



# Newsletter

Issue 4 | February 2023

## Happy New Year from the NOISE Study Team!

Another New Year means another chance to say thank you for participating in the NOISE Study! The data you provide is helping researchers better understand the complex relationships between military service experiences and hearing health and improve future outcomes for Service members and Veterans.

### Why do we ask for follow-up data?

Our biggest questions are focused on the long-term effects of military exposures. Following Vets and Service members over the years is the only way to answer some of these questions. This is why our goal is to keep the NOISE study collecting data from all participants until 2034 or beyond! Maybe your new year's resolution this year will be to continue to help your fellow Veterans and Service members by sending in your annual NOISE survey. Thank you for all that you have done so far!

Respectfully,

The NOISE Study team

## NOISE Study receives award for Outstanding Research Accomplishment

We are honored to announce that the NOISE Study has received a 2022 Military Health Service Research Symposium (MHSRS) award for Outstanding Research Accomplishment (Team). This award recognizes outstanding research contributions by a team of research scientists, focusing on significant accomplishments of high impact achieved during the past year.

MHSRS is the Department of Defense's most prominent scientific meeting. This event focuses on military research and development relevant to the medical needs of military Service members.

## How's the NOISE Study going?

The NOISE Study has about **20 team members at sites in 3 states!**



### Portland, Oregon:

National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR) - Portland VA Medical Center

690 participants have enrolled at NCRAR site



### San Antonio, Texas:

DoD Hearing Center of Excellence (HCE) - Joint Base San Antonio

423 participants have enrolled at HCE site



### San Diego, California:

Naval Medical Center San Diego, Naval Base San Diego, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

Enrollment starting soon

## New contact information?

If you have updated contact information, please let us know!

**Call Aneka Sonstroem**  
**503-220-8262 ext. 55949**

## Reconsent to continue participating

We're required to get your updated consent to continue to collect data. Completing the re-consent process is easy to do by email! If you have not re-consented, please contact our study team to do so ASAP.

## New NOISE Study leadership, same NOISE study goals!

Congratulations from the NOISE team to Senior Research Career Scientist Dr. James Henry, who has retired after 35 years as a tinnitus researcher at the Portland VA! Dr. Henry led the NOISE Study since it began in 2013. He also co-developed the VA's Progressive Tinnitus Management program and received several prestigious career awards. Thank you, Dr. Henry, for your dedication to tinnitus research and improving the hearing health of Service member and Veterans!

We are excited to announce that Dr. Kelly Reavis, PhD, and Dr. Kathleen Carlson, PhD, have taken on new roles as co-Principal Investigators of the NOISE Study! Dr. Reavis and Dr. Carlson have both served as Co-Investigators for NOISE for several years. Both are accomplished researchers, trained as epidemiologists; Dr. Reavis is an audiologist as well. Under their leadership, the NOISE Study will continue to answer important research questions on military service and hearing health outcomes.

## Meet the new team in San Diego

The NOISE study has recently added a third location for testing and recruitment. We're currently setting up a new study site in San Diego, which will enroll participants and perform testing at Naval Medical Center San Diego, Naval Base San Diego, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton.



**Kaylani Abejar, MPH, CPP:** Kaylani grew up in San Diego as a Navy brat and pursued her B.S. in Biology and MPH at Cal State San Marcos. Her previous job focused on improving and advocating for the quality of life for Active Duty Service Members, specifically Marines and Sailors aboard MCAS Miramar. Kaylani is dedicated to helping improve the quality of life for Active Duty Service Members, Veterans, and Retirees which has led her to continue to do so with the NOISE Study.

**Hannah Famili, Au.D.:** Hannah earned her doctorate in Audiology from the University of Pittsburgh and completed her externship with the San Diego VA Healthcare System. Her interest in using an epidemiologic approach to understand the impact of hearing loss and tinnitus on quality of life and improve clinical care drew her to the NOISE study.



## New findings from the NOISE Study

**NOISE study findings are published in scientific journals. Check out these publications from the past year:**

One of our papers looked at the association between hearing problems and functional status (or ability to carry out daily activities) in Service members and Veterans. We found that tinnitus, hearing loss at low frequencies, and self-reported hearing difficulties were all associated with poorer functional status.

(Lewis, M. S., Reavis, K. M., Griest, S., Carlson, K. F., Gordon, J., & Henry, J. A. (2022). **The influence of tinnitus and hearing loss on the functional status of military Service members and Veterans.** *International Journal of Audiology*, 1-9.)

We explored the relationship between hearing health and the number of medical conditions (not related to hearing loss) reported by Veterans. Compared to Veterans with no medical conditions, Veterans with two or more medical conditions were more likely to also have low-frequency hearing loss or tinnitus.

(Grush, L. D., Reavis, K. M., Griest, S. E., Thapa, S., Helt, W. J., Henry, J. A., & Theodoroff, S. M. (2022). **Associations between medical conditions and auditory dysfunction in U.S. Veterans.** *International Journal of Audiology*, 1-9)