

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Patrick Harper, CDR

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Tumultuous 2020 Oral History project

Interview # T20-A-L-2021-050

Commander Patrick Harper, a United States Public Health Service pharmacist and Center for Disease Control and Prevention field assignee to the Illinois Department of Public Health, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: October 15 & November 19, 2021

Location: ALPL Recording Studio

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Amanda Riggenbach, Project manager for *Tumultuous 2020*, ALPLM

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript being
processed.

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:49 + 2:45 / 1.82 + 2.75 = 4:34 / 4.57 hrs.

Session 1: Early life and professional career, including start of COVID-19 pandemic

Session 2: May of 2020 to November of 2021

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on December 29, 2021.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Patrick Harper, *Tumultuous 2020*, T20-A-L-2021-050

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Patrick Harper was born in Nashville, Illinois, in September 1985. Since the beginning of high school, Harper knew he wanted to be a pharmacist. He attended St. Louis College of Pharmacy, graduating in 2010. He planned on returning to Nashville and becoming a local pharmacist. However, after watching a presentation from a United States Public Health Service (USPHS) officer, he was intrigued by the possibilities. Following graduation, he left for the Navajo reservation with his soon-to-be-wife, Erica. After several years of working for Northern Navajo Medical Center, he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander. He moved to Chicago, Illinois, with his expectant wife, to begin work at the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Staying in Chicago, he worked with the Health Resources and Services Administration. With the promotion to Commander, Harper and his family moved to Springfield, Illinois, where at the time of the interview he worked as a Center for Disease Control (CDC) field assignee to the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Harper began working at the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) in November of 2019, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Once the virus became prevalent in Illinois, he faced multiple deployments, some virtual and some in-person. In the second session of the interview, Harper goes into detail about the pandemic from the perspective of both a clinician and a public health expert. He chronologically outlines his experiences from May of 2020 up to the date of the interview. This includes his experience with the vaccine as well as mass vaccination site deployments. At the time of the interview, Harper was preparing for his daughter, a seven-year-old, to get her first dose of the vaccine.

Subject Headings/Key Words: United States Public Health Service; Nashville, Illinois; Pharmacy; St. Louis College of Pharmacy; Public Health; Northern Navajo Medical Center; Chicago, Illinois; Springfield, Illinois; Illinois Department of Public Health; Center for Disease Control and Prevention; deployment; vaccine; COVID-19; COVID-19 pandemic

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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