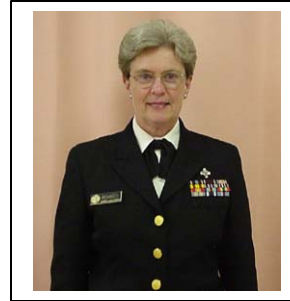


Career Summary
CAPT Charlotte B. Richards, MA, PT

CAPT Charlotte Richards' career as a physical therapist, leading member of the Therapist Category, and successful public health officer exemplify what is attainable when one has true commitment to a chosen profession.



CAPT Richards' military career began in 1967 following her graduation from the University of New Mexico (BS in Biology) and her acceptance to an active duty commission in the United States Army. She arrived at the Army Medical Field Service School, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where she completed the Medical Service Officer Basic Course, followed by the Army's Program in Physical Therapy. She graduated from the Army's postgraduate certificate program in physical therapy in 1968 thus beginning her career as a physical therapist. Following four years of active duty service with assignments at San Antonio, TX, Denver, CO, and Frankfurt, Germany (during which time she completed the Army Medical Service Officer Advanced Course and Command and General Staff College) CAPT Richards decided to experience the challenges of civilian life while still maintaining an amiable relationship with the uniformed service. She affiliated with the Army Reserves where for fourteen years she was in the Ready Reserves and the New Mexico National Guard.

CAPT Richards, as civilian PT and "Citizen soldier", accepted and met the challenges of being a therapist in several different and interesting positions in California, New Mexico, and Texas, and noted that her most rewarding time occurred in Farmington, NM. Although the civilian life and work were challenging, she still had a desire to serve her country in an active duty setting. CAPT Richards decided that she could provide better, more comprehensive service by wearing the uniform full time, thus in 1985 she entered the United States Public Health Service and resumed her uniformed, dedicated career.

Her initial tour of duty upon entry to the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) was at the Indian Health Service facility in Winslow, AZ. Deeply committed to her profession and patients she continually sought to expand her capabilities and usefulness culminating in 1987 with the completion of a field based Master of Arts Degree in Education Management and Development from New Mexico State University. Over the subsequent years CAPT Richards has served in many demanding and challenging assignments.

CAPT Richards most rewarding assignment was as The Rehabilitation Services Department Director at Northern Navajo Medical Center (NNMC), a modern, state-of-the-art Indian Health Service facility located on the Navajo Reservation in Shiprock, NM. With her many years of experience and training she was an instrument of change within rehabilitation services at

NNMC and throughout the Reservation. A strong advocate for comprehensive rehabilitation services, which includes PT, OT, Speech and Language services, and Audiology, she was pivotal to the increase of services and staffing, growing her department from two physical therapists and a therapist aide to five physical therapists, three physical therapist assistants, an occupational therapist and an audiologist. She also tapped into Tribal programs for administrative help, which not only provided her department with receptionist/clerk assistance but provided valuable training and subsequent job placement for Tribal job trainees.

CAPT Richards has spent many untiring years supporting and promoting interests of the Therapist Category. She served actively on the T-PAC since 1995, as ex-officio since her appointment as the Chief Professional Officer in 1998. She was extremely instrumental in making the Army/Baylor University entry-level master's degree program in physical therapy a quad-service training opportunity. Since then the Therapist Category has graduated in excess of ten therapists from that program. She was the initial champion of the Visiting Professor program of the PHS physical therapist to the Army Academy of Health Sciences. This resulted in an association that has opened training opportunities for PHS officers that were before available only to Army, Navy, and Air Force officers. Two such long-term training opportunities are the Army's Orthopedic Physical Therapy Residency and the Sports Medicine Residency programs.

During her impeccable career, besides an unwavering admiration of her category CAPT Richards, has earned numerous awards not the least of which was in June 2000, she was recognized by the Alumni Association of US Army Entry Level Programs for Physical Therapy for her quad service accomplishments and was awarded the 2000 Outstanding Alumni Award. Her service awards are numerous and include the PHS Commendation Medal, PHS Outstanding Service Medal, The Surgeon General's Exemplary Service Medal, PHS Field Medical Readiness Badge, and many others.

CAPT Charlotte Richards' commitment of her professional life and career to the care of patients and serving her fellow officers in the uniformed services of both the United States Public Health Service and the United States Army total 36 years of caring. CAPT Richards though retired from the Commissioned Corps as of February 01, 2004 continues to serve the Native Americans on the Navajo Reservation at Shiprock, NM.

Reflecting on her career, CAPT Richards commented: "I like firsts and have a few: first female officer in the NM National Guard (served in a sex and branch immaterial area--Race Relations and Equal Opportunity); first female Chief PT/Department Head in Navajo Area IHS; 1st female Chief Therapist Officer. I also like change--status quo just doesn't work for me. Thus my push for multidisciplinary departments in IHS, and my insistence on participation and representation by all disciplines in the PAC and as liaisons to the CPO; my quest for fitness standards and a greater participation in readiness/deployment issues; an unwavering push for Centralized command and control vs. the fragmented agency driven system we have had to endure forever; and career education of all officers (basic, advanced, and career programs of

education). I would like to have been promoted to RADM, as I think I might have been able to better effect more positive change for the Category and the Corps, but I'm thankful for my accomplishments even so."