

Career Summary

CAPT Leopold “Leo” LaBranche, MS, PT, OCS, CWT, CSTS

CAPT Leo LaBranche has served his country for 30 full years. Four of those years were with the United States Marine Corps (USMC) with one tour in Vietnam from 1968 to 1972. This service earned him a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. CAPT LaBranche began his career with the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps in October 1977 at the USPHS Outpatient Clinic in Washington, DC. There he was a staff therapist responsible for total outpatient physical therapy care. While there, he was cited for excellence in managing the foot care program. CAPT LaBranche transferred to the United States Coast Guard (USCG) where he, for the next 10 years, was detailed as chief of physical therapy services; specifically at the USCG's Headquarters in Washington, DC and Academy Hospital in New London, CT.

CAPT LaBranche went on to spend the rest of his Commissioned Corps career within the Indian Health Service (IHS). In August 1989 he was assigned to the IHS hospital in Zuni, NM. As a Chief Therapist, CAPT LaBranche increased services to the orthopaedic, sports, diabetic, and pediatric population. He improved monitoring protocol of all diabetic and pediatric cases by increasing data collection and Registry entries. CAPT LaBranche also enhanced wound care by educating and training other health care staff, and standardizing wound management. In 1993 until his retirement, CAPT LaBranche transferred to the Tuba City Indian Medical Center (now known as the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corp) in Tuba City, AZ. During this assignment, CAPT LaBranche served as Deputy Chief and Orthopedic Clinical Specialist; Regional and Navajo Area Spinal Cord Clinic Coordinator; Area Program Consultant for physical therapy; Liaison for orthopedic services; and Commissioned Corps liaison.

In addition to a full career CAPT LaBranche has attained various certifications and special skills, including board certifications as an orthopedic physical therapist; clinical instructor; strength and weight trainer. He has special skills in emergency and sport medicine; foot orthotic fabrication; and diabetic foot care. CAPT LaBranche even is an instrument rated General Aviation Pilot, and is conversant in French.

CAPT LaBranche has also invested time with various professional and PHS organizations. He was a past APTA House of Delegate member for Connecticut two years running; TPAC field representative for Arizona for two years; a full TPAC member for the last three years, of which has served as Chair of the Education Committee. CAPT LaBranche also greatly served his category by being instrumental in the establishment of the review process for the TPAC's Charter and process for obtaining CEU's at COA Conferences.

Community activities have also been of great importance to CAPT LaBranche. He has participated in sports medicine programs for local high schools in Virginia, Zuni, Tuba City and at the USCG Academy. He has been a member of an advisory board of Teen Health in Zuni; and instructor at Northern Virginia Community College PTA program; Emergency Medical Technician and Rescue Squad in Virginia; Search and Rescue Volunteer in New Mexico and Arizona; Preventative Search and Rescue in Grand Canyon National Park. For relaxation, CAPT LaBranche enjoys being a private pilot; rock climber; fly fisherman; bicycle race; and world traveler.

CAPT Leo LaBranche has given his country 30 strong years of service, directed toward better health of a nation on various fronts. He has served well, and has paved the way for future therapists to follow in his footsteps.