



CDR Kazu Okumura, MA, REHS, CP-FS, CPH

Board Position: Environmental Health Officer (EHO)

CDR Kazu Okumura serves as the Regional Emergency Coordinator for the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Region 9, and is stationed in Honolulu, HI. He led the COVID-19 response in the seven Pacific jurisdictions including three foreign nations. His previous duty stations include the Food and Drug Administration, and the National Institutes of Health. He also served two months as a Safety Officer for the Monrovia Medical Unit Team 2 as the youngest EHO on the team.

CDR Okumura has extensive involvement with COA and its local branches. He has served on multiple committees with the District of Columbia COA and was also a Branch President in 2012. He has also been involved with SoCal and the Aloha branch during his time in San Diego and Honolulu, respectively. He served as EHO category planner at the PHS Symposium for three years where he provided extensive professional development opportunities for his fellow officers. He has been a COA Life Member since 2016.

He holds a B.S. in Environmental Health from the University of Washington and an M.A. from the U.S. Naval War College. CDR Okumura has received the USPHS Outstanding Service Medal, USPHS Commendation Medal, and was the 2016 RADM Kenneth Moritsugu Award recipient.

Position Statement

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Board Position: Environmental Health Officer (Applicant for 2024-2027)

I would be honored to serve as a board member of the Commissioned Officer Association (COA) of the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS), and I am committed to making meaningful contributions both locally and nationally to advance our mission of promoting the health and well-being of the American people. As we navigate the challenges of the contemporary healthcare landscape, our association remains at the forefront of advocacy, collaboration, and professional development.

On a national level, I am dedicated to advocating for policies that support the PHS and advance public health objectives. By leveraging our collective voice, we can influence legislative decisions that impact the delivery of healthcare services, funding for research, and the overall well-being of our nation. I will actively engage with policymakers, collaborating with other professional associations, and participating in advocacy campaigns to champion the importance of public health and the vital role of the PHS in safeguarding the nation's health.

Over the last 14 years of my career in PHS, I have served in multiple organizations that have prepared me for this role. The COA Board of Directors and COA members will benefit from my expertise in leading multiple organizations because I recognize the value of collaboration. In 2012, I served as Branch President of the District of Columbia Commissioned Officers Association, where we created multiple opportunities for officers in the DC area to network and collaborate. From 2013-2015, I served as a voting member of the Junior Officers Advisory Group. From 2019-2021, I was President of the Uniformed Services Environmental Health Association, representing all Environmental Health professionals serving in every uniformed service to the National Environmental Health Association.

Professional development is important for PHS officers, and I am committed to expanding opportunities for our members to enhance their skills, knowledge, and leadership capabilities. I will champion initiatives that provide continuous learning opportunities, mentorship programs, and networking events to foster a thriving community of public health professionals within our association. My experience of leading EHO category day for three years will benefit COA members.

Through strategic partnerships, advocacy efforts, and a commitment to professional development, I am confident that we can make lasting contributions to the improvement of public health and the well-being of our fellow citizens.

V/r,

CDR Kazu Okumura