

The MED Ship Shape With Shorb

Frank Frontis
Staff Reporter

Smart Veterans know the formula for success. They take advantage of their military training and experience to reach honorable achievements in life.

Gary Shorb, a former Navy officer, who is now president of The Regional Medical Center (MED), fits one, such veteran.

Shorb, 39, recently received the L.M. Graves Award, an award given to an individual in the field of community health for their outstanding achievements. The award was presented to Shorb on November 9th as a result of the hospital executive having been chosen the recipient by the L.M. Graves Award Selection Committee.

The Committee cited several of the hospital executive's accomplishments, among them, his involvement in civic activities and his efforts in merging a close working relationship between the MED and the U.T. Medical Center's medical faculty and staff. Shorb was also noted for having a chief role in the development and opening of the MED's Burn Unit and for his success in bringing financial stability to the MED.

For sure, Shorb's success didn't just spring up over night. Indeed it was built on a well layed-out foundation—a foundation started by Shorb early on in 1972 with his entry in the U.S. Navy. "I got drafted," says the MED's president with a smile. "So I went into the Navy."

After attending Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island, Shorb spent his active duty time quite constructively. The then young naval officer first served as an assistant to an admiral for a year-and-a-half. Shorb later did a stint with the Seabees before joining the Civil Engineer Corps.

It is here where Shorb gained most of his marketable skills, especially with his promotion to Chief Engineer supervising the construction of the Portsmouth Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Virginia. Shorb left naval service in 1981 holding the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

No doubt, Shorb's naval years were quite productive; they were extremely



Gary Shorb President of the MED

transient also. "I was stationed in nine different locations," says Shorb, "including Iceland." Shorb says he exited service for reasons of family stability.

Shorb did a brief tour with Exxon after departing the Navy, then came aboard at the MED in 1982. "I answered an ad in the paper [The Commercial Appeal] for Facility Manager," says Shorb jubilantly. "And I got the job!"

As Facility Manager at the MED, Shorb supervised the completion of the new addition to the hospital. The hospital executive credits his naval training background for his success in getting the Facility Manager position at the MED. "I'm sure my experience as Chief Engineer at Portsmouth Hospital had a lot to do with it," says Shorb.

Interestingly, and despite his broad military construction background, Shorb insists that his service experience was perhaps really more about something else other than cement, bricks and steel. "My military experience was actually a *people's relations* business," says Shorb soberly.

More than anything else, it was probably this view of Shorb's that helped him go from Facility Manager to Assistant Vice President of the MED a few years later.

In 1984, when Shorb received his MBA at Memphis State opportunities got better. Eventually, in 1986, the ex-navy Lieutenant Commander rose to the top of the MED. Notably, Shorb was only 36 years-old when he became

the hospital's boss.

When Shorb became the MED's president in 1986 *people* were his top concern. "My first goal," says Shorb, "was to improve the *customer responsiveness* of the organization. I wanted to make sure that our customers [patients] were thoroughly satisfied with the services they were receiving."

Strengthening the working relationship between the MED and U.T. Memphis was another important goal of Shorb's at the outset. Shorb says he sought the involvement of more U.T. faculty to work with MED interns. According to Shorb, the MED was practically in a financial sink hole when he came on as Chief Executive Officer. Thus, it was a goal of necessity to correct the hospital's bottom line.

Today, the MED's *short-caller* can observe how his past aims have hit their targets. Shorb says customer satisfaction is substantially better than it was several years ago. Now a much closer relationship exists between the MED and U.T. Memphis—especially with U.T. faculty, which has increased its presence at the MED. And at last, according to Shorb, the MED is financially afloat. "We're now financially viable," says Shorb, soothingly.

The ex-Navy Officer's ability to establish goals and see them through has not only benefited the MED, but Shorb as well, personally. It is mostly because of the realization of his major goals that Shorb received the L.M. Graves Award to begin with.

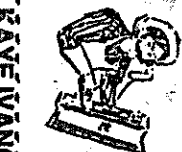
Like his goal achieving ability, there's been another certainty about Shorb. In the course of his successful management of the MED, the Chief Executive has managed to keep his focus on his hospital—and not himself. "I was surprised," says Shorb when asked how he felt about receiving the award. "Actually, the award was more of a credit to the organization than to me personally," he insists. "I couldn't have done nearly what I did without the help of everyone else here at the MED." Shorb also praised U.T. Memphis for the assistance they've been providing.

Then, of course, as always, some credit has to go to the family. Shorb has been married to his wife for 18 years, and has a daughter, 14 and a son, 11. Despite being tossed here-and-there while in the Navy, the Shorbs came out intact. Now, finally, they're decked and more satisfyingly united, thus providing their head with the perfect opportunity to demonstrate his *mettle* at the MED.

Despite his achievement, especially at such a relatively early age, Shorb feels that other veterans or veterans-to-be have an opportunity to be just as successful. He offers words of encouragement to those who may be thinking otherwise:

"Through their military training," says Shorb, "veterans can acquire marketable skills. They should take advantage of these skills and training in their careers," he urges. "And of course, you'll need to work hard and focus on goal achievement."

Congratulations Gary Shorb! Our Veteran of The Month. Keep things sailing smoothly at the MED.



• Glossy
• A Variety
• Specialty
• New York
KAYE IVANOFF
STEVE IVANOFF (VET)
(901) 853-2946

TOWN SQUARE

Your Full Service, neighborhood
Hours: Open Monday

FEATURIN

• NEW YORK
• A Variety
• Specialty
• New York

E & H C
6448 Raleigh
Hours 6 a.m.
6 a.m.

Delia
BREAK

Pool Tourne

8



Dr. Cha
OF
YOUR EYEWARE SU

Open 8-5 Mon-Sat
We Accept all Insurance
MEDICAID & MEDICARE

1399 Airways

Pool Tourne
8