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News Release

Director of NIH to Address USU Graduates at 29th Commencement

BETHESDA, Md. — Elias Zerhouni, M.D., the 15th director of the National Institutes of Health, will address the graduates of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) at the university's 29th Commencement Exercise, Saturday, May 17.

Dr. Zerhouni came to the United States at the age of 24 after earning his medical degree at the University of Algiers School of Medicine in 1975. He went on to complete a chief residency in diagnostic radiology at Johns Hopkins. Throughout his tenure at NIH, Dr. Zerhouni has worked to keep the institute at the forefront of federal agencies through initiatives such as the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research – an effort to transform the medical research enterprise. Dr. Zerhouni has also held several other leadership positions, such as the consultant to the White House under President Ronald Reagan and a consultant to the World Health Organization in 1988.

USU's Commencement Exercise is at the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C., at 11 a.m. The F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine will award 157 Doctor of Medicine and 71 Biomedical Sciences Graduate degrees, while the Graduate School of Nursing will award 35 Master of Science degrees in the Family Nurse Practitioner, Perioperative Clinical Nurse Specialist, and Nurse Anesthesia disciplines, as well as three Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science degrees.

Some of the university's faculty members are world renowned experts in the field of post traumatic stress disorder, deployment psychology, and traumatic brain injury. Research foci span a range of interest such as: CDR (Dr.) Jack Tsao's study of Phantom Limb Pain, where he uses mirrors to help service members with lower extremity amputations alleviate the pain; and CAPT (Dr.) Gerald V. Quinnan, Jr.'s collaborative new study with other U.S. scientists that provide compelling evidence that two genes are linchpins in defining the course of immune restoration in HIV-positive individuals undergoing virus-suppressing therapy.

Located on the grounds of Bethesda's National Naval Medical Center and across from the National Institutes of Health, USU is the nation's federal school of medicine and graduate school of nursing. The university educates health care professionals dedicated to career service in the Department of Defense and the U.S. Public Health Service. Students are active-duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service, who are being educated to deal with wartime casualties, national disasters, emerging infectious diseases, and other public health emergencies. Of the university's more than 4,000 physician alumni, the vast majority serve on active duty and are supporting operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, offering their leadership and expertise.

Media interested in attending the commencement exercise should contact the Office of External Affairs at (301) 295-1219 and visit the USU Web site for additional information www.usuhs.mil.