending out the annual thank you letters to ACOA committee members after verifying via the event logs that document the members' involvement.

Community Service Committee

Did you know that helping others is one way to increase the “happy” hormones in your body(1)? Being active with your local COA chapter and helping your community in the process is a great way to release these hormones. Not only will you have the opportunity to make a difference within your community but you also have the opportunity to do something fun and exciting!

Are you looking to get involved in your local community? Would you like fellowship with other PHS officers? Well, look no further! ACOA’s Community Service Committee provides regularly scheduled community service activities.

Past events include:

- Volunteering with Trees Atlanta
- Winter social at the USO lounge in Hartsfield Jackson
- Cooking and serving meals at St. Francis Table

For more information, contact CAPT Jennifer Verani and LCDR Naeemah Logan at ACOACommunityService@gmail.com.

1. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/feel-good-hormones-how-they-affect-your-mind-mood-and-body>

Anchor & Caduceus Dinner

A Night with the Stars

Please join us for the 2023 ACOA Anchor and Caduceus Dinner. Friends and family are also welcomed to attend. Please use the 2023 A&C Dinner RSVP form to purchase your ticket(s).

Keynote Speaker: RADM (ret) Anne Schuchat, former CDC Principal Deputy Director, will provide the keynote address at this year's event.

What to expect: Esprit de corps, fun, and fellowship! In addition to the keynote address, there will also be a cocktail hour, silent auction, trivia, music, dancing, and plenty of opportunities to mingle and network with Atlanta's finest officers!

Attire: Don't be deterred by the "dress" uniform. Your service dress blue uniform can easily be converted to the dinner dress blue uniform by removing the name tag and swapping out ribbons for mini medals. See next page for details.



*Early Bird Deadline
is March 31st*

Anchor & Caduceus Dinner

Ticket Prices: Early bird pricing is available through March 31, 2023, so purchase your tickets soon! Your ticket includes a plated, served meal as well as wine and champagne for official toasts during dinner. Additional beverages will be available for purchase during cocktail hour and throughout the evening.

When you RSVP, please pick one of these three dinner options for each attendee:

- Braised beef short rib
- Grilled salmon
- Pesto pasta (vegetarian)

Anchor and Caduceus Challenge Coins: Commemorative challenge coins will be available for purchase at the dinner for \$10 each, with 100% of profits being donated to the Commissioned Officers Foundation.

Payment Options: Zelle is the preferred payment option. Officers can also choose to mail a check or use PayPal (which incurs a \$2 fee per ticket). The 2023 A&C Dinner RSVP form contains additional payment information.

Questions: Please contact ACOAEventsPlanning@gmail.com with any questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you at the A&C dinner!

2023 Anchor & Caduceus Dinner ticket prices*			
	ACOA member Early bird price (thru Mar 31)	ACOA member Regular price (Apr 1-15)	Non-member price
O1 thru O3	\$55	\$65	\$75
O4 and O5	\$65	\$75	\$85
O6 and above	\$75	\$85	\$95

*Ticket prices include 8.9% Georgia sales tax

Uniform Corner

Converting Service Dress Blue to Dinner Dress Blue – Female Officers



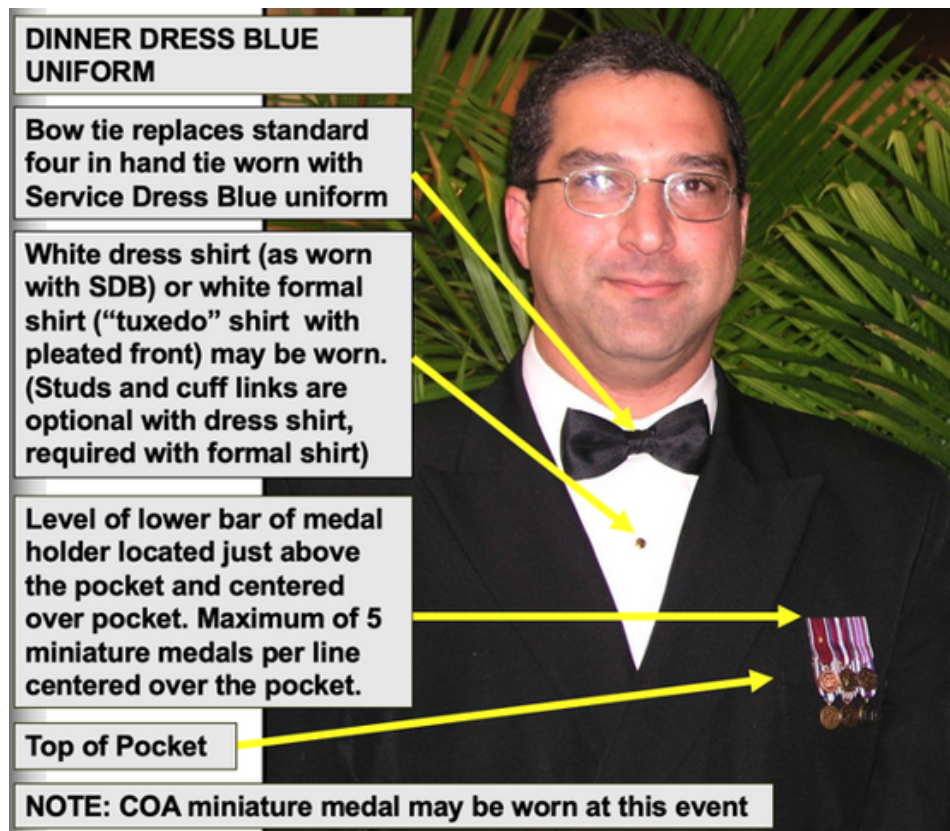
1. Use same tie for both uniforms
 2. Miniature medals replace standard ribbons
 3. Nametag not worn with Dinner Dress Blue
- That's it, you're done!

Converting Service Dress Blue to Dinner Dress Blue – Male Officers



1. Bow tie replaces standard tie. Can be purchased from any source. It should be plain in style with square ends and between 2 inches and 2-3/4 inches in vertical width.
 2. Miniature medals replace standard ribbons
 3. Nametag is not worn with Dinner Dress Blue
- That's it, you're done!

Uniform Corner



That's it, you are now ready to mingle, dance, and bid at the silent auction. Still need a little guidance? Information on mini-medals and detailed instructions can be found on the ACOA website.

Upcoming Events

Lunch & Learn with Chris Schueler, Producer of the USPHS Documentary

ACOA's Professional Development Committee will host an in-person and virtual event to hear from Chris Schueler, CEO of Christopher Productions (CP). CP has created over 100 television programs in the past 25 years that have garnered 26 Emmy® Awards and have been broadcast throughout the country and around the world. Chris will discuss the USPHS documentary project with officers. A complimentary box lunch will be provided to officers who RSVP and attend in person.



Invisible Corps

In Officio Salutis
In Service of Health

Points of Contact for the Event are CDR Rachael Cook (nevicook@gmail.com) and LT Cashmere Miller (cashmere.miller@protonmail.com). Please sign yourself up here (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080C4CAAA72FA31-lunch1>) if you plan to participate.

Virtual attendees: Zoom Meeting link <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88514295679>

Date: Tuesday April 11, 2023
Time : 12PM -12:45PM ET
Location: CDC- Roybal Campus
 Building 19, Room 254
 1600 Clifton Road
 Atlanta, GA 30329

Upcoming Events



ACOA is Proud to Present:

Volunteer with Trees Atlanta

ACOA is looking for up to 10 volunteers to assist with a forest restoration activity in collaboration with Trees Atlanta.

Date: Saturday, May 6, 2023
Time: 9am – 12pm
Location: Frazer Center
1815 S Ponce de Leon Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30307
Parking: Park in the main lot at the top of the hill and meet at the trailhead next to the parking lot

If you would like to participate or have any questions about the event, please email CDR Sam Graitcer (igc6@cdc.gov), LCDR Emily Ussery (vzv4@cdc.gov), and LCDR Michelle Hughes (nqw7@cdc.gov) by Monday, April 24th.

Trees Atlanta is a nationally recognized citizen group that protects and improves Atlanta's urban forest by planting, conserving, and educating. Founded in 1985, Trees Atlanta has planted and distributed nearly 150,000 trees, recruited thousands of volunteers, and educated an average of 2,000 children and adults annually about the importance of urban trees and how to plant and properly care for them. You can find out more information regarding the organization at <http://treesatlanta.org/>.

On May 6th, we will be helping with forest restoration in Frazer Forest. Activities include hand-pulling and cutting invasive plants such as English ivy, Chinese privet, and kudzu in a densely wooded area off trail. Physical activity such as bending, pulling, lifting, and kneeling is

Upcoming Events

required. Forest restoration can be physically strenuous - be ready to break a sweat and get dirty and learn a lot while doing it! This project is for volunteers ages 12 and up. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Volunteers who are 16+ are allowed to attend without a parent/legal guardian present if they bring a signed waiver with them to the project.

What to wear and bring with you:

Gloves: Bring your own work gloves.

Recommended clothing: Long pants and long sleeves are recommended as you will be in close contact with plants that could scratch your skin. All volunteers need closed-toed shoes or boots, and clothes that can get dirty.

Tools: Trees Atlanta provides necessary tools, but if you'd like to bring your own, any of the following tools would be helpful: hand pruners, hand saw.

Drinking water: We strongly recommend that you bring drinking water in reusable containers. No one-time-use plastic bottles, please.

Allergy medication: If you've experienced life-threatening allergic reactions to insects, please come prepared with your own emergency medicine, such as an auto-injector or oral medication. Please notify the coordinator of your need for medication in the case of an allergic attack.

You may also want: Sunscreen and bug spray as needed, snacks as needed (Trees Atlanta will not provide any of these items).

Upcoming Events



ACOA is Proud to Present:

Surgeon General's 5k and APFT

ACOA will host a satellite 5k run and APFT for Atlanta-area officers, friends, and family. Officers will have the option to run the 1.5 mile run for the APFT or the full 5K. Guests are welcome to join!



Points of Contact for the Event are LT Alexis Roberts (asmroberts@gmail.com) and LT Charles Edge (edgecharles13@gmail.com); please contact them if you have any questions. Please sign yourself and your guests up using the [reservation form](#) if you plan to participate. Water and light snacks will be provided.

Date: Saturday May 13, 2023
Time: 9:45 am-12:00 pm ET (Recommended arrival time is no later than 9:45 am for check-in, race starts promptly at 10:00 am)
Location: Westside Reservoir Park (Entrance 2)
1660 Johnson Rd. NW*
Atlanta, GA 30318

Upcoming Events

***Note: Address will not take you to the exact spot so look for the sign for entrance 2 and for the landmark in the below photo**

Meet here at 9:45 am:



Call for Articles

The Signal and FRONTLINE Publication Guidelines for COA Members

CRITERIA:

Frontline is a publication for and about COA members and COF donors. It is National COA policy that all officers mentioned in articles, authors of articles and “photo courtesy of “ individuals must be current COA members or COF donors; it is imperative that this be confirmed prior to submitting an article to COA; requests for exceptions to this policy should be addressed to COA/F’s Executive Director.

FORMAT:

- Submit as an email attachment
- Word format using Calibri, font size 10 (no exceptions)
- Title of article: Century Gothic, font size 14, italic and bold
- Body of article: Calibri, 12 point font
- Review articles for spelling, grammar, sentence flow and variety, truth in numbers, and etc.
- Limit articles to 1,000 words or less
- Include your rank, name, and credentials (if you have them)
- Email or preferred contact information
- Clearance approval by OP/DIVI (if applicable)

Each submitter will receive an email confirming receipt of the article; this is not an acceptance of your article.

PHOTOS:

Submission of photos is encouraged; action photos are preferred. All photos accompanying submissions must be in jpeg file format and attached to the same email submission; provide a suggested caption, if a caption is desired. Caption sizes should be limited and are subject to editing by COA.

Send all article submissions to ACOACommunications@gmail.com