

Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2010 11:49 PM
To: COA@LIST.NIH.GOV
Subject: [COA-DC-BRANCH] COA-DC-BRANCH Smart Brief - Benefits Available to PHS Officers

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA METROPOLITAN AREA BR



To members of the D.C. Metropolitan Area Branch,

This Smart Brief is a journal style email message intended to help keep you informed about various uniformed service benefits available to PHS officers. Please note that some offers may only apply to Armed Forces members; however, these Smart Briefs will help promote awareness and push toward including the common language of "Uniformed Services" in more legislation and benefits packages.

For the current posting, please forward any questions or comments to LCDR Robert Windom at robert.windom@foh.hhs.gov. We also welcome any hot topics or special discounts that you wish to share with your fellow officers. Thank you.

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Current Posting

1. GI Bill Transferability H.R. 3657*
2. Busch Garden's "Heroes Salute" Extended Through 2010
3. New Disney World Military Salute 2010
4. Universal Orlando Extends 2009 Military Salute to March 2010
5. Wet n' Wild (Orlando) Extends Military Appreciation Until March 31, 2010
6. Free Lift Tickets for Active Duty / Emergency Personnel

Previously Posting

1. **GI Bill Transferability H.R. 3657***
 2. **Space Available Flight Travel Information**
 3. **Commissary Connection Highlights**
 4. **White House Launches Veterans Employment Initiative**
 5. **PHS Health Reform Bill**
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Current Posting

1. GI Bill Transferability H.R. 3657

There is a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to extend GI Bill transferability to PHS and NOAA officers. The bill is H.R. 3657, introduced by Rep. Ciro Rodriguez. At this time, there is no companion bill in the Senate. You can help in the following ways:

- **Write to your Representative in the House and ask him or her to co-sponsor H.R. 3657 to extend transferability of GI Bill benefits to PHS officers.**
- **Write to both of your Senators and ask them to support the creation of a companion bill to H.R. 3657 to extend transferability of GI Bill benefits to PHS officers.**

Please click on the COA website: [GI Bill Transferability - COA Call to Action](#) for information. COA created a document that contains rules to follow and helpful tips for writing your elected representatives. *Please read it before writing your representatives.* The website also contains sample letters you may use as a guide for writing your own letters.

After you write your elected representatives, please send copies of all your letters to COA Government Relations Director Judith Rensberger (jrensberger@coausphs.org). COA will send follow-up letters to your Representative and Senator, thus doubling the impact of your own efforts!

You have a lot to gain (college education for a child or spouse) and little to lose (a half an hour to write the letters, and the cost of a few stamps). Let

your representatives in Congress know how you feel, then spread the word to your friends and colleagues. The more PHS officers who participate in this call to action, the better our chances at success. This effort will also serve to realign our benefits with other sister services and maintain parity with them, which is vital to our future. If you believe we deserve this benefit, then please help us secure transferability for current and future officers and their families!

2. Busch Garden's "Heroes Salute" Extended Through 2010

Here's To the Heroes Salute is extended to run 1/1/2010 to 12/31/2010 and provides a complimentary single-day admission per person, per year to an Anheuser-Busch Adventure Park for active duty military from any of the five service branches, active members of a reserve or National Guard unit and/or up to three direct dependants. Also eligible for the offer are members of foreign military forces serving in the coalitions in Iraq or Afghanistan or attached to American units in the U.S. for training. The offer is non-transferable and non-refundable. Inactive, standby and retired reserve members, military retirees, U.S. Merchant Marine and civilian Department of Defense workers are ineligible for the program. Valid for one complimentary single-day admission per person, per year, to one of the following SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment parks:

- o SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio
- o Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg
- o Sesame Place
- o Adventure Island
- o Water Country USA

* Christmas Town at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Va. is not part of this program.

Register at www.herosalute.com and choose the park, then print your confirmation. Exchange the confirmation at the gate for entrance into the park. Please show a valid Department of Defense photo ID showing active status.

3. New Disney World Military Salute 2010

Beginning January 4 through July 31, 2010, active duty and retired U.S. military, including members of the U.S. Coast Guard and active members of the National Guard or Reservists, may purchase a 4-Day Walt Disney World Armed Forces Salute Ticket for themselves and up to five (5) family members and / or friends for \$99 (plus tax is purchased at Walt Disney World gate). MWR Information, Tickets and Travel Outlet prices are: 4-Day Base Ticket - \$99; 4-Day Park Hopper Ticket - \$122.75; 4-Day Water Park Fun and More Ticket - \$122.75; and a 4-Day Park Hopper with

Water Park Fun and More option - \$148.25. BLACK-OUT DATES when these tickets can't be used are: March 27 - April 9 (All Parks) and July 3 and 4 (Magic Kingdom only).

4. Universal Orlando Extends 2009 Military Salute to March 2010

Universal Orlando Extends 2009 Military Salute to March 2010 Universal Orlando is excited to announce that the 2009 Military Salute program will be extended through March 26, 2010! As part of the Universal Orlando Military Salute program, Universal is continuing the offer of one (1) FREE 2-park unlimited admission 7-day ticket to all US Military members to include Active Duty, Retirees, National Guard and Reservists with a valid military ID. Customers receiving the FREE ticket will have to sign the Universal Acknowledgment Form when picking up the ticket at the ITT Outlet. Personnel eligible for the free ticket can also purchase "companion" passes for family and friends for \$94 /person (price effective after Dec. 18) from MWR Information, Tickets and Travel Outlet (current companion ticket price is \$89 up to Dec. 18). Tickets must be fully used by March 26, 2010. Please note that this program extension does not offer Military personnel that have already taken advantage of the Salute program a 2nd complimentary ticket, it only extends the timeframe for use for personnel that have not taken advantage of the offer yet or have not used the tickets they have picked up to date.

5. Wet n' Wild (Orlando) Extends Military Appreciation Until March 31, 2010

Active duty, retired and reservists from all branches of the armed forces can receive a FREE One-Day admission ticket to Wet n' Wild, Orlando, FL as part of Wet n' Wild's Military Appreciation Days! To receive this offer visit the MWR Information, Tickets and Travel Outlet nearest you, present a valid, active duty or retired military photo ID to receive a free ticket coupon and Application Form with proper base information. Then, present the coupon, valid military ID and completed application form at Wet 'n Wild's Guest Services window in Orlando. Personnel can upgrade to a Splash Pass for an additional \$20.00 plus tax at Wet 'n Wild's Front Gate. *The Splash Pass allows unlimited admissions to Wet 'n Wild until March 31, 2010.*

6. Free Lift Tickets for Active Duty / Emergency Personnel

Active duty and emergency personnel (paid and volunteer firefighters EMS and law enforcement officers) can enjoy a FREE lift ticket, compliments of Ski Roundtop on February 2, Liberty Mountain on February 3 and Whitetail Resort on February 4. A current ID is required at the resort's ticket window. Learn to Ski / Snowboard package is \$25 and includes a

lift ticket to beginner terrain, ski or snowboard rental and lesson. No pre-registration is necessary. Tickets are valid until 10 p.m. For information, contact the ski resort (<http://www.skiliberty.com>) (<http://www.skiroundtop.com>) or (<http://www.skiwhitetail.com>)

Benefits Committee Note

The Benefits Committee is dedicated to researching offers, incentives, and legislative topics with the purpose of increasing awareness of benefits and services available to USPHS Commissioned Corps Officers, retirees, and family members. We strongly feel that sharing this valuable information will lead to increased morale and improved quality of life for our PHS community. We hope that you have enjoyed these Smart Brief publications and we want to continue sharing topics of interest and opening dialogue with you. Please note that Smart Briefs are sent out once a month; look for future editions around the 2nd Monday of each month. For your convenience, a link has been created on the DC COA website that will allow you to access past Smart Brief editions. [DC COA Smart Briefs](#)

Thank you for your support,

LCDR Julian Canizares, Chair, DC COA Benefits Committee
CDR Lou Ann Rector
CDR Melissa Meredith
LCDR Robert Windom
LCDR Eduardo Lim
LT Kimberly Love
LTJG Tracy Tilghman