



VETERANS DAY 2022

Honoring Veterans



Veterans Day is observed annually on November 11 for honoring military veterans of the United States Armed Forces. In honor of Veterans Day, we interviewed OHSU members that are Veterans and wanted to share a little about their experience.

Thank you to the Veterans Employee Resource Group and the Black Employee Resource Group for helping find people to interview and curating thoughtful questions for these interviews.

CHERIE ARNOLD



Cherie is a Coding Specialist at OHSU.

Length at OHSU: *15 years*

Served in the United States Navy for 8 years.

What did you learn about yourself?

I learned that I do not get seasick. Haha. That is where I learned to let things go. If it is not affecting me, I can let things go. That was one of the things that has impacted my life. I learned discipline and how to take orders. I learned a lot and my time has shaped me into who I am. I learned that I loved being at sea, we would be out weeks at a time and I loved it. I am proud that I was able to serve and that experience helped me gain the discipline and how to get along out in the world.

What were some of the pranks that you or others would pull?

We would send a new recruit down to the

engineering department and tell them to fetch us a union jack because we needed it to pull into port. They would run around the ship and everyone laughed. They would eventually come back with something mechanical and what they thought was a union jack. We laughed at them and they were sent to fetch the flag at the bridge, which was the union jack.

What was your favorite and least liked MRE?

We did not have MREs. But I do remember something called 'bug juice' it was basically like a Kool-Aid. In deck department, we would actually get packages of it from the cooks and use it to shine the brass drains on the ships, that was some strong stuff, can only imagine what it could do to our insides when it was strong enough to clean off the "green" on the brass! But we did love to drink our bug juice!

JOHN BARRY



John is a Professor of Urology and Emeritus Professor of Surgery, School of Medicine.

Length at OHSU: 54 years

Served in the United States Air Force for 3 years at Kadena Airbase, Okinawa Island, Japan.

Is there something memorable about when you first started your service?

Getting off the plane at Naha Airbase, in my dress blues, the door of the plane was opened and there was a smell of open wet sewage. I marched down the stairs, saluted a major in a tan, short-sleeved uniform, collected my gear, got in a car and went to Kadena Airbase. I changed out of my dress blues, which I don't think I wore again except for special occasions.

What were some of your most exciting experiences?

I'll give you two. In April of 1967, a C-133

transport plane went down off the coast of Okinawa. There were earlier crashes with this airplane, and none of the crews had survived. This crew, all 8 of them did. I was the physician who went out with the rescue team on a Kaman HH-43 helicopter to pick them up and deliver them to the Army hospital at Camp Kue. The second was my Mach 1 flight in the back seat of an F-105D in October of 1966. *Points at Mach 1 gloves hung in his OHSU office.* I still correspond with the pilot, JC Jones who now lives in Tennessee.

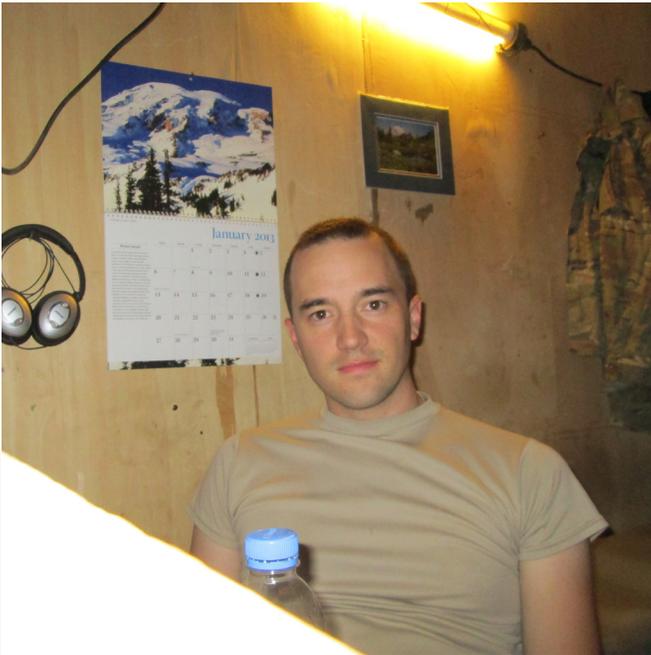
Anything you would like to add?

My Air Force time gave me an understanding of a formalized chain of command and a great respect for human life. I believe that public service is a responsibility of citizenship; some do it with military service, some do it by volunteering in organizations, some go to other countries or underprivileged parts of our own country, some make it possible for others to volunteer, and some do it through philanthropy. I think people should think about others. Disparities among healthcare in ethnic and religious groups disappeared in the military because everyone had equal access to quality healthcare. We need this in the civilian community.

What was your favorite and least liked MRE?

I never ate one. I don't think I ever ate all of something I disliked. I would take whatever was served, if it tasted good, I ate it all, if it did not, I would leave it on the plate.

MARSHALL HEALY



Marshall is a student pursuing a Masters in Healthcare and Clinical Informatics. Marshall is graduating class of 2023.

Length at OHSU: 2 years

Served in the United States Army for 22 years, joined in 1998.

Can you talk to me about your role in the military and the duties that the job included?

A lot of people do not realize the flexibility the military gives you to change jobs, explore, and grow. I joined the army as a diesel mechanic, and I fixed diesel vehicles for the first 3 years. I then went to signals intelligence, cell phones, the internet, and radios for about 7 years until I got tired of the paperwork and not seeing the outcome of my work. I started preparing for Physician Assistant (PA) school in 2008 and was matriculated in 2010, staying a PA for the rest of my career. I was an aeromedical

PA, which meant I should have served in aviation, so pilots. I ended up doing special operations instead where I made sure people were perfectly safe to throw themselves out of airplanes at exceptionally high altitudes and free fall in places where the locals did not want them, but in a safe manner. I put a lot of time and effort into battlefield trauma and when not on the battlefield, I focused a lot on sports medicine and rehabilitation, keeping people out of the surgical suite. I came from a family of electricians, loggers, and the women in my family were all bankers. I expected to do blue-collar work and I joined as a mechanic. I did not have much interest in medicine when I started. It was a self-discovery, a good job, and I knew I would always be able to do it (clinical care) and without being promoted out of what I enjoyed sealed it for me. At the end of the day, I like being able to see the outcomes of my work.

What are some life lessons you learned from your time in the military?

The maturity I gained from the military was life-changing and to hold a good job. I look at my peers and their jobs do not prepare them to provide or receive that level of mentorship. In the military that mentorship was mandatory, and it really helped me apply myself the way my family and educators said I could, but never managed to do up to that point. There are several lessons learned in the military that are forced on you. That self-development you gain, you really do not realize how beneficial it and the associated lessons are until you exit the military. One of the lessons is that no matter where you are in life, there will always be a boss, coworker, peer, or customer you do not like or who doesn't like you, and you cannot get away from that. In the military, I changed every 3 years, and it was the same problem, so learning that helped me adapt to situations and allowed me to be the water that flows around the

rocks in the stream instead of fighting the obstructions. For your own health and mental sanity makes your life easier.

Anything additional you would like to add?

Our nation does not do a good job of advertising itself, and what it does for its people. People don't realize the benefits they are getting from their taxes or representatives. People will thank us for our service, and we appreciate it, but we made this choice to do this. But if you really want to thank us, go out and vote, participate in your government, and don't let vested interests drive what happens. If you want to honor the sacrifices Veterans made on Veteran's Day, participate in your government, and make the nation better, we should all try to leave things better than we found them.

What was your favorite and least liked MRE?

My favorite thing was the jalapeno cheese you could put it on anything and made ANY MRE digestible.

My least favorite was the milkshakes. They used whey protein and dried powdered milk, no matter how much water you added they were always slimy.

MATTIE WATTS



Mattie is a medical student at OHSU hoping to pursue an emergency medicine position. Mattie is graduating class of 2025.

Length at OHSU: 1.2 years

Served in the United States Marine Corps for 5 years (2011-2016).

What does Veterans Day mean to you?

When I think about Veterans Day, I think about family. No matter what branch you are in, that becomes your second or third family. I think about celebrating my family, I am not with them anymore and we are all over the place, all over the world, but I want to celebrate them and myself, the years we served together, and our jobs.

Did you ever have to do a job you were not trained for? If so, how did you move forward?

My job is what they called Communications

and Navigation Technician on F/A-18s which is a fighter jet. We called each job in the division a “shop”. There were times in my shop when we would not have anything to do, so we would go to other shops and see if they needed help. We did that quite often and I was always put in a position of not knowing what was going on because it wasn’t my job. People think about the military and they think about leaders. I think that being a good leader also means you are a good follower. In those positions, I was just following the lead of that shop. A big thing that we say a lot in the Marine Corps is “Adapt and overcome.” So that was just a part of the job, I am an adapting to this new situation, to this new environment, to this new job, and overcoming what I am being hit with and doing what I must do to get the job done. This has helped me in so many ways after my time in the Marine Corps. In undergraduate and now in med school, some of my classmates may have a hard time dealing with change or something unfamiliar. I do not look at it that way, I am like “oh, this is another change, let’s do it!” It removes a lot of the worry and stressful components for me.

Anything you would like to add?

I try to encourage people, specifically women and even more specifically, women of color. I worked in a male dominated field. You don’t meet a lot of women who work on aircraft or who work with their hands because that is not seen as a “woman’s job”, I did that. I thrived at that and I was a supervisor, we called it a Collateral Duty Inspector. I was supervising men. Now that I transitioned into medical school, I always try to encourage my female counterparts, and especially the women of color, to take the step and follow their dreams even if that dream is in a male-dominant field. Don’t let the fact that you are a woman discourage you, you can thrive and be successful. I like using myself as an example, if I did it, you can too.

What was your favorite and least liked MRE?

I did not have a favorite MRE, but I did have a favorite component and it was the cornbread. Surprisingly, the cornbread was great. The MREs are not that great, they got the job done and fed you, but the cornbread and peanut butter were A1. Honestly, everything else kinda sucked. Haha.

TERRANCE SOUSER



Terrance is an Inpatient MRI Technologist at OHSU.

Length at OHSU: *11 months.*

Served in the United States Navy for 14 years.

Why did you pick the service branch you joined?

Both my uncle and my grandpa were in the Army and told me about their experiences, I wanted the same experiences for myself. I grew up in an Air Force town, so I wanted something different and choose the Navy.

What were some of your most memorable experiences? Who were some of your most memorable characters?

One of my most memorable times was spent in an underway humanitarian mission. I spent 3-4 months helping local nationals and Caribbean, Central, and South American countries with basic health necessities. My

time in Afghanistan, I spent a year there helping the local national army in how to properly do reality procedures for their soldiers.

Senior Chief Nyeche was one of my mentors throughout my career. He always pushed me to do more for myself.

Anything you would like to add?

The Navy allowed me to be the person that I always aspired to be. I did not grow up with mentors or anything like that. I was pretty much on my own and the Navy helped me by allowing me to finish my college education. I hold a Master's degree in Healthcare Management. There is a sense of self-respect for yourself and serving your country that only a few truly understand.

What was your favorite and least liked MRE?

My favorite MRE was the lemon pepper tuna because it came in a standard Sunkist pack. My least favorite one was the vegetarian one, no one liked that one. It was a random mix of vegetables, it was a scramble, and it was always the last one left in the box.

