
Nua is a retired U.S. Army Commander Sgt. Major and his last position was CSM for the Pacific Medical Command at Tripler Medical Center in Hawaii. He was the first Samoan to hold that job.

Before that, he was the senior enlisted of the 44th Medical Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In that position, he was credited for maintaining a very high retention rate of soldiers, drastically reducing alcohol-related cases and setting programs to promote soldiering across the command.

Nua was confirmed on Feb. 6, 2013 by the Senate in a 14-2 vote as director of the department of health. He went before a House hearing that same day with a vote expected by the full membership. His confirmation is the first time in more than two years that the department has had a permanent director.