



Lastly, I'd like to reaffirm the purpose of the EPAC and why is it so important. EPAC is charged with providing advice and consultation to the Chief Engineer, who in turn reports to the Surgeon General on matters relating to the professional activities and personnel issues affecting Civil Service and Commissioned Corps Engineers and Architects. That sounds like a lot of responsibility and you know what...*it is!* The EPAC plays a vital role in the promotion and advancement of our category. I commend all of those who have, who are and who will serve on the EPAC and take on this great responsibility. If you are not already involved with the EPAC, I challenge you to get involved. You don't have to be a voting member to contribute. If you are interested, please feel free to contact me or a current member.

I look forward to working with each of you this year as we promote and advance our category! If you would like to share any ideas, concerns or questions, please feel free to contact me (kimberly.piermatteo@fda.hhs.gov).
Machinatores Vitae!

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How to Get Your Work Published

LCDR Deborah V.L. Hirst and CDR Tanya Davis

You have just returned home from a 30-day deployment setting up a field hospital for the Ebola response in Liberia. You designed a new innovative wastewater treatment system to serve a remote Alaskan village. You completed an engineering control survey at an indium-tin oxide plant to reduce worker exposure to indium. All of these accomplishments (along with your normal daily job duties) are what the USPHS mission is about. We protect, promote, and advance the safety and health of the Nation. Why would we not want our accomplishments or our daily job duties published for other engineers or categories to read and learn about? Engineers have cool jobs and we do cool things. As members of the Public Health Engineering Practice Subcommittee, we constantly hear other engineers say that they do not know what to write about or they do not have the interesting variety of projects that engineers in other agencies may encounter. If you are an engineer, then you do have something to write about and you can get your work published in peer and non-peer reviewed journals. For the next two newsletters, we will give you some pointers to help you with writing and we will also guide you to specific journals that may be suitable in your area of expertise.

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Why Get Published?

There are many reasons to get your work published. For one, authorship of publications is part of the *Progression of Leadership Potential* benchmark (Performance Precept).¹ Sharing your published article with the public and/or peers at professional associations and conferences boosts an officer's value under the *Presentations and Outreach* benchmark (Officership Precept).¹ Publishing can also help your career through networking opportunities created by your paper. Having an article published is the primary way that you can communicate the work that you are doing to others in the same field and is a record of your accomplishments.² Your work, experience, insight, and/or research are important and can be used by the public, policy makers, industry, and your peers only if it is available and they are aware of its existence.³ Your publication adds to the body of knowledge. The exposure or attention that your article receives by publication can lead to funding resources for your work.

Publishing improves your skills and expands your knowledge base. Practicing writing in a specific, structured, focused, and precise language improves one's writing skills. Working through your material and data properly, addressing comments and edits, identifying the main points or findings and reviewing the painstakingly small details of your article are valuable experiences. The peer review process of your article often provides you with additional insight into your own work. Finally, through identifying appropriate publishers for your work, you will learn about different publications, writing styles, editorial processes, channels and rankings.

What Should I Write About?

As a USPHS engineer, you can write about past and present deployments, volunteer work, completed projects, laboratory and/or field research, and case studies. The topic areas are endless. For example, two recent publication topics included eliminating the risk of *Legionellosis*⁴ and providing a potable drinking water system to a small community.⁵

Where Do PHS Engineers Get Their Work Published?

Engineers publish their work in journals, books, newspapers, and other literary works. *The Military Engineer* and the *Machinatores Vitae* are just two examples of countless non-peer reviewed literary mediums. For USPHS engineers, the most common literary medium is *The Military Engineer*.⁶ *The Military Engineer* is published bi-monthly by the Society of American Military Engineers ([SAME](#)).⁷ This

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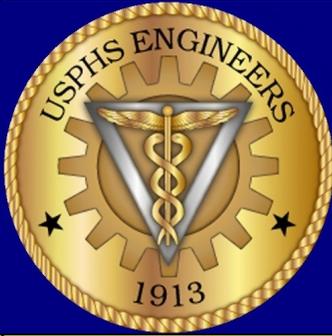
magazine contains information on various engineering disciplines, including environmental, construction, and architectural. The *Machinatores Vitae* is a newsletter published twice annually by the EPAC. The newsletter covers a variety of topics ranging from personal accomplishments to deployments. We will go into more detail about publishing in non-peer reviewed literature in the next issue.

Engineers can also publish their work in a peer-reviewed journal or book. A peer-reviewed article or chapter is one that has been examined by people with credentials in the article's field of study before it is published.⁸ The process of publishing in a peer-reviewed written work is not as expedient as publishing in a non-peer reviewed journal or book. The proposed written work may have to undergo several revisions and reviews before a journal or book will agree to publish it. This process could take a couple of months to years. We will discuss peer-reviewed journals and books in a later issue.

A Few Points to Remember

You are an engineer in the USPHS. You have a story to tell to the engineering and public health community. You *can* have your written work published in either a non-peer reviewed or peer-reviewed literary medium. In the next newsletter, we will discuss non-peer reviewed journal publications and how to get *your* work published in a non-peer reviewed article. Stay tuned!

- 1 http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/2016%20ENGINEER%20Benchmarks%20-%20Final.pdf
- 2 http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2007_04_06/caredit.a0700045
- 3 Wilson, L. [1942]. *The Academic Man: A Study in the Sociology of a Profession*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 4 Gumapas, L.A. [2016]. Eliminating *Legionellosis* risk at the National Institutes of Health. *The Military Engineer* 108(700):53-54.
- 5 <http://themilitaryengineer.com/index.php/staging/item/280-water-for-life>
- 6 <http://themilitaryengineer.com/>
- 7 <http://www.same.org/>
- 8 <http://hsl.lib.umn.edu/biomed/help/identifying-peer-review-journals>



United States Public Health Service

MACHINATORES VITAE

Engineer Community Newsletter

From the Chief Engineer Officer



Randall J.F. Gardner, P.E.
Rear Admiral, US Public Health Service
Assistant Surgeon General

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Impact, Partnerships and Results

Recently I was asked what "PHS" meant by someone I thought should have known. That intrigued me to search where the Public Health Service (PHS) is identified and to consider how commonly known we are outside the PHS Commissioned Corps. I challenge each of you to find 10 people that are not familiar with the Commissioned Corps and tell them our mission, your program mission, and as engineers, what we contribute to that mission. Also, let them know where they can find out more about our programs within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and about the Commissioned Corps.

Partnerships - I just like the way that sounds. It probably goes back to grade school where the teacher told me we would be working in pairs and the nervous feeling of not knowing who my partner would be. For me the word partner means someone who is willing to help you, and we can always use help, especially with the challenges in public health. If you are not helpful to your partner and vice versa, then it probably isn't a true partnership. Learning what others do, networking, and finding ways to compliment and help each other is a good way to form partnerships and possibly find connections that you may not be expecting. I am interested in forming more and stronger partnerships between the once organized Public Health Agencies (CDC, FDA, IHS, etc). Through partnerships, we can strengthen the leadership and enhance the capabilities of our respective programs.

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