



## News Feature

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### **Geneva-Jonas Interim Report**

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Geneva and Jonas Philanthropies partnered in 2016 to create a joint scholarship that funds doctoral candidates seeking to improve healthcare for veterans and military personnel. Geneva and Jonas are committed to supporting nursing leaders who are spearheading critical research for the greatest healthcare issues facing our military. Below is a synopsis of key highlights from the two 2018 scholarship recipients:

#### **PhD Candidate Lisa Perla, MSN, RN, FNP, CNRN, CRRN and CDR *Uniformed Services University***

Ms. Perla has worked in clinical and administrative roles in areas including emergency medicine, medical/surgical and transplantation intensive care, and rehabilitation medicine. She is a national speaker on stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and other neurologic emergencies. Her research pursuits have expanded beyond the clinical sequelae of service members and veterans to include investigating the role of leadership in health care outcomes

During 2019, Ms. Perla completed her coursework for a total of 25 of the 31 courses required for her PhD. Her dissertation working title continues to be: *Veterans Affairs Case Management and Leadership: An Exploratory Analysis*. The dissertation will use data from the Veterans Affairs (VA) All Employee Survey (AES) database to understand how VA case managers function as leaders or in leadership roles in the VA.

Ms. Perla has received: the Outstanding Service Award, VHA Office of Nursing Service, Excellence in Field Advisory; the Dorland Health Case In Point Platinum Award for the Polytrauma Case Management, the Military Care Management Category; Special Contribution Award, for a unique contribution to the mission of the James A Haley VA; and the VA Educators Choice Award for Artistic Presentation.

#### **PhD Candidate CDR Melissa R. Troncoso, MSN, NPC, CHWC *Uniformed Services University***

Commander (CDR) Melissa Troncoso's research focuses on obesity, weight cycling, and eating self-regulation with the goal to 1) understand the factors associated with weight management and 2) how to treat and prevent obesity among military personnel and veterans. CDR Troncoso served as the Navy Nurse Corps Administrative Fellow at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and as the Navy medical representative on the Department of Defense Instruction 1308.3: *Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program Procedures* working group.



CDR Troncoso recently completed her course work and is now eligible to take the qualifying PhD exam. Her dissertation topic: *Impact of Weight Cycling on Body Composition and Cardiometabolic Disease Risk Among Active Duty Military Personnel*, is the same concept she has been working towards in her PhD journey, with an updated title. She networks with subject matter experts to develop content, facilitate learning, and increase her knowledge base.

CDR Troncoso's research "will directly impact the U.S. military, and will also have implications for the VA. To my knowledge, my research will be the first to address the issue of weight cycling associated with physical readiness testing and body composition requirements while investigating potential metabolic and psychosocial consequences."

CDR Troncoso's awards include: the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (x2); the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (x2); the Defense Meritorious Service Medal; The Army Achievement Medal; the FNP Distinguished Academic Performance Award; the Admiral James L. Holloway, Jr. Memorial Scholarship; the Special Recognition Award-Women of Color Task Force; and the Military Order of the World Wars/ NROTC (University of Michigan).

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#### **About Jonas Nursing and Veterans Healthcare program of the Jonas Philanthropies, Inc.**

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