

## Invited Speaker Biographies

Mr. Ronald Brown  
1990-91 Gulf War Veteran  
Toxic Wounds Consultant  
Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)

Mr. Brown is an honorably discharged U.S. Army Gulf War Veteran, having served in the U.S. Army from 1989-1992 in the 82nd Airborne Division. He is an active advocate for Gulf War Veterans' issues and currently works with Vietnam Veterans of America in Silver Spring, MD as a Toxic Wounds Consultant. He also works with the U.S. Department of Defense, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) at Ft. Detrick, MD. Some of Mr. Brown's other Gulf War advocacy includes service as president of the National Gulf War Resource Center (NGWRC) that specializes in Gulf War Illness claims and working with Veterans to educate and assist them in the claims process. Mr. Brown's Gulf War Illness experience includes working with senior Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) leadership to address issues Gulf War Veterans face with each agency. He has worked directly with two VA Secretaries, Robert McDonald and Dr. David Shulkin, on adding brain cancer as a presumptive condition for Gulf War Veterans based upon VA's own research; worked to educate Gulf War Veterans on understanding the evidence and documentation needed to file for VA compensation claims related to their service, and worked directly with VA's Compensation Service helping to alleviate and prevent any mistakes occurring at the Veterans Benefits Administration regarding Gulf War Veterans claims. He has worked with two different DoD Under Secretaries of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to address chemical weapons exposure during Desert Storm, served as a consumer reviewer on DoD scientific merit peer review panels related to Gulf War Illness, burn pits exposure, and metals toxicology and participated in biweekly meetings with VA's Office of Public Health to discuss Gulf War research.

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CDR Jean-Paul Chretien  
Program Manager, Biological Technologies Office  
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

CDR Jean-Paul Chretien joined DARPA as a program manager in 2020. Chretien earned a Bachelor of Science degree in political science from the United States Naval Academy, Master of Health Science in biostatistics and Doctor of Philosophy in genetic epidemiology degrees from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and a Doctor of Medicine degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He completed his residency in general preventive medicine at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and fellowship in health sciences informatics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. His interests include disease and injury prevention, operational medicine, and biothreat countermeasures. Prior to coming to DARPA, Chretien led the Pandemic Warning Team at the Defense Intelligence Agency's National Center for Medical Intelligence. A naval medical officer, his previous assignments include senior policy advisor for biodefense in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; team lead for Innovation & Evaluation at the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch; and director of force health protection for U.S. and NATO forces in southwestern Afghanistan.

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Brad E. Hutchens, P.E.  
Chief, Office of Informatics  
Environmental Health Sciences and Engineering  
Defense Centers for Public Health-  
Aberdeen (DCPH-A)

Mr. Hutchens Serves as an Environmental Protection Specialist in the U.S. Army Public Health Center (APHC), Environmental Health Sciences and Engineering Directorate. Responsible for managing and maintaining technical operation of APHC environmental health surveillance (EHS) data archiving activities. Provides advisory to engineers, scientists, and public health personnel on EHS data management. He serves as a project officer and manages EHS data management systems, such as the Defense Occupational and Environmental Health Surveillance System (DOEHRS) for Non-secure Internet Protocol Router (NIPR) and the Military Exposure Surveillance Library (MESL) for the Secure Internet Protocol Router (SIPR). Develops and maintains local NIPR and SIPR standard operation procedures (SOPs). He analyzes environmental data management and archiving procedures; recommends process and data analysis improvement processes; and develops innovative approaches for EHS data management. Utilizes expanded knowledge of environmental science/environmental engineering/science principles in the framework of public health, and the occupational and environmental health operational risk management process, to develop methods of data management.

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Steve Jones, MPH  
Director, Force Readiness and Health Assurance Policy  
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
for Health Readiness Policy & Oversight

Mr. Steve Jones is a retired Army Environmental Science and Engineering Officer and senior consultant with over 39 years of medical, public health, and environmental health experience at all levels of the Department of Defense (DoD). He has extensive experience in deployed, humanitarian, disaster relief, and other operating environments at enduring and contingency locations, to include coordination with engineering, facilities, medical, environmental, and other base support managers. Mr. Jones is responsible for developing policy for force health protection, deployment health, occupational and environmental health, burn pits, individual medical readiness, comprehensive health surveillance, and bio-surveillance. He also advises on health issues related to garrison and deployment occupational and environmental exposures. Mr. Jones is currently the functional proponent for the joint DoD-Veterans Administration (VA) Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record.

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Mary “Molly” Klote, MD, CIP  
Director, Research Protections, Policy & Education  
Deputy Chief Research and Development Officer -Enterprise Support  
VA Office of Research and Development

Mary “Molly” Klote, MD is the Deputy Chief Research and Development Officer for Enterprise Support for the Office of Research and Development in the Veterans Health Administration. She joined the VHA 4 years ago after retiring from the Army after 30 years of service. Her final job as a Colonel in the Surgeon General’s Office was overseeing policy and compliance for all human research in the Army. In addition to her core duties in ORD she is leading the ORD efforts on research infrastructure including the VA innovation and Research Review System (VAIRRS), the VA Electronic Determination Aid (VAEDA), and the Enterprise Clinical Trials Management System (CTMS). She also serves as the ORD champion for the impact of the EHRM on research. She holds a board certification in Allergy Immunology. She holds the Certification for IRB Professionals.

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Jacob Lindheimer, III, Ph.D.  
Deputy Associate Chief of Staff/Research  
William S Middleton VAMC, Madison, WI

Dr. Jacob “Jake” Lindheimer is the Deputy Associate Chief of Staff/Research William S Middleton VAMC, Madison, WI. Dr. Lindheimer is a federally funded research health scientist at the Madison VA Medical Center and also holds Honorary Fellow positions in the UW-Madison Departments of Kinesiology and Medicine. Dr. Lindheimer earned his BS in Psychology at ASU in 2009 and earned his MA in Experimental Psychology at ASU in 2011. Following the completion of his master’s degree, Jake attended the University of Georgia from 2011-2015 where he completed his Ph.D. in Kinesiology with a concentration in Exercise Psychology. In 2021 Dr. Lindheimer received a new investigator award from the American College of Sports Medicine. He is also the principal investigator on a VA funded project studying acute exercise tolerance among Veterans with Gulf War Illness.

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Mr. Kirt P. Love  
1990-91 Gulf War Veteran  
Director, Desert Storm Battle Registry (DSBR)  
Former member, VA Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans (ACGWV)

Kirt Love is currently Director of the Desert Storm Battle Registry. The DSBR was formed to accumulate data concerning the War and post effects.

Mr. Love served as a Power Generation Equipment Specialist with the Army’s 141st Signal Battalion, 1st Armored Division during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his performance. Post deployment illness kept him from returning to his pre-military occupation of commercial sign illustrator, and muralist. Mr. Love re-trained in the electronic information processing field, to include electronic document research, transmission, and electronic security.

Mr. Love keeps an ongoing Registry of over 1,000 Veterans he has met. He has personally interacted with over 3,900 in the last 4 years. Mr. Love has attended meetings with the IOM, Independent Gulf War Illnesses Conferences, Pentagon Conference with Gulf War Investigative Offices, OSAGWI Town Hall Meetings, Presidential Special Oversight, and CDC Chemical/Biological Conference, etc.

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Sumitra Muralidhar, PhD  
Program Director, Million Veteran Program  
Office of Research and Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Dr. Sumitra Muralidhar is the Program Director for VA's Million Veteran Program (MVP) in the Office of Research and Development (ORD). In this role, she oversees the policy and infrastructure development for the collection and use of samples and genetic, clinical, lifestyle and military exposure data from over one million Veterans. She also serves as the Director for the VA-Department of Energy (DOE) Joint Research Program, which leverages VA and MVP data and DOE's high-performance computing and expertise in artificial intelligence and machine learning to advance precision healthcare for our nation's Veterans. She served as ORD's liaison to the White House Precision Medicine Initiative under President Obama. She also served as the designated federal officer for VA's Genomic Medicine Program Advisory Committee, which advised the VA Secretary on implementing genomic medicine within the Veterans Health Administration. She previously served as Health and Science Advisor to the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC), and Associate Professor at Georgetown University Medical Center. She received her Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the University of Maryland.

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Dr. LaTonya Small  
Program Specialist, Advisory Committee Management Office (ACMO)

Dr. LaTonya Small has over 34 years of experience working with the Federal Government and private / non-profit organizations. Her vast technical knowledge and experiences enabled her to be viewed as an expert in the areas of leadership, workforce/strategic planning, program management and organizational development. where she developed, managed, facilitated and evaluated leadership development programs, strategic planning initiatives and organizational development for numerous agencies. Currently with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Dr. Small helps Federal advisory committees achieve their charter mission that supports and services our Veterans. In her career, she served as Chief for the Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Office for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Executive Training and Development Specialist for VA's Corporate Senior Executive Management Office, Senior Training Officer with the Corporation for National and Community Service, Human Resources Specialist for Office of Personnel Management. Dr. Small holds a Doctorate Degree in Human Resources Development from The George Washington University; Master Degree in Public Administration from The University of Missouri-Columbia; and undergraduate degree in Business Management from Hampton University. She holds life membership in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Blacks in Government.

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Thomas Thomou, PhD  
Senior Scientist & Engineer  
DARPA

Dr. Thomau is an accomplished Senior Scientist with a passion for making new discoveries in scientific research. With a Ph.D. in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine as well as an advanced degree in Molecular Biology & Biomedicine. Dr. Thomou did 5 years of invaluable, post-doctoral training at the nation's most notable medical institutions -- such as Harvard Medical School and Mayo Clinic -- built a strong foundation for all aspects of experimental planning and development, study execution, and data interpretation and analysis. The major focus of his research is to assess the contribution of adipose tissue derived exosomal miRNAs in the circulation. This has led to the identification, evaluation, and development of novel cellular models facilitating studies on their impact on systemic metabolism in health and disease. Specifically, Dr. Thomau created the methodology and hypothesis and also established novel methodologies in order to study fat derived exosomal miRNAs and their effect in systemic metabolism. One of the greatest achievements of his career in academia was having the opportunity to co-author a first author publication in Nature with Professor C. Ronald Kahn (in press). In addition, as an inventor, he was fortunate again to partner with C. Ronald Kahn in the discovery of "Therapeutic Interventions in the Liver via Adipose Derived Engineered Exosomes in vivo" (patent pending).

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Larry Vandergrift II  
ILER Project Manager  
Solution Delivery Division  
Defense Health Agency  
Clinical Support Management Office

Larry Vandergrift serves as the project manager for ILER and is responsible for the day-to-day development activity and engagement with key stakeholders. With nearly 20 years of program management and technology modernization experience, Mr. Vandergrift prioritizes users' needs and requirements to deliver value added functionality to the field as quickly as possible.

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Marc A. Williams, H.D., Ph.D., Fellow A.A.A.A.I.  
Toxicology Directorate  
Health Effects Division U.S. Army Public Health Center (APHC)

Dr. Mark A. Williams is a Biologist (Immunotoxicologist) and Project Manager for the Ecotoxicology Assessment Program in the Toxicology Directorate – Health Effects Division of the U.S. Army Public Health Center at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD. Dr. Williams holds primary degrees in Biotechnology and Bioengineering, as well as Molecular Cell Biology and Immunology. He holds a Ph.D. in Hematological Oncology and Tumor Immunology from Queen Mary College of the University of London, U.K., and has conducted post-doctoral training at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD), La Jolla, CA, and the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore. Dr. Williams has previously served as a Research Biologist at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), with research interests in allergic asthma, and environmental exposures to particulate matter and nano-pollutants. Prior to joining the U.S. EPA, Dr. Williams was an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Environmental Medicine at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and an Instructor of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Williams is a Fellow of the American Academy of

Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI). Dr. Williams is a frequent external grant reviewer for NASA and their Atmospheric, Earth and Environmental Health Research Panels, and currently serves as the Non-VA Federal Government Chair of a Gulf War Exposures and Health Effects Working Group.