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News Release

USU AWARDS 245 MEDICAL, GRADUATE, NURSING DEGREES IN 2004

BETHESDA, Md. – With this year's 25th graduation of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, its School of Medicine and Graduate School of Nursing awarded 245 medical, graduate and nursing degrees.

The F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine awarded 164 doctor of medicine and 56 biomedical sciences graduate degrees, while the Graduate School of Nursing awarded 25 master of science in nursing degrees.

The 164 medical graduates from the School of Medicine include 53 Air Force, 64 Army, 45 Navy and two Public Health Service officers. Upon graduation, Army and Air Force students were promoted to captain, while the Navy students were promoted to lieutenant, and all were commissioned as medical corps officers. Public Health Service students were promoted to lieutenant upon graduation and were commissioned as U.S. Public Health Service medical officers.

The year-round, four-year school of medicine's curriculum is nearly 700 hours – or about 20 weeks – longer than those found at other U.S. medical schools. The extra hours focus on epidemiology, health promotion, disease prevention, tropical medicine, leadership and field exercises, medical effects of weapons of mass destruction, and other subjects that relate to the unique requirements of career-oriented military physicians.

The 56 students in the School of Medicine Graduate Program in biomedical sciences and public health include 13 Air Force, 14 Army, 10 Navy and four U.S. Public Health Service officers, as well as 15 civilians. Degrees conferred include doctor of philosophy, doctor of public health, master of science, master of military medical history, master of science in public health, master of public health, and master of tropical medicine and hygiene.

This year, seven officers -- 6 Army and one Navy -- were enrolled in the GSN's nurse practitioners program and received their master's degree at graduation. In the GSN's nurse anesthesia program, 18 officers -- 12 Air Force, one Army, four Navy and one U.S. Public Health Service -- were recognized at graduation, but will complete their master's degree requirements this fall.

Since the School of Medicine's first commencement in 1980, USU has now graduated 3,585 medical officers to join the ranks of the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy and Public Health Service medical departments. Today, its School of Medicine graduates account for roughly 22 percent of the active duty physicians in the Military Health System.

Additionally, the School of Medicine has conferred 832 basic science graduate degrees, to include 78 master of science, 5 master of science in public health, 455 master of public health, 28 master of tropical medicine and hygiene, 4 master of military medical history, 15 doctor of public health and 247 doctor of philosophy.

Since the 1993 addition of the USU Graduate School of Nursing, 232 master of science in nursing degrees have now been awarded.

USU's 25th Commencement ceremony was held May 15 at the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

Retired U.S. Army Gen. Barry R. McCaffrey was the Commencement 2004 guest speaker. General McCaffrey was also one of three honorary degree recipients, receiving the degree of Doctor of Military Medicine, *Honoris Causa*. The Honorable C.W. Bill Young, U.S. Representative from Florida, and the Honorable John P. Murtha, Jr., U.S. Representative from Pennsylvania, both received the degree of Doctor of Medical Jurisprudence, *Honoris Causa*, but were not present at the ceremony.

Cinda J. Helke, Ph.D., associate dean of USU's graduate education, received the Carol J. Johns Medal. Doctor Johns, a long-time supporter of USU, achieved the highest honors in academic medicine as a nationally recognized clinician, academician and teacher. The university established an annual award in her name to honor the faculty member whose accomplishments emulate Doctor Johns' spirit in: furthering the welfare and excellence of the USU faculty; promoting outstanding educational programs for the students; and advancing the reputation of the university locally, nationally, and internationally.

USU was established by Congress under the Department of Defense in 1972 and has the nation's only fully accredited federal school of medicine and graduate school of nursing. With its motto "Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way," the university has a worldwide reputation as a center of excellence for military medical education and research.