

# The Society of U.S. Naval Flight Surgeons Awards

## Sonny Carter Memorial Award

CDR P. Glenn Merchant, MC, USN

The Sonny Carter Memorial Award was instituted in 1993 in memory of Captain Manley Lanier "Sonny" Carter, Jr., MC, USN. The award recognizes the Medical Corps or Medical Service Corps Officer who has made the most significant contribution towards improving the health, safety, and welfare of operational forces by promoting communication and teamwork among the aeromedical communities.

Before his death in 1992, Sonny Carter was somewhat of a legend in Aerospace Medicine. As a Naval Officer, Naval Aviator, Flight Surgeon, and member of the Astronaut Corps,



he was respected for his technical abilities, energy, and dedication to his profession, and probably most of all, for his ability to inspire others. The Sonny Carter Award recipient is judged not only on accomplishments in the last year but also on a career

history of aeromedical community involvement. Criteria for selection include: resourcefulness and dedication in promoting and accomplishing operational medical support; demonstrated leadership in forming and promoting teamwork among the various aeromedical specialties; demonstrated professionalism, integrity, unselfishness and respect for all aeromedical communities; demonstrated communication skills, and embodiment of the spirit of cooperation.

The recipient of this year's Sonny Carter Memorial Award is CDR P. Glenn Merchant, MC, USN, who is recognized for exceptional contributions in the area of teamwork, cohesiveness and promoting a sense of common purpose in the aerospace and operational medicine community. A former designated aviator who flew the AV-8A Harrier, he completed medical school, internship and returned to the aviation community serving as flight surgeon for an AV-8B training squadron at MCAS Cherry Point, and with the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing embarked aboard *USS Nassau* (LHA-4) during Desert Storm. He completed the Aerospace Medicine Residency and served as the Senior Medical Officer aboard the *USS John C. Stennis* (CVN-74). He is now assigned to the Department of Preventive Medicine of the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD. In that capacity he has emphasized Navy Aviation Medicine to medical students and has traveled around the country recruiting future Navy flight surgeons. He also teaches aviation mishap investigation at NOMI, influencing student flight surgeons, student aerospace physiologists, and student aviation experimental psychologists. His roles with ASNU and the AMA have garnered a positive image for Navy Aerospace Medicine. CDR Merchant's personal initiative and selfless devotion to duty are in keeping with the Sonny Carter spirit and the highest standards of the Society of United States Naval Flight Surgeons.

## Robert E. Mitchell Lifetime Achievement Award

RADM Daniel B. Lestage, MC, USN (Ret.)

The Robert E. Mitchell Award was initiated in 1996 in honor of Captain Robert E. Mitchell, Medical Corps, United States Navy for his 43 years of exemplary Naval service and numerous contributions to Naval aerospace medicine.



CAPT Mitchell is best known for his contributions to two long-term aeromedical research projects: the "Thousand Aviators Study" and the "Repatriated Prisoner of Wars Study." Dr. Mitchell continues to provide countless

hours of service analyzing POW studies data, and, in the past year, was honored by the establishment of the Robert E. Mitchell Center for Prisoner of War Studies.

The Robert E. Mitchell Lifetime Achievement Award is designated to recognize emeritus Naval flight surgeons for their career contributions to promoting and advancing the knowledge and science of aerospace and operational medicine.

The recipient of this year's Mitchell Award is RADM Daniel B. Lestage, USN (Ret.), for his multitude of contributions to the Navy aerospace medicine community including his initial flight surgeon deployment to Southeast Asia with CVW-16 aboard *USS Oriskany* (CVA-34). After completing the Master of Public Health program at Tulane University and the aerospace medicine residency, he served as senior medical officer onboard *USS John F. Kennedy* (CV-67). Subsequently, RADM Lestage served with VIP-30, Naval Hospital Jacksonville, FL, and Director of the Aerospace Medicine Division at BUMED. He commanded Naval Hospital, Millington, TN; the Naval Medical Command, European Region; and the Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, VA, and also served as Inspector General for BUMED. He is a Fellow of the American College of Preventive Medicine, the American Academy of Family Practice, and the Aerospace Medical Association. In addition, he served as president of AsMA from 1988-89 and is currently the chair of the Fellows Group. His military awards include five Legions of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Air Medals, and the Navy Commendation Medal. He is remembered for his leadership and representation of Navy aerospace medicine within the larger preventive medicine community through his services with the American College of Preventive Medicine and the Aerospace Medical Association. RADM Lestage sets a model example of service and leadership for others to emulate, and his unflinching devotion and dedication are in keeping with the highest standards of the Society of United States Naval Flight Surgeons.

## Bruce Jackson Memorial Reserve Flight Surgeon Award

RADM James R. Fowler, MC, USNR (Ret.)

CAPT Bruce Jackson graduated from Yale University School of Medicine in 1966, and was selected as a Fulbright Scholar and studied for a year at Cambridge University in England. He returned to the United States and completed his internship at Los Angeles County Hospital. He was commissioned in the U.S. Navy and designated a Naval Flight Surgeon in 1968. He



served his initial flight surgery tour with a P2V Neptune Squadron at Cam Rahn Bay, South Vietnam and later in Okinawa. Following completion of his active duty, he transferred to the Active Reserve as a flight surgeon. He completed residency training in Family Practice at the University of California, Irvine, in 1974. During his third year of training he completed the British Royal Navy course in aviation medicine at Farnborough, England. He returned to active duty as a flight surgeon with the U.S. Coast Guard until 1979 when he transferred to the Ready Reserve. He practiced aviation medicine and family medicine for many years while serving in the Naval Reserves at NAS Alameda. While serving as Wing Surgeon, 41st Marine Aircraft Wing, CAPT Jackson was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He subsequently died in June 1990.

This award will be given annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to the practice of aerospace medicine as a Reservist and service to those sailors and marines who depend on their flight surgeon for their health and safety in peacetime and war.

The recipient of the first annual Bruce Jackson Memorial Award is RADM James R. Fowler, USNR (Ret.) for outstanding contributions to Naval aerospace medicine during a career that spanned 32 years of Active Duty and Ready Reserve service. He completed flight surgeon training in 1965 and was deployed to Southeast Asia with HMM-163. Upon returning to the United States, he served as Flight Surgeon for VMT-103 and deployed aboard *USS Saratoga*. Leaving active duty, he continued to serve as a Ready Reservist while completing a residency in General Surgery and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, with a Fellowship in Hand Surgery. After entering private practice in Salt Lake City, he served with Marine Reserve Aircraft Group 42 at NAS Alameda. He was selected as Director of Health Services, Readiness Command 20, San Francisco, CA, the senior reserve medical billet in the southwestern U.S. Following a successful tour at REDCOM 20, he became Commanding Officer of Reserve Fleet Hospital 9. He was then selected for duty as Deputy Surgeon General for Reserve Affairs (BUMED Code 07). During this time he also

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served as the medical advisor to Commander Naval Reserve Force, New Orleans, LA. He has been awarded six strike/flight Air Medals, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two Navy Commendation Medals. He has been a constant advocate for Navy aerospace medicine and, in particular, for Naval Reserve flight surgeons. RADM Fowler's unfailing devotion and dedication to Navy aerospace medicine reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest standards of the Society of United States Naval Flight Surgeons.

## Richard E. Luehrs Memorial Award

LT Sean J Murphy, MC, USNR

The Luehrs Award is the longest running award sponsored by the Society. It was initiated in 1975 in honor of CAPT Richard E. Luehrs, MC, USN.



Dr. Luehrs is somewhat of a legend in the naval aeromedical community. His career spanned 32 years of exemplary service ending in his untimely death in 1974. Some highlights of his career include: service on

10 separate aircraft carriers; first Senior Medical Officer on the first nuclear powered carrier, *USS Enterprise* (CVAN-65); service on the *Bon Homme Richard* where he was wounded by an exploding 20-mm cannon shell; service as Flight Surgeon for the Blue Angels Demonstration Team; service with the astronaut recovery team for the Mercury Project; service with the First Marine Aircraft Wing in Vietnam; a tour as Fleet Marine Force Pacific Surgeon. As a Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association, he was awarded the Harry G. Mosley Award in 1965 for his contributions to flight safety. CAPT Luehrs was serving as Senior Medical Officer at Andrews AFB when he died at Portsmouth Naval Hospital in May 1974.

The Luehrs Award is given annually to recognize outstanding performance in operational aviation medicine practice by a first or second tour Naval flight surgeon of the rank of lieutenant or lieutenant commander. Selection is based on leadership qualities, dedication, initiative, resourcefulness and industry in carrying out duties with the operational forces.

This year's recipient of the Luehrs Memorial Award is LT Sean J Murphy, MC, USNR, COMNAVAIRLANT, for outstanding performance while serving as an operational flight surgeon at Fleet Composite Squadron Eight, Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. His remarkable accomplishments have demonstrated commitment to excellence for the aviation community in a myriad of ways throughout Puerto Rico, Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Naval Hospital Roosevelt Roads, and Fleet Composite Squadron Eight. A proven leader, he has distinguished himself as a naval officer and flight surgeon. He has been the sole flight surgeon for over 350

flight status personnel, plus providing support for visiting VIP, Air Force, Marine Corps, Army and international squadrons. He has personally conducted 20 life or limb saving MEDEVAC/SAR missions during the last year and has also rewritten a comprehensive and innovative instruction governing the MEDEVAC process at Naval Station, Roosevelt Roads. He also modernized the squadron medical spaces with new equipment, computers and direct access to the Naval Hospital via the LAN. He implemented healthcare to the deckplate by even making house calls and providing school, sports, driving, and marriage physicals for family members and elevating squadron morale. LT Murphy was an invaluable asset before, during and after the massive destruction caused by Hurricane Georges. His solid work ethic contributed enormously to the Caribbean-wide post hurricane recovery effort. These many accomplishments represented LT Murphy as a well-rounded and dedicated physician. His selfless and unrelenting devotion to duty reflect great credit upon himself and were in keeping with the Richard E. Luehrs spirit and the highest traditions of the Society of United States Naval Flight Surgeons.

## Ashton Graybiel Award

Maj. Carl M. Walker, MC, CAF

The Ashton Graybiel Award was initiated in 1991 in honor of CAPT Ashton Graybiel, MC, USN. Dr. Graybiel was already recognized as an expert in cardiovascular medicine when commissioned a Lieutenant Commander in 1940. In 1944, he was designated a Naval Flight Surgeon. Dr. Graybiel served as Director of Naval Research for the

Naval School of Aviation Medicine and Research during the formative years of aviation medicine. His career spanned 40 years during which he made many pioneering contributions forming the foundation of aerospace medicine research. His work included development of electrocardiographic techniques, experimentation with flight disorientation, studies on the physiological effects of altitude on humans, and work with the "Thousand Aviators Study." All of these significantly advanced current aeromedical knowledge relevant to Naval aviation and the space program. He is author of countless publications and a recipient of many national and international awards, and is recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities on aerospace medicine.

This award is given annually to recognize outstanding contributions to the medical literature in support of some operational issue in Aerospace Medicine that has made a significant contribution with promise of long-term impact to the health and safety of aviation. Eligible recipients of this award should have conducted or been involved in an original research project and their papers published in the last year. By convention, only those papers published in *Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine* are considered, unless the awards committee is made aware of papers published elsewhere. This year's recipient published a paper that the awards committee felt was significant and crucial in changing the way NOMI Code 42 does business.

The recipient of this year's Ashton Graybiel Award is Maj. Carl M. Walker, MC, CAF, for his article "Allergic Rhinitis History as a Predictor of Other Future Disqualifying Otorhinolaryngological Defects" (*Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine* 1998; 69: 952-6).

## Army Awards

The U.S. Army Aviation Medical Association held its annual business meeting on Monday, May 3, 1999, in Detroit, MI. LTC John Crowley called the meeting to order and recognized the distinguished guests present, including MG Spurgeon Neel, USA(Ret). At the meeting, COL James McGhee, President of the Society of U.S. Army Flight Surgeons, announced the 1999 winners of the annual Flight Surgeon of the Year Awards. Notable among the winners was CPT Daniel S. Mosely, the Spurgeon Neel Flight Surgeon of the Year, and MAJ Otto F. W. Boneta, the Army Aerospace Medicine Specialist of the Year.

### Spurgeon Neel Flight Surgeon of the Year

CPT Daniel S. Mosely

CPT Daniel S. Mosely was recognized for superb, worldwide, operational support for the 75th Ranger Regiment and selected special mission units as Flight Surgeon for the 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne)-SOAR(A). He is the only physician in the Army's Special Operations Aviation alert force. CPT Mosely provides care for over 500 soldiers, 350 of which are on flight status and about 100 on airborne status. In addition to his medical duties, CPT Mosely

developed and implemented a Flight Medic Aircrew Training Program for the 160th SOAR(A), authored a Special Operations Flight Medic Sickcall Guide, a nutrition guide, and a weight lifting handbook—all are extensively used throughout the 160th SOAR(A).

CPT Mosely epitomizes the remarkable talent, energy, and technical expertise of the ideal Flight Surgeon. He has proven himself a combat multiplier in this one-of-a-kind, all-volunteer Aviation Battalion.

### Army Aerospace Medicine Specialist of the Year

MAJ Otto F. W. Boneta

MAJ Boneta has performed as Director of the U.S. Army Flight Surgeon Course in an exceptional manner. Additionally, he conducted the first-ever Latin American Flight Surgeon Symposium for 17 foreign flight surgeons. MAJ Boneta continues to be instrumental in re-vitalizing the Society of U.S. Army Flight Surgeons. As Treasurer and Acting-Secretary, he resurrected the Society Newsletter after its long hiatus, and was instrumental in creating our presence on the Internet. MAJ Boneta also co-developed the Ultimate Flight Surgeon Reference on CD-

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