

Army Team Medicine,

It is with great honor that The Surgeon General and I announce the SARS Team Six hailing from U.S. Army Public Health Command-Pacific, Camp Zama, Japan; U.S. Army Public Health Activity-Japan; Naval Health Research Center-San Diego, CA and Yokosuka, Japan; U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka, Yokosuka, Japan; and the 1st Area Medical Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, as the winner of the Army Medicine Wolf Pack Award for Fiscal Year 2020.

This team of seven (7) Active Duty military and Department of the Army Civilians continue to enhance the Ready Medical Force process in order to enable critical in-country testing for the DoD community in Japan; maintaining the health of the community and directly impacting operations in USINDOPACOM.

During the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Forces Japan Commanding General, LTG Kevin Schneider, prioritized in-country laboratory testing capabilities. The primary laboratory on mainland Japan projected initial testing would require six months of lead time. The challenges medical leaders faced were: no single laboratory meeting all the requirements for clinical COVID-19 testing; some laboratories had experienced personnel but lacked proper accreditation; and other laboratories had certification and equipment but lacked personnel for sustained operations. Senior medical leadership envisioned a small team of laboratory experts who would become SARS Team Six to address the COVID-19 laboratory testing challenges.

The initial team of personnel - an Army Officer Biochemist and an Army DA Civilian Microbiologist assembled at the Naval Health Research Center Satellite Laboratory at U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka. The Army team brought critical equipment to expand molecular testing. Within three days, SARS Team Six began to receive samples. Less than a week later, SARS Team Six reported the first laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in U.S. Forces Japan aboard USS Ronald Reagan. Demand on the team grew exponentially after the first confirmed case and word of the struggles of USS Theodore Roosevelt made international news.

During the period 17 March to 10 September 2020, the SARS Team tested over 3500 individual patients for COVID-19. Through an aggressive teamwork-focused mindset, the team successfully prevented a wide-scale outbreak on both Navy vessels and populations ashore. The rapidly fielded laboratory team enabled Carrier Strike Group 5 to remain postured to deter increased aggression in the US Indo-Pacific Command by potential adversaries after USS Theodore Roosevelt's COVID-19 situation made international news.

Despite the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, SARS Team Six worked effortlessly to continue to not only complete a successful mission, but added to the future of Army Medicine and its tradition of excellence.

This year's quarterly winners: Warrior Care and Transition Staff team, MEDCOM Deputy Chief of Staff Warrior Care and Transition program, NCR, Crystal City, VA; Utilization Behavioral Health Consultant Team, Blanchfield Army Community Hospital, Fort Campbell, KY; Combat Medic Training Specialist Program, US Army Medical Center of Excellence, Fort Sam Houston, TX; and SARS Team Six, RHC-P, PHC-P, Tripler Army Medical Center, HI, Camp Zama, Japan, San Diego, CA, Yokosuka, Japan and APG, MD competed and are exceptional competitors whose teamwork and efforts achieved remarkable results. Congratulations to all of the competitors of 2020!

Please join me in congratulating the Team for their efforts and achievements illustrating professionalism, teamwork and dedication reflecting great credit on each team member and epitomizing the highest standards of the Army and Army Medicine.

v/r,  
Rich  
Richard R. Beauchemin  
Chief of Staff/  
Chief, AMEDD Civilian Corps