



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Assistant Secretary for Health
Office of Public Health and Science
Washington D.C. 20201

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Commander Michael Libby, USN
Director, Armed Services Blood Program
Washington, DC

Dear Commander Libby,

This is an exciting time as you reflect back on your military career and take the next step in life. I have been fortunate to witness your development from a junior clinical laboratory scientist to a professional military blood bank officer. Our first opportunity to work together was during your assignment in Subic Bay. I trusted you as you moved to other assignments such as Portsmouth, Okinawa and Washington. Each assignment, each step you have taken, has been challenged by opportunities for you to grow.

Each assignment that was presented to you was an opportunity to learn. It wasn't a course, it wasn't a lecture; it was the experiences that shaped your desire, your dream and your vision. You took a path in your career to move concepts and programs forward; you were not satisfied with the *status quo* or just housekeeping a laboratory. Catching the vision and moving forward are not always safe for a career, but at the end of the day, being safe and not taking risk doesn't result in anything substantial.

As you move through the next passage of your life, reflect on your thoughts, and past experiences that got you to this point. Just as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Every ship that comes to America got its chart from Columbus." You have paved the way for others to follow. Now it is your turn to follow others in the next passage by supporting the next generation of military blood bank officers.

During this next passage of your life, you will have the opportunity to use your leadership skills to influence the future in a different way. You will have the opportunity to make changes, both in the civilian and military world, without authority, but by influence. Change through influence is the true sign of a leader.

Thank you for serving our Nation and the American people. I hope that you will always count on me as a colleague and a friend. I give you my best thoughts and ask God's blessing on your life.

Jerry A. Holmberg, Ph.D.
Senior Advisor for Blood Policy