

U.S. Public Health Service
Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC)
Marketing and Recruitment Subcommittee

**EHOPAC Adopt-a-School Program
2009/2010 School Year – Inaugural Year**

Authority

The Adopt-a-School Program is an outreach activity of the Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC) and is administered by the EHOPAC Marketing and Recruitment (M&R) Subcommittee. The Adopt-a-School Program works under the broad scope of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) to educate university faculty, staff and students about environmental health related career opportunities available within the Commissioned Corps.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Adopt-a-School Program is to support the recruitment of qualified candidates for appointment as Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) into the USPHS Commissioned Corps. The program provides a mechanism for developing relationships between EHOs representing the EHOPAC, and colleges and universities with accredited academic programs offering undergraduate and graduate degrees that qualify individuals for appointment into the EHO category. This includes a number of programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels in environmental health, industrial hygiene, occupational health and safety, health physics and related disciplines. The program voluntarily pairs EHOs with a college or university. Officers who volunteer (i.e., adopt a particular school) are expected to serve as a point-of-contact for that institution, routinely communicate with key faculty and staff, and provide periodic recruitment representations and outreach support.

Appointment

Participation in the program is voluntary and appointments will be made through the M&R Subcommittee. Preference will be given to active duty EHOs, but retired and inactive reserve corps officers are also eligible. Selected officers must have completed the requirements for the Commissioned Corps Training Ribbon (CCTR) and be basic ready qualified (active duty only). Officers will be required to submit an enrollment form indicating what school(s) they are willing to sponsor. If multiple officers are interested in the sponsoring the same program, one officer will be chosen to be the primary sponsor. Up to three secondary sponsors may also be chosen to support the program. Appointment limits are intended to enhance the effectiveness of the program. When making assignments to a particular school, priority will be given to graduates of the program and officers in close geographic proximity.

Letters of appointment will be issued by the M&R Subcommittee. The term of initial appointment for officers participating in the program shall be three (3) years. It may be possible for officers to continue working with a particular institution beyond their initial term. However, the M&R Subcommittee will structure appointments to ensure the opportunity for participation by all qualified EHOs. Any adopting officer may terminate his or her appointment at anytime by

notifying the Chair of the M&R Subcommittee. The M&R Chair may reassign participating officers or discontinue any officer's appointment.

Participant Responsibilities

Enrolled officers will act as a liaison between the EHOPAC M&R Subcommittee and the adoptive school/program. Because the needs of each academic program and the support provided by sponsoring officer(s) will vary, a list of representative activities is provided below. The development of new and innovative activities is highly encouraged.

- Establish contact with the school if no relationship currently exists. Suggested ways to establish contact:
 - Send a letter or email with introductory information then follow-up with a phone call offering a recruitment visit.
 - If local or visiting the area, set up an appointment to meet program and career services staff in person.
- Forward information to established contacts about USPHS opportunities including the Commissioned Officer Student Training Extern Program (COSTEP), job openings, application news/changes, and other useful information.
- Establish or maintain an online presence for the EHO category on the school/program's career website. Post any relevant job openings, COSTEP opportunities, and general USPHS information to increase awareness.
- Visit the school at least once a year. Try to arrange to speak with an environmental health class or give a recruiting presentation. Participation in career fairs, guest speaking events, other in-person or online (e.g., virtual recruitment) presentations are also recommended.
- Coordinate a recruiting event by other interested officers. This could include active duty, inactive reserve and retired EHOs.
- Participate in periodic conference calls with other school sponsors and the M&R Subcommittee program lead to discuss activities, ideas for improvement, and other relevant topics.
- Submit activity reports to the M&R Subcommittee at least quarterly.

Reporting Requirements

Activities will be documented on the Adopt-a-School Activity Report Form and submitted to the M&R Subcommittee at least quarterly. These reports will provide a method to compile information related to the Adopt-a-School Program.

M&R Subcommittee Responsibilities

The program shall be managed by the EHOPAC M&R Subcommittee; oversight will be provided by the EHOPAC. The M&R Subcommittee's responsibilities include:

- Approving sponsor appointments.
- Establishing and maintaining a listserv and/or website to provide information to program participants.
- Maintaining a database of primary and secondary school sponsors, their terms, and their recruitment activities.

- Monitoring the program to ensure that sponsors are performing their responsibilities as described above.
- Providing a summary report detailing program activities to the EHOPAC annually.
- Recommending awards and program associated recognition to the EHOPAC.

Awards/Acknowledgements

EHOs participating in the Adopt-a-School Program will receive a letter of appreciation for inclusion in their official personnel folder (OPF) at the end of each calendar year from the EHOPAC M&R Subcommittee. In order to receive the letter, officers are required to maintain an active relationship with their assigned school and documentation of those activities must be submitted to the M&R Subcommittee. PHS Citations will also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Program Contacts

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