 Dr. Forsten brings a wealth of tactical, operational, and strategic medical leadership to our WarDocs Series. Dr. Forsten’s intent for participating in WarDocs is to highlight some of the events from his career that may assist future military medical physicians and leaders to succeed. Dr. Forsten has over 25 peer reviewed articles and specializes in the care and research of PTSD, mTBI, Substance Use Disorders, and Adult ADHD. He is an appointed Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, Maryland, and a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. Dr. Forsten’s notable past military assignments include deployments to Iraq during OIF1 as well as Afghanistan. He was the US Army Special Operations Command Psychiatrist from 2007-2012 and commanded the 121st Combat Support Hospital in Korea from 2012-2014 and the 62nd Medical Brigade at Joint Base Lewis-McChord from 2016-2018. He also deployed as Task Force-Medical Commander to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in response to Hurricane Maria from October to December 2017. He is also a resident graduate of the U.S. Army War College with a Master of Strategic Studies. Dr. Forsten’s recognition for service include the Legion of Merit (4 awards), Combat Action Badge, the Army Surgeon General “A” Designation, the Order of Military Medical Merit, and he is a Distinguished Member of the U.S. Army Medical Department Regiment. For more information on Dr. Forsten’s past history, assignments, and training, please see <https://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/about-us/who-we-are/dc-wriisc.asp#forsten>

It is a pleasure to introduce Dr. Robert D. Forsten, Colonel, US Army, Retired, to the WarDocs Podcast series. Dr. Forsten retired in September 2020 after serving 26 years on active-duty, and started working for the Providence VA in October 2020. He transferred to the DC WRIISC in November 2022 to work as a Senior Clinician and Psychiatry Consultant.

Additional history: Dr. Robert Forsten was commissioned through the Army’s Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) in 1990 and attended medical school on a Health Profession Scholarship graduating in 1994 from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine. Following graduation, he entered U.S. Army Active duty and completed residency and fellowship training in Psychiatry at Tripler Army Medical Center.

His military professional education includes the AMEDD Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, Command and General Staff Officer's Course, AMEDD Brigade Pre-Command Course, Senior Officer Legal Orientation Course, Joint Medical Executive and Medical Strategic Leadership Courses, Airborne and Air Assault Schools, Army Basic Flight Surgeon Course, Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape (SERE)-Level C, the US Navy Medical Deep-Sea Diving Officer Course, and the US Army War College.

COL Forsten’s previous assignments include 1st Cavalry Division Psychiatrist, Ft. Hood, TX, 2000-2002; Chief of Outpatient Psychiatry, Darnall Army Community Hospital, Ft. Hood, TX, 2002-2003; Chief of Behavioral Health, 21st Combat Support Hospital, Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003-2004; Medical Director, Intensive Outpatient Program, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C., and Site Director, Walter Reed Army Medical Center Residency Program and Associate Program Director for the National Capital Consortium Psychiatry Residency Training Program, Washington, D.C., 2004-2007; Command Psychiatrist, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Ft. Bragg, NC, 2007-2012 with deployment to Afghanistan in support of 7th Special Forces Group as part of the CJSOTF-A in 2009. He commanded the 121st Combat Support Hospital and the Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital, Seoul, Korea 2012-2014. He then served as the Deputy Surgeon, US Army Pacific 2014-2015. COL Forsten earned a Master of Strategic Studies from the US Army War College, Carlisle, PA in 2016 and then commanded the 62nd Medical Brigade at Joint Base Lewis-McChord 2016-2018 and deployed as Task Force-Medical Commander to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in response to Hurricane Maria from Oct-Dec 2017. He then was assigned as the Command Surgeon, US Army First Corps, JBLM, WA from 2018-2019 and retired from Keller Army Community Hospital, West Point, NY. From 2019-2020.

Dr. Forsten’s awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit (4 Awards), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (6 Awards), Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal (5 Awards), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal (with Bronze Service Star), the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, NATO Service Medal (Afghanistan), Armed Forces Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Commendation, German Armed Forces Badge (Gold), German Armed Forces Parachutist Badge, Estonian Military Parachute Wings, and the Royal Netherlands Army Parachutist Badge. He has also been awarded the Combat Action Badge, and earned the Expert Field Medical Badge.