

Maryland EMS News

For All Emergency Medical Care Providers

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MIEMSS Presents Annual EMS Awards

Forty-one years ago, President Gerald Ford signed the first official National Emergency Medical Services proclamation, recognizing the accomplishments of EMS providers and establishing the first National EMS Week. For many years, MIEMSS has held an annual award ceremony during EMS Week to recognize groups and individuals that have made extraordinary accomplishments in the service of prehospital care in 2013. This year's EMS Week theme is "Dedicated. For Life.," which is undeniably reflected in Maryland's EMS providers. MIEMSS is pleased to announce the twenty-three 2014 winners for the Maryland Star of Life Awards. For the May 21, 2014, awards ceremony, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley provided two Proclamations,

one recognizing EMS Week as May 18 – 24 and a second naming May 21, 2014, as EMS for Children Day.

This year the EMS for Children state and national program, a national initiative designed to reduce childhood death and disability due to severe illness or injury, also celebrates its 30th anniversary. The 2014 theme is: "Then, Now, Imagine...Honoring the Past, Experiencing the Present, and Visualizing the Future." As part of this program, several children and youth in Maryland that have demonstrated the *Steps to Take in an Emergency* or *Ways to be Better Prepared for an Emergency* receive "Right Care When It Counts" awards. This is the eleventh year that MIEMSS has conducted this award program.

The Right Care When It Counts Awards were presented during the first part of the two-part ceremony that took place at the Miller Senate Office Building in Annapolis. Five impressive young children received a Right Care award this year.

Lauren Hontz received an award for helping her family start "Lauren's Luggage," an organization that provides blankets, stuffed animals, and other comforting and necessary items for families whose lives have been disrupted by a disaster. Lauren was nine years old when her home was destroyed by a fire, forcing her and her family to leave behind the most basic necessities. It was this experience that inspired Lauren to want to give back to those in need after a disaster by providing things normally taken for granted.

Brayden Mitchell was 7 years old when he made a frantic phone call to 9-1-1 call because his mother was having extreme

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Right Care When It Counts awardee Lauren Hontz is pictured center. Joining Lauren, from left to right, are MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Pat Gainer, former Associate State EMS Medical Director for Pediatrics Dr. Joseph L. Wright, MIEMSS EMS for Children Director Cynthia Wright Johnson, and MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Dr. Richard L. Alcorta.

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difficulty breathing. Although he was very concerned for her well-being, Brayden was able to stay calm and provide the dispatcher with all the required information in order to get units to the location quickly.

Six-year-old **Kenneth Watson** called 9-1-1 for his mother who was having a significant seizure that left her unable to communicate or call for assistance. He was extremely knowledgeable of his mother's medical history, providing the dispatcher with important information for getting help to her quickly.

Kenneth also followed pre-arrival instructions that prevented his mother from suffering further injury to herself until EMS arrived.

Siblings **C.J. Cooksey and Carlee Cooksey**, who are 14 and 10 respectively, have volunteered much of their time at the Leonardtown Volunteer Rescue Squad helping with daily duties and with emergency drills. Both C.J. and Carlee have taken training in high-performance CPR; C.J. was able to earn his certificate and, when she's of age, Carlee will also take the certification test for her CPR card.

For the second part of the program, MIEMSS Acting Co-Executive Directors Patricia Gainer and Dr. Richard Alcorta presented 23 groups and individuals with the Maryland Stars of Life Awards in several categories. First, the **Star of Life Award**, given to individual(s) or teams for an outstanding rescue, was presented to 13 fire/rescue/EMS companies from Frederick County that extricated and treated a construction worker trapped in a trench. The following companies and jurisdictional programs each received a Star of Life Award:

- **New Market Volunteer Fire Company**
- **United Steam Engine Company #3**
- **Walkersville Volunteer Fire Company**
- **Walkersville Volunteer Rescue**
- **Fort Detrick Fire and Emergency Services**
- **Independent Hose Company**
- **Citizens Truck Company**
- **Spring Ridge Fire Station**
- **Libertytown Volunteer Fire Department**
- **Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services**
- **Frederick County Advanced Technical Rescue Team**
- **Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services**
- **Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services**

On September 24, 2013, an excavation crew was working to relocate a water main in Frederick County. A 9-1-1 caller reported that a person was pinned in a trench between two pipes and the trench was rapidly filling with water. By the time rescue personnel arrived, ballast had washed around the patient to his waist from the bottom of the trench. Water continued to fill the trench, and despite excavation efforts, reached the patient's chin. He was in and out of consciousness and hypothermic and needed a self-contained breathing apparatus to protect his airway from the rising water.

Crews used pumps to slow the rising water while the excavation company increased the opening at the end of the trench to allow more water to run away from the patient. Once a shoring system was in place, providers were able to assess and treat the patient and begin extrication. Although one leg was

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Right Care When It Counts awardee Brayden Mitchell is pictured center. Joining Brayden, from left to right, are MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Pat Gainer, former Associate State EMS Medical Director for Pediatrics Dr. Joseph L. Wright, MIEMSS EMS for Children Director Cynthia Wright Johnson, and MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Dr. Richard L. Alcorta.



Right Care When It Counts awardee Kenneth Watson is pictured center. Joining Kenneth, from left to right, are MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Pat Gainer, former Associate State EMS Medical Director for Pediatrics Dr. Joseph L. Wright, MIEMSS EMS for Children Director Cynthia Wright Johnson, and MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Dr. Richard L. Alcorta.

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freed, he was losing blood rapidly from the other still pinned below the knee, requiring a tourniquet. After three hours of rescue efforts, crews were finally able to separate the pipes crushing his leg. He was transported to the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center for treatment.

He had suffered significant blood loss from a venous bleed and acute respiratory failure, but was able to be discharged 15 days after the incident.

Next to receive awards were **William Kenney**, **Alexander Ketner**, and **Robert Lowmiller**, who were chosen to each receive an EMS Citizen Award. They were riding a

school bus on March 15, 2013, when it was involved in a serious crash with a motor vehicle. Mr. Kenney, aged 17 at the time, was a fire/rescue EMS student and rescue squad volunteer, and he did not hesitate to act. He took action to ensure the safety of his fellow students and the bus driver, assessing for injuries. He gathered the first aid kit from the bus and attempted to aid the driver of the vehicle, who had been ejected during the collision. Mr. Ketner called 9-1-1, explaining the situation and staying on the line until help arrived. Mr. Lowmiller remained on the bus, calming his fellow students and keeping them safe. Mr. Kenney, Mr. Ketner, and Mr. Lowmiller displayed bravery, critical thinking, quick response, compassion, caring, and heroism. Mr. Kenney has since gone on to become a Maryland EMT.

Jeremy Chism, EMT-IVT, was presented with MIEMSS Director's Award for Excellence in EMS. In December 2013 a call was dispatched to police and EMS for a possible domestic dispute. EMT-IVT Jeremy Chism, a member of the Valley Lee Fire Department and Rescue Squad responded from his nearby home, finding an injured woman lying in the middle of the street. EMT-IVT Chism immediately recognized that the patient had suffered a laceration to her neck and she was bleeding profusely. He placed light pressure over her wound, positioning her head in such a way to stop the bleeding and enabling her to breathe without restriction while awaiting the arrival of ground transportation. EMT-IVT Chism maintained this position while accompanying the patient to St. Mary's Hospital (MedStar) where she required immediate life-saving intervention and stabilization. EMT-IVT Chism was selected for this award because his quick action and tenacity directly saved this patient's life.

The **Maryland State Police Aviation Command AW-139 Helicopter Transition Program** received this year's Outstanding EMS Program Award for implementing the strategies of the Maryland State Police Aviation Command (MSPAC) Helicopter Technical Procurement Team in order to produce the safest, most modern, and efficient medevac program in the United States. This team formalized and implemented computerized risk matrix; adopted FAA Part 135 guidelines for

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Right Care When It Counts awardees C.J. (left) and Carlee (right) are pictured center. Joining C.J. and Carlee, from left to right, are MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Pat Gainer, former Associate State EMS Medical Director for Pediatrics Dr. Joseph L. Wright, MIEMSS EMS for Children Director Cynthia Wright Johnson, and MIEMSS Co-Executive Director Dr. Richard L. Alcorta.



The Maryland Star of Life Award was presented to representatives of New Market Volunteer Fire Company, United Steam Engine Company #3, Walkersville Volunteer Fire Company, Walkersville Volunteer Rescue, Fort Detrick Fire and Emergency Services, Independent Hose Company, Citizens Truck Company, Spring Ridge Fire Station, Libertytown Volunteer Fire Department, Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services, Frederick County Advanced Technical Rescue Team, Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, and Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services. The awardees are shown here with MIEMSS Co-Executive Directors Dr. Richard L. Alcorta (left) and Pat Gainer (right).