



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2016 EMS Advocate of the Year Award Recipients Announced

Clinton, Miss. – The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) announced the 2016 recipients of the EMS Advocate of the Year Award, a national award to recognize EMS professionals whose volunteer efforts advance EMS through educating and engaging elected government leaders, the EMS community, the wider healthcare community, and the public. NAEMT congratulates and thanks the recipients for their determined support on behalf of the EMS profession and our patients!

Two nominees were selected and formally presented with the award at the [EMS On The Hill Day](#) Briefing on April 19, in Arlington, Va. This year's recipients are:

Mark Babson (Idaho)

Babson has worked for Ada County Paramedics since 2005 and received his Paramedic Certificate in 2006. He worked closely with his colleagues in Ada to present House Bill 153 to establish Community Health EMS (CHEMS) within Idaho. Passage of this legislation recognized the role of Community Paramedic as a provider. Babson engaged legislators, community leaders, the EMS Bureau Chief for the state of Idaho, hospital administrators and heads of various entities within the state to help get this legislation passed. He also assisted in the development of CHEMS measures in concert with the State of Idaho. He has dedicated countless hours of service that will help the State build a program that works in the both the urban and very rural environment.

Babson also routinely provides “EMS tours” to local leaders and state officials to help people learn about EMS by “experiencing” a call from dispatch center through to the Emergency Department. In his nomination, Babson was said to exemplify the definition of “advocate” and is referred to as a person who loves bringing folks together to create better programs.

Leroy Garcia (Colorado)

Garcia works as a paramedic for American Medical Response and is the state Senator for District 3. He has used his awareness of the challenges in EMS to become a champion of EMS issues in the state legislature. His very first bill in the state's House of Representatives created the critical care paramedic program in Colorado.

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The bill created the critical care paramedic certification and instructed the Department of Health to create rules for critical care transport. It passed unanimously with bipartisan support.

Garcia has sponsored bills to provide emergency responders with protections and confidentiality on certain peer support communications after stressful encounters. He also sponsored EMS license plate legislation and a Veterans Fire Corps Act, which created Fire Corps training geared specifically to veterans. In addition, he successfully cosponsored and supported bills that enhance penalties for assault on EMS providers, and educated legislators of both parties on them. This year, he is sponsoring a bill to create the community paramedic certification and community integrated healthcare agencies in Colorado, and a bill that enhances and streamlines the certification of emergency medical responders.

In addition to the award, recipients receive expenses paid to the EMS On The Hill Day event. Nominations for this award are evaluated on the extent to which the nominee effectively advocates for the passage of EMS legislation by:

- Educating elected government leaders at the local, state or federal levels on the components of the legislation and how it supports the ability of EMS to provide quality patient care.
- Building strong relationships with the elected officials and their staff who have influence over the passage of EMS legislation.
- Educating fellow EMS professionals about EMS legislation; how the legislation would impact the ability of EMS to provide quality patient care, the importance of advocating for the legislation, and how to effectively advocate.
- Engaging members of the EMS profession in advocacy activities in support of the legislation.

About NAEMT

Formed in 1975 and more than 55,000 members strong, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) is the only national association representing the professional interests of all emergency and mobile healthcare practitioners, including emergency medical technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders, paramedics, advanced practice paramedics, critical care paramedics, flight paramedics, community paramedics, and mobile integrated healthcare practitioners. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military.

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