

In Remembrance of RADM Joseph, Chief Scientist



RADM LIREKA P. JOSEPH, D.P.H.

Chief Scientist, USPHS (2000-2004)

and

Director, Office of Health and Industry Programs

Center for Devices and Radiological Health

Food and Drug Administration (1996-2004)

RADM Lireka P. Joseph served as the Chief Professional Officer for the Scientist Category of the United States Public Health Service from October 1, 2002 until her untimely death on February 17, 2004. As the Chief Scientist Officer (CSO), RADM Joseph ceaselessly promoted esprit de corps, a positive approach to the challenges of Corps service, and the ability of individual officers to “make a difference” in their jobs and in the Corps. She was forward-thinking at all times and a strong proponent of the USPHS and its officers. RADM Joseph worked hard to increase the stature of the Scientist Category in the USPHS and the effectiveness of the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) in representing all Scientist Officers and supporting their needs and concerns throughout her tenure as CSO. RADM Joseph set a precedent in 2003 by convening the first ever SciPAC retreat to chart a course for the SciPAC and Scientist Officers Corps-wide, which other Category PACs soon replicated.

In her ‘regular job,’ RADM Joseph served as the Director of the Office of Health and Industry Programs within the Center for Devices and Radiological Health at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). She had responsibility for a diverse staff of 130 professionals who were primarily engaged in communication, education and policy interpretation for stakeholders. RADM Joseph had responsibility for administering the Mammography Quality Standards Act of 1992, which certifies and inspects the 10,000 mammography facilities in the United States. She oversaw development of regulations within the Center and ensured that the regulations process achieved its desired results. She managed a staff that provided assistance to medical device manufacturers, both domestic and international. RADM Joseph also oversaw a program that addresses medical device use errors by utilizing the human factors principles to identify potential areas that may result in patient injury. RADM Joseph provided oversight to an international program that coordinates medical device harmonization activities. She managed an active program that provided education to the 1,000 employees in the Center by providing science-based courses, as well as management and communication skills, and policy interpretation and implementation. From a broadcast quality television studio, she oversaw the broadcast of satellite teleconferences that provided current information and educational programs to FDA’s stakeholders.

During her distinguished career, RADM Joseph received a Distinguished Service Medal, a Meritorious Service Medal, two Outstanding Service Medals, a PHS Citation, two Outstanding Unit Citations, and twelve Unit Commendations.

RADM Joseph, or Lee, as she was known to those closest to her, was known to many in the Corps and FDA and loved by all who knew her. She served as an energetic, enthusiastic, and superb leader for the Scientist Category. We offer this tribute to her as a memorial and testament to her life and career with the USPHS and will miss her dearly!