

# Maryland EMS News

For All Emergency Medical Care Providers

Vol. 35, No. 7

June 2009

## MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards During EMS Week

*In a two-part ceremony at the Annapolis Sheraton on May 17, MIEMSS honored children from across the State and also presented its annual Stars of Life Awards to honor EMS personnel, citizens, and EMS programs. Photos of the winners receiving their awards, as well as summaries of why they received them, follow.*

Eight children were recognized for their actions which ensured that people in Maryland received "the right care when it counts," by assisting in providing a life-saving service to someone in their community. Each of the following received a "Right Care When It Counts" Award.

**Michael Tanner Shoemaker (Washington County):**

On March 24, 2008, Tanner called the 9-1-1 operator to ask for help. His mother had fallen down the stairs and was unconscious; they needed an ambulance. Tanner (then 8 years old) talked to the dispatcher while his father ran to

the aid of his mother. Tanner knew his home address, his mother's age, and how many steps she fell down. He answered all the questions and only checked with his dad to be sure the dogs were not going to be in the paramedics' way when they arrived. When touring the 9-1-1 center later that month, Tanner told the staff he learned when to call 9-1-1 while he was on a visit to the Children's Safety Village in Hagerstown as part of a school safety curriculum.

**Kevin Steven Tchato (Howard County):**

On December 18, 2008, Kevin Steven Tchato recognized that something was wrong with his mother. She was 9 months pregnant and 5-year-old Kevin found her unresponsive; so he called 9-1-1. When EMS arrived, he opened the door and took the crew to his mother's side. He knew his father's cell phone number and gave it to the EMS team. Kevin's quick action and calm reactions helped not only his mother but also his unborn sibling.

*(Continued on page 2)*



Award winner Michael Tanner Shoemaker with his family, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Tanner), and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass (extreme right).



Award winner Kevin Steven Tchato with (l-r) Howard County Deputy Chief for EMS Operations John Butler, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson, Kevin's family, and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass.

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards



Award winners Jordan and Cole Becker with (l-r) Howard County Deputy Chief for EMS Operations John Butler, their mother, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Jordan and Cole), their dad, and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass



Award winner Traevon Brown with his family, Capt. Holly Trego (Cecil County Emergency Communications), EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Traevon), and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).



Award winner Emily Cox with her family, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Emily), and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass. Emily's step-dad is Kevin Gillespie, Assistant Director, EMS Division, Caroline County Department of Emergency Services.



Award winner Douglas Edward Buck with his family, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Douglas), and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass. Douglas' mom Laraine Buck is a member of Salisbury Fire Department, Station #1.

(Continued from page 1)

## **Cole Becker and Jordan Becker (Howard County):**

Early in the morning of October 14, 2008, Cole Becker (8 years old) heard a loud bang coming from the upstairs of his home. He went upstairs and found his mother on the floor of the master bathroom; she was unconscious. Cole dialed 9-1-1 and spoke with the dispatcher, checking his mother's breathing; when she started to wake up, he told her to stay still. Jordan, his 4-year-old sister, stayed with her mom while her brother Cole provided key information to the EMS crew about what happened and how to contact his Dad and neighbors.

**Emily Cox (Caroline County):** Eleven-year-old Emily Cox was riding in the car with her mother and her two younger sisters in August 2008 when suddenly Mom said she felt like she was going to pass out. Just then, Mom fainted, going 35 miles per hour on a rural road, and the car moved off the road and toward a field. Emily reached over and took control of the steering wheel, moving the car back onto the shoulder of the road, stopping the car, and turning off the ignition. Emily called her dad Steve Cox who was only a mile or two away. By the time he arrived at the scene, Emily's mom had regained consciousness, so he safely drove everyone home. Emily's quick actions prevented a more serious vehicle incident from happening.

(Continued on page 3)

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards

(Continued from page 2)

**Traevon Brown (Cecil County):** In August 2008, 8-year-old Traevon found his mother in distress. She was experiencing a medical emergency, and he dialed 9-1-1, remaining calm throughout the call and giving the dispatcher important information to relay to the paramedics who arrived and were able to help his mother.

**Douglas Edward Buck (Wicomico County):** Sitting in class in February 2008, Douglas Buck (then 9 years old) was listening to his third-grade teacher give the class instructions when he noticed that her eyes were closed and she was going to fall. His teacher was already using crutches from a previous surgery, and Doug was able to catch his teacher's head to lessen her fall. He then asked one classmate to come hold the leg in a cast and asked (or maybe told) a second classmate to go and get the school nurse. Doug remained calm and pretty much in control of the class until other teachers and the school nurse arrived. Doug used some of the first-aid skills he learned in Cub Scouts to help his teacher that day.

**Isaac Curry (Prince George's County):** In October 2008, Prince George's County Fire & EMS paramedics responded to the scene where an adult had been struck by a car. They were having difficulty communicating with the person who was using American Sign Language, when 8-year-old Isaac Curry walked by and bravely stepped forward. He knew sign language and offered to help the crew talk with the victim. Isaac was able to calm the injured man and help the crew determine the location of injuries. The victim was able to learn what was going to be done to help him and that he would be taken to the hospital. Isaac's action demonstrated what is meant by the name "Good Samaritan."

There were nine categories of EMS Star of Life awards, with two winners in the category "MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS."

## Maryland Star of Life Award

### Calvert County Rescue Dive Team:

**Dan Furth (diver)**

**Chief Kenneth Gray**

**Chris Heyer (diver)**

**Lori Lodge (diver)**

**Assistant Chief John Mowatt**

During a severe storm across the Chesapeake Bay in the early morning hours of September 20, 2008, a 45-foot boat with four passengers on board broke free of its mooring and was blown toward shore. It became grounded in extremely shallow water against 30-foot high cliffs, while 4-foot surf and high winds pounded it continuously. Several hours later, after multiple rescue attempts had failed due to the dangerous conditions and remote location of the boat, the Calvert County Rescue Dive Team was called in.

At approximately 4 AM, in total darkness, they began their rescue operation, knowing that one passenger had a serious head wound and another was suffering a diabetic emergency. Dan Furth helped launch two Jet Skis. After a difficult ride aboard the first Jet Ski, Chief Gray and Assistant Chief Mowatt found the boat blown against the cliffs and listing to one side. They boarded the wrecked vessel and began giving first-aid to the panicked passengers. Divers Chris Heyer and Lori Lodge soon arrived on

(Continued on page 4)



Award winner Isaac Curry with his family, EMSC Program Director Cyndy Wright-Johnson (behind Isaac), and MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert Bass.

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards



*Maryland Star of Life Award: (L-R) Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director), Chief Kenneth Gray, Lori Lodge, Asst. Chief John Mowatt, Chris Heyer, and Dan Furth.*



*Maryland EMS Citizen Award: (L-R) Ronnie Butler and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*

*(Continued from page 3)*

the second Jet Ski and assisted in the rescue operation. The passengers were offloaded one at a time to the Jet Ski operated by Assistant Chief Mowatt and transported to a nearby rescue boat from Benedict Volunteer Fire Department. Arriving at Breezy Point Marina, the passengers were taken by a St. Leonard Volunteer Fire Department ambulance to a hospital.

## **Maryland EMS Citizen Award Ronnie Butler (tow-truck operator)**

On November 5, 2008, following a collision in Jefferson in Frederick County, a State Highway Administration dump truck came to rest on top of a Honda Civic that had been pushed across the intersection against a utility pole. Two young women were trapped inside the Civic.

Chief Jimmy Lakin could see the severity of the crash, which happened only a few hundred yards from the entrance to Jefferson Volunteer Fire Company 20. He immediately contacted Ronnie Butler, a heavy-duty tow truck operator, to respond and assist fire/rescue personnel.

Mr. Butler responded to the scene within minutes, arriving almost simultaneously with Rescue Squad 20. He immediately began to try to stabilize the dump truck and hooked up cables to lift the truck off the Honda, allowing rescue workers to give aid.

Mr. Butler's quick response and expertise in vehicle recovery dynamics allowed emergency workers to extricate the two trapped teenagers and to begin treatment. He certainly played a significant role in providing the trapped young women a chance to survive a horrible crash.

## **EMS Provider of the Year Award**

### **Master Firefighter/ Paramedic Christopher Touzeau**

Below are some of the comments from the Suburban Hospital Emergency Department and Trauma Center staff who nominated Mr. Touzeau for the EMS Provider of the Year Award.

They cited his work on many Quality Management projects with the Suburban Hospital Emergency Department that resulted in improved patient outcomes. Some examples included the implementation of the transmission of field EKGs and the development of a mechanism for providing timely feedback of patient outcomes to the medic units. He has also helped Suburban Hospital in preparing for many disaster drills.

Suburban Hospital also stressed Mr. Touzeau's positive, "can do" attitude. He encouraged a team approach between EMS and hospital staff regarding patient care. In their nominating letter, Suburban Hospital stated that

*(Continued on page 5)*

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards



*Maryland EMS-Geriatric Award: (L-R) Deputy Chief for EMS Operations John Butler (accepting the EMS-award for the Howard County Fire & Rescue Department) and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*

*(Continued from page 4)*

when Mr. Touzeau “calls from the field to alert us to incoming patients, we know that the assessments will be complete and correct, the protocols followed, and that he will maintain a high standard of care. There are several circumstances in which Mr. Touzeau either saved the patient’s life and/or increased the patient’s chance of survival.”

Currently Mr. Touzeau is teaching paramedic students at the Montgomery County Fire Rescue Training Academy and serves as an excellent role model and mentor to the EMS providers.

In summation, Suburban Hospital felt—and the Award Selection Committee agreed—that Mr. Touzeau exemplifies what the EMS Provider of the Year should be: dedicated, committed to providing and improving quality care, concerned with patient outcomes, and fostering collegial relationships with the hospitals and EMS providers in order to best serve the community.

## **Maryland EMS-Geriatric Award Howard County Fire & Rescue Department**

In 2008, the Howard County Fire & Rescue Department, in partnership with the six larger long-term care facilities within the county and the Howard County Office on Aging, launched a ground-breaking initiative to improve each organization’s ability to care effectively for geriatric persons. The collaboration builds on the commitment to improve elder care in Howard County. The goal is to achieve real, measurable change in how each of the participating organizations provides elder care. The program is premised on the belief that health care providers can do better and can accomplish more by communicating effectively and working together. One of the goals being addressed is improved continuity of care between long-term care facilities, hospitals, and EMS.

## **Maryland EMS for Children Award**

### **Rose Ann Soloway**

Rose Ann Soloway is a familiar face for Maryland’s Emergency Medical Community and injury prevention advocates, as well as for the MIEMSS Region V Education Council. Rose Ann has coordinated the clinical toxicology education for both EMS and hospital professionals for the Washington Metropolitan area for several decades and lectured at conferences in Maryland, across the country, and overseas. She has also been a strong and powerful voice for poison prevention outreach, advocacy, and education while wearing many hats as educator, instructor trainer, television health expert, and curriculum developer. Rose Ann’s work at the National Capital Poison Center extended into working in leadership positions with the American Association of Poison Control Centers, Safe Kids USA, the Home Safety Council, and the National Fire Protection Association in their Risk Watch program development.

Rose Ann has served on national committees and advisory boards with such agencies as the Environmental Protection Agency, Institute of Medicine, and World Health Organization. Currently she is transitioning into partial retirement in Charlottesville, Virginia, and will once again be a pioneer, working to establish remote poison control emergency consultation services in a pilot project that is expected to be a model for the nation.

Rose Ann was recognized for her involvement in Maryland’s local poison training for EMS providers and nurses, for her long (and often late) hours on the emergency phone number for the poison center, for her collaboration with the Maryland Poison Center, and especially for advocating for children (the most at-risk group for unintentional poisonings) and for advising emergency care professionals on how to handle poison emergencies when they occur.

*(Continued on page 6)*



*Maryland EMS for Children Award: (L-R) Cyndy Wright-Johnson (EMS for Children Program Director), Rose Ann Soloway, and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards

(Continued from page 5)

## **Emergency Medical Dispatcher of the Year Award EMD Stanley D. Harris Calvert County Control Center**

During his career as a Communications Officer at Calvert County Control Center, Stanley Harris (also known as “Dave” and “Stumpy”) has helped save many lives. One example is a call that he received on August 13, 2008 from two young siblings who had just witnessed their mother collapse on the floor. He instantly took control of the situation, asking the children who were 9 and 11 years old, important questions to find out what happened to their mother. Discovering that she had been shaking, he immediately suspected a seizure. But as he continued to ask questions in a child-friendly way, he realized that she had



*Emergency Medical Dispatcher of the Year Award: (L-R) EMD Stanley D. Harris and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*



*Leon W. Hayes Award for Excellence in EMS: (L-R): Paramedic Raymond B. Campbell and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*

turned blue and did not have a good airway. He quickly asked for police to be sent to the area to assist the children and gave the older child instructions to perform rescue breathing until help arrived. After a few breaths, their mother regained consciousness and was able to breathe on her own.

In addition to being a great EMD himself, Mr. Harris has worked to improve the quality assurance process at Calvert County Control Center. He presents mini-learning sessions—some complete with PowerPoint presentations—that the other EMDs can do at their work stations. As a result, according to his supervisor, dispatcher QA scores at Calvert County 9-1-1 improve each week.

## **Leon W. Hayes Award for Excellence in Emergency Medical Services**

### **Raymond B. Campbell, NREMT-P**

Paramedic Raymond Campbell has been involved with emergency medicine since he was a Navy corpsman back in Vietnam in the late 1960s. Since 1976 when he became an EMT, he has held numerous officer positions and instructor titles, caring for the public both as a career and volunteer prehospital provider.

In the early 1980s, Paramedic Campbell became the Ambulance Supervisor at Kirk Army Health Clinic at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Under him, the department has become state-of-the-art and progressive. For example, under his direction, the department initiated a medical advisor board, QA/QI Program, a self-sustaining training site with numerous accredited instruction programs, and a Public Access Defibrillator Program (with more than 170 AEDs currently in use and two current public saves). In addition, he helped to establish public education and certification courses in CPR, First Aid, and AED, as well as a Combat Life Saver course that trains soldiers to save lives in combat. He has also encouraged employees to become instructors; for example, more than 85 percent of the paramedics are instructors in first aid and CPR, while more than 60 percent are also ACLS and PALS instructors.

Paramedic Campbell was recognized for his more than 30 years of service as a prehospital provider and his leadership as Ambulance Supervisor at Kirk Army Health Clinic.

## **Outstanding EMS Program Award Garrett County Emergency Services Clubs**

The Emergency Services Clubs program of Southern and Northern Garrett High Schools is a cooperative effort between the Garrett County Board of Education, Garrett College, and Garrett County Public Safety. It is designed to bring awareness to high-school students of the need for emergency services providers (especially volunteer

(Continued on page 7)

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards



*Outstanding EMS Program Award: (L-R) Brad Frantz (Director of the Garrett County Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management), Todd Dyche (faculty advisor for the Garrett County Emergency Services Clubs), and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*



*MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS: (L-R) Major Andrew J. (A. J.) McAndrew (Commander, MSP Aviation), MSP Sergeant Nathan H. Wheelock (flight paramedic for Trooper 2), and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director). Missing from the photo is James MacKay (pilot for Trooper 2).*

*(Continued from page 6)*

providers), the opportunities for volunteer and career Fire and EMS providers, and to offer the students a curriculum for training in Community Emergency Response Team and CPR. The ultimate goal of the program is to facilitate a conduit for high-school students into the local fire and EMS companies in their own communities.

In addition to offering first-aid, CPR, and safety training, club activities vary. For example, students:

- Put together their own mission and goals statements;

- Make posters for recruitment for volunteer emergency services and place them in their communities.
- Participate in mock crash and disaster scenarios.

These scenarios are usually done at the school with local fire and rescue personnel demonstrating methods used to extricate, assess, and treat the mock victims. This type of activity shows the entire school how the volunteer public safety system works.

In the modified Community Emergency Response Team course, students learn such things as how to determine if a building is safe to enter, how to use a fire extinguisher, and how to locate electrical boxes.

The Emergency Services Clubs program of Southern and Northern Garrett High Schools is providing a vital service to their school and home communities.

Todd Dyche, a science teacher at Southern Garrett High School, started the club and continues as club advisor. He is also president of the Garrett County Fire & Rescue Association and a member of the Grantsville Volunteer Fire Department.

Brad Frantz is the Director of the Garrett County Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management. He fosters working with the Garrett County Emergency Services Clubs as a way to increase volunteerism, especially in the local rescue squads and fire departments.

## **MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS MSP Sergeant Nathan H. Wheelock (flight paramedic for Trooper 2) & James MacKay (pilot for Trooper 2)**

On the morning of December 23, 2008, Maryland State Police Sergeant Nathan H. Wheelock performed three life-saving rescues while serving as the paramedic and hoist operator aboard MSP Aviation Command helicopter "Trooper 2." There had been a water main break in the vicinity of the Congressional Golf Course in Bethesda.

But this was no ordinary water main break. The water pipe was 5-1/2 feet in diameter. It spewed 150,000 gallons of water per minute on the hilly section of the road. The resulting flash flood trapped and pushed several cars and their occupants in a four-foot wall of water. One survivor later noted that water piled up to the window of her car, and ice formed on the windshield because of the 17-degree temperature outside. Montgomery County Fire Department Lieutenant Bill Phelps described "boulders coming down the road the size of laundry baskets. It felt like whitewater rapids."

Sergeant Wheelock quickly reconfigured the aircraft in preparation for a possible hoist rescue. Upon arriving overhead the scene, he accurately assessed the numerous hazards; these included power lines along each side of the two-lane road, wires crossing the road, and approximately

*(Continued on page 8)*

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards

*(Continued from page 7)*

100-foot trees forming a partial canopy over two vehicles that were trapped by the torrent of freezing water threatening to sweep them down the steep River Road and into the swollen Cabin John Creek. These two vehicles were not accessible to ground-based rescuers. Clearly the three people in these two vehicles were in a life-threatening situation.

There was room for the crew to position the helicopter between the trees and power lines, but the power lines in front of them would eliminate an escape route should something occur to the helicopter. If the crew conducted the hoists at an altitude above the obstructions, they would not have been able to see through the trees and direct the rescue basket to the trapped people. They had to get down into the trees to make a quick rescue.

James MacKay piloted the helicopter into position until he lost sight of the vehicles below him. Wheelock then became MacKay's eyes and guided the helicopter through verbal directions to MacKay. They settled into a hover between the trees and power lines with another set of power lines crossing in front of them. The flight crew had decided that if something went wrong, MacKay would drop the helicopter onto River Road to the left and ahead of the vehicles to avoid the trapped people. Any move-

ment to the left, right, or forward, and Trooper 2 would have impacted trees or power lines, but MacKay and Wheelock agreed to put their lives in danger to save three others.

MacKay was able to maintain a rock-solid hover, while Wheelock expertly maneuvered the rescue basket clear of all obstacles. He executed two flawless hoist rescues—in the first, saving a woman and in the second, saving a woman and her son. By the time of the second hoist rescue, however, the rescue basket and rescue cable were covered in so much ice that it could not be completely retracted. Wheelock had to calm the mother and her son, while keeping the basket from swinging and giving MacKay verbal directions to get Trooper 2 out of the dangerously confined area. With incredible coordination, Trooper 2 moved from the scene to a nearby field where Wheelock moved the mother and her son into the helicopter. All three survivors were flown by Trooper 2 to Suburban Hospital for further treatment.

Without question, the performance of Sergeant Wheelock and James MacKay was outstanding, courageous, well above the call of duty, and in a situation in which there was a definite risk to the lives of both men. At a scene filled with fear, confusion, and terrible destruction, these men brought life-saving skills while risking their own lives.

*(Continued on page 9)*



*MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS: (L-R) Kyrle Preis III (Fire Director, Baltimore County Fire Department), Don Kraft (Loyola Blakefield faculty), Kim DeMario (AED Coordinator & School Nurse at Loyola Blakefield), Jeremy Parr (athletic trainer at Loyola Blakefield), and Dr. Robert Bass (MIEMSS Executive Director).*

# MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards

(Continued from page 8)

**MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS**  
**Loyola Blakefield AED Program**  
**Don Kraft**  
**Jeremy Parr**

Loyola Blakefield has a Public Access Defibrillation Program. So when Joseph Roberts, a parent of a ninth-grade soccer player from Archbishop Curley High School, slumped in his bleacher seat before the start of a late-afternoon soccer game on October 8, 2008, Loyola staff knew what to do and did it!

Physical Education Chairman Don Kraft rushed to the side of Mr. Roberts and carried him from the bleachers to the ground so he could begin CPR. He also sent a student to get Jeremy Parr, an athletic trainer, so he could bring the AED. By the time Mr. Parr arrived, 9-1-1 had been called and a small group of parents were assisting Mr. Kraft. These included two Loyola fathers who were physicians and took over breathing and chest compressions and an Archbishop Curley father who held Mr. Roberts' head and neck in the right position to maintain an open airway.

After Mr. Parr applied the AED pads to Mr. Roberts, the AED indicated that a shockable rhythm was detected and, after responders moved clear of Mr. Roberts, delivered one shock. Following additional CPR, Mr. Roberts started to breathe and had a pulse. Mr. Parr applied a pulse oximeter to a finger of Mr. Roberts to monitor his

oxygen saturation and also continued to monitor his heart rate until Baltimore County EMS arrived. Paramedics then took over the medical assessment, treatment, and transport of Mr. Roberts.

At St. Joseph Medical Center, Mr. Roberts had a stent inserted into his completely blocked left main artery. Following quadruple bypass surgery when he was stable neurologically, Mr. Roberts is completely recovered and has no brain damage. His stay at St. Joseph Medical Center had a happy ending, but his story would have ended differently if Loyola Blakefield did not have an AED Program.



*Right Care When It Counts Award Winner Emily Cox with her three sisters.*



*Student members of the Garrett County Emergency Services Clubs (Outstanding EMS Program) attended the awards ceremony and cheered on their advisors*