



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAEMT Announces the 2019 Recipients of the EMS Advocate of the Year Awards

Clinton, Miss. – The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) will present the 2019 EMS Advocate of the Year Awards on April 10 at EMS On The Hill Day in Arlington, VA. EMS Advocate of the Year Awards 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 these recipients for their determined support on behalf of the EMS profession and our patients!

Three EMS professionals were selected to receive this year's awards from nominations received from around the country. NAEMT congratulates the 2019 recipients:

Mark Kennedy, NRP, CCP (Illinois)

Mark is a paramedic for the Nauvoo Fire Protection District (NFPD) in Illinois and critical care paramedic for Henry County Health Center in Iowa. He was nominated by NFPD EMS Chief Victoria Gallaher for tireless efforts to educate lawmakers, advocate for passage of EMS legislation, and encouraging others to do the same. Mark was instrumental in obtaining recognition and licensure for the Advanced EMT level by meeting with state legislators and public health officials. He is the NAEMT Advocacy Coordinator for Illinois and reaches out to elected officials on issues important to EMS. He helped to recruit Rep. Darin LaHood as a member of the [Congressional EMS Caucus](#) and was part of a group that met with Senator Dick Durbin on rural EMS issues and solutions that were incorporated into the SIREN Act. "Thanks to Mr. Kennedy's exceptional advocacy, this important legislation was signed into law as part of the [2018 Farm Bill](#)," noted Sen. Durbin.

Dennis Russell, M.Ed., ATC, CSCS, NRP, CP (Maine)

Dennis is Dean of the accredited Education Department and also Community Paramedicine Program Manager for United Ambulance Service. He serves on the Maine Board of EMS and also chairs its Community Paramedicine Committee. Dennis advocates for the advancement of Community Paramedicine, broader scopes of practice for EMS practitioners, and improved reimbursement models for EMS agencies. He is currently collaborating on the development of standardized education curriculums for Community Paramedicine. He has brought awareness of the role of EMS to community partners, including hospital leadership, nursing, physician groups, and legislative liaisons. Dennis has a strong interest in how national EMS issues affect EMS agencies and practitioners in Maine. He also keeps congressional representatives informed on local and national EMS issues. Shaun St. Germain, Director of Maine EMS said, "I believe that Dennis Russell embodies the qualities we should all endeavor to emulate in an EMS leader."

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Kevin Spratlin, MS, NRP (Tennessee)

Kevin is a lieutenant with the Memphis Fire Department where he serves as coordinator of the Healthcare Navigator Program. He advocates at the local, state, and federal level for innovative EMS practices and appropriate reimbursement rates for EMS agencies. Kevin has met with congressional representatives in Washington, DC, to promote the implementation of Mobile Integrated Healthcare/Community Paramedicine (MIH-CP) programs. In Tennessee, he was instrumental in the passage of legislation that provides the foundation for Community Paramedicine and was recognized by then-Governor Bill Haslam for his advocacy efforts, ethical practice, and professionalism. Laura Brown of Innovate Memphis said, “Kevin has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the safety of citizens through EMS legislation advocacy.”

As part of the award, recipients have their expenses paid to participate in EMS On The Hill Day. 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 67,000 members strong, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians 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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