



NAVY RESERVE MEDICINE

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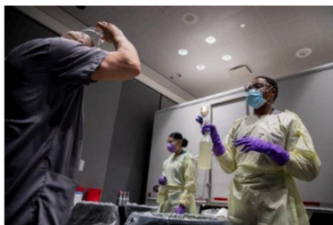
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Navy Medicine Reserve Spotlight: HM1 Rene Lumene

By André B. Sobocinski, Historian, BUMED

Sometimes formative experiences in the Navy can have a lasting impact on your life and career. Just ask HM1 Rene Lumene.

HM1 Lumene is reservist attached to the Navy Reserve Detachment Ft. Worth. As a civilian he serves as a healthcare administrator, a career that would never have happened if not for his formative experiences in the service.



HM1 Lumene at Javits Center, 2020

Growing up in Miami, Florida, Lumene had never thought of pursuing a career in the military. He had hoped to enter college on an athletic scholarship, but fate intervened when a Navy recruiter visited his high school and spoke about the great benefits the

service offered. Despite having no military connections in his family Lumene enlisted in the Navy in 2005.

"With the U.S. involved in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq it was a scary time, especially for my mother," said Lumene. "And to be quite honest, she was quite upset with me about joining, but I when I graduated from boot camp, oh my goodness, she was so proud."

Over the next year, Lumene went through Hospital Corps School in Great Lakes, Illinois and Surgical Technician School at Naval School of Health Sciences (NSHS) Portsmouth, Virginia before being assigned to Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Florida.

Although Lumene did not have a long-term plan when entering the Navy, everything changed for him after a conversation with a surgeon at Jacksonville in 2006. During a laparoscopic inguinal hernia surgery repair, the surgeon asked Lumene what he planned on doing in his career. When Lumene expressed an interest in both medicine and business, the surgeon planted the seed of healthcare administration.

"That same day I Googled healthcare administration and right then and there knew this is what I wanted to do," said Lumene. A week later Lumene enrolled in college and ended up getting his associate's degree in healthcare management followed soon after by a bachelor's and finally an MBA in healthcare administration. Along the way a healthcare administrator at Naval Hospital Jacksonville took Lumene under her wing and help him make the right connections.

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In January 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti, killing over 220,000 people. Lumene, a Haitian-American who speaks Creole, volunteered to serve as a translator for Operation Unified Response. As a child Lumene had regularly travelled to Haiti to visit family members. When he arrived there aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort seven days after the earthquake he did not recognize the country.

"Prior to the earthquake I had an image of what Haiti looked like," said Lumene. "When I got there it was like somebody dropped a bomb and everything was messed up—there were people out in the streets looking for lost family and picking up scraps."

Lumene worked 12-hour shifts aboard the ship's surgical ward where he helped to close communication gaps between patients and medical staff. To this day, one patient named "Wilson" stands out in Lumene's mind.

Wilson was a father of nine children and the only provider to his family prior to the earthquake. "A piece of concrete fell on his right foot, and half of the front was literally smashed to the point where you could literally see the bones," recalled Lumene. After the surgeons cleansed, irrigated, and debrided the foot they determined that part of it needed to be amputated. It was up to HM1 Lumene to communicate this to Wilson.

"Wilson didn't want to cut it off," related Lumene. "And so I told him, 'I understand. I don't think anybody would want to have a body part cut off. However, the grave concern here is that you may very well ultimately lose your life. I guarantee your wife and your children would rather have you alive than keep that foot because if you keep it will ultimately kill you.'"

Lumene continued to speak with Wilson and prayed with him, before he deciding to go through with the procedure. While recuperating Wilson asked to speak with Lumene. "I went down to where he was recovering, and he gave me the biggest hug ever," recalled Lumene. "He said, 'I'm so glad I went ahead and got this done.' And during that time there were several NGOs that were offering prosthetic limbs and to help."

Lumene admits that his deployment to Haiti and experiences with individuals like Wilson forever impacted his life.

"I remember coming home from that deployment, dropping my stuff down in the living room and thinking to myself, 'I know where I just came from, and I know what I saw. And here I am with a roof over my head knowing that there's people out there struggling.'"



HM1 Lumene transferred into the reserves into 2010, and embarked on his civilian career as healthcare administrator. Today, he credits his early experiences in the Navy and his mentors for his success as a civilian and as a reservist. And for those serving or thinking about careers in the reserves Lumene has one piece of advice:

"When you first come in get to know the people who are in your unit, especially the senior sailors," said Lumene. "Ask questions. There's so many people with so much valuable experiences and information. Even if you don't know what to ask, just start a conversation, and I'm sure eventually you'll be led to what you ultimately want to be."

Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) Program LCDR Shillady

The IRT Program is deep into planning for the upcoming missions. Lead planners and key members from the Navy Reserve Medicine units participating in the FY22 IRT exercises are fully engaged in weekly and bi-weekly telecons hosted by the lead services and community partners. Planning meetings resume next month for all four missions with a focus on training plans to incorporate TCCC, TNCC, CPR, KSAs and HMSB training programs. Mid- and final planning meetings (MPM and FPM) are virtual to save costs. Due to funding shortfalls, planners are coordinating use of Annual Training for members in order to meet the mission needs.

Congratulations!

Flag Officer Announcements

Congratulations to CAPT David Buzzetti and CAPT David Malone on their selection to Rear Admiral (lower half).

CAPT Buzzetti, MSC is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Naval Medical Forces Atlantic.

CAPT Malone, MC is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Naval Medical Forces Pacific.