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MEDDAC installs CSL-designated Troop Commander at change of command ceremony

By US Army Medical Department Activity-Fort Carson Public Affairs

Fort Carson's Medical Department Activity ceremoniously installed its first full-time and authorized Troop Commander on July 8. Lt. Col. James A. Morrison now leads the battalion-level unit that includes most of the MEDDAC's military personnel who work in Evans Army Community Hospital and its clinics.

The change of command ceremony with outgoing Troop Commander Maj. Susan (Andi) M. Tallman was held on the west lawn of Evans hospital. It recognized the formal change in leadership and also highlighted the value Army Medicine places on its command positions.

The Troop Commander position existed in a different form when Tallman filled the position. She was dual-hatted and also served as the MEDDAC's chief of human resources.

In late 2014 the Army's Surgeon General altered how medical commands would be staffed and increased command opportunity across the Army Medical Command. This change led to the authorization of a lieutenant colonel Troop Commander position at the MEDDAC. That position is now filled via a Centralized Selection List and Morrison is the first troop commander so selected.

During the change of command ceremony Tallman thanked everyone for the opportunity to command. She said, "[I've] worked with outstanding people...To the Officers, NCOs, Soldiers and Civilians thank you for being professionals in ensuring that our mission of patient care is the best our Army has to offer. It has been an honor and privilege to be your troop commander." She told the new commander, "You are receiving an outstanding unit and I know you will continue to give its officers, NCOs and Soldiers outstanding leadership."

During her assignment as commander, Tallman increased medical readiness of the unit's personnel from 61 percent to over 87 percent. She mentored two company command teams; supported Soldier health, wellness and readiness via the unit's Health Promotion Team; encouraged involvement in Better Opportunities for Single Soldier events; ensured good order and discipline; and handled Troop Command UCMJ authority.

Morrison said to MEDDAC's Commander Col. Patrick M. Garman, "We have always desired an assignment here and I look forward to serving under your leadership and the opportunities that the future holds."

Regarding MEDDAC's Soldiers and civilians, Morrison said, "They, along with our civilian and Joint Service counterparts, are dedicated to providing quality and compassionate care for all we are privileged to serve while at the same time remaining ready as our nation's foremost, agile, versatile, and innovative medical force. It is my privilege to serve them and I will work daily to earn and maintain your trust and confidence. Together we will not only take care of the patient, but take care of each other."

Garman acknowledged Tallman's accomplishments and said to Morrison, "You are the right Soldier for this job at the right time and we cannot be happier to welcome you to our unit."

Morrison comes to the MEDDAC from Regional Health Command – Europe where he served as the G6 and Chief Information Officer. Prior assignments include Chief Information Officer and Chief, Information Management Division for Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany and Chief Information Officer/ Chief, Information Management Division and Executive Officer for Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas. He also commanded the 261st Medical Battalion (Multifunctional) (Provisional) at Fort Bragg and deployed in support of the initial ground invasion of Iraq in 2003 and deployed again as the Task Force G6 for Medical Task Force 44 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 08-10.

Commissioned as a Medical Service Corps officer from The University of Memphis ROTC Program, Morrison also earned master's degrees in both Healthcare Administration and Business Administration from Baylor University.

Besides having command oversight of the MEDDAC's Medical Company, the troop commander is also responsible for providing a safe and learning

environment for Soldiers, Families, and civilian staff while appropriately recognizing and providing the necessary resources and training to those that require it. He and his staff also enforce good order and discipline to increase readiness, ensure MEDDAC's Soldiers are medically proficient and fully deployable, promote an environment conducive to higher learning and professional development, and they provide administrative support.

Morrison will also perform duties as a garrison liaison and enhanced Multi-Service Market Information Management Division liaison.



Col. Patrick Garman passes the colors to Lt. Col. James Morrison signifying his assumption of command during the July 8 ceremony at Evans hospital. (US Army photo)