



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAEMT Announces 2024 Recipients of the EMS Advocate of the Year Awards

Clinton, Miss. – The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians ([NAEMT](https://www.naemt.org)) is pleased to announce the 2024 EMS Advocate of the Year Award recipients. Sponsored this year by Demers-Braun-Crestline-Medix, Solutions Group, and Stryker, the awards recognize EMS professionals whose volunteer efforts advance EMS through educating and engaging elected government leaders, EMS and healthcare communities, and the public. NAEMT congratulates these advocates and commends them for their tremendous efforts to advance EMS care. The awards will be presented on April 17 during [EMS On The Hill Day](#), the largest national advocacy event for the EMS profession.

Michael Loiz, Paramedic/EMT-P (Connecticut)

Michael Loiz has served EMS and Public Safety for over 34 years, mostly in leadership roles. He is Chief of Stratford EMS and an active EMS Instructor, teaching EMT and Paramedic programs. He is also a Public Safety Consultant and Expert Witness through his company, The Public Safety Consulting Group. He is the NAEMT Advocacy Coordinator for Connecticut and serves as the Legislative Chair of the Connecticut EMS Advisory Board, educating the legislature through fact sheets, direct and other communications. He has also instructed local municipal leaders on how to advocate for EMS-friendly legislation. Loiz has worked to align and coordinate legislative activities across several groups and to make information accessible to field personal, so they are more involved. Two recent advocacy achievements were in garnering support for EMS practitioners with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and obtaining increased reimbursement for EMS agencies from Medicare and Medicaid. To ensure his advocacy network has accurate and timely information, Loiz is active on social media. He created templates and other opportunities to make it easier for EMS practitioners to offer testimony on bills. He also includes legislative overviews in the courses he teaches to nurture EMS advocates.

Cathryn “Catie” Holstein, BA, Paramedic (Washington)

Catie Holstein is the State EMS Director for Washington State. Holstein began her EMS career as a firefighter/EMT and then became a paramedic. Driven by a passion for patient care, she aims to advance EMS systems to meet the changing needs of healthcare. She regularly responds to inquiries from legislative staff, aggregating input from stakeholders to provide an issue assessment and potential solution. She educates elected officials about the issues and opportunities to support the EMS profession. Holstein has built strong relationships with elected officials and their staff through networking, attending events such as town halls and committee meetings, and engaging in meaningful communication. Local officials hold her in high regard and view her as an expert on EMS policy. She encourages active participation in policy-making activities and provides suggestions and information for EMS stakeholders. Holstein motivates others in the EMS profession to engage in grassroots advocacy by highlighting the direct impact of their work. She provides accessible resources, encourages stakeholders to connect with their elected officials, and stresses the importance of collective action.

Scott Willits, NRP, BS, CPC (Oregon)

Scott Willits is a seasoned advocate, leader, and investor in healthcare transformation. He focuses on advancing patient-centric models through Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) and Community Paramedicine (CP). He dedicates himself to delivering innovative healthcare solutions. Willits has traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for paramedics' on-scene care and coordinated scenarios for members of Congress and their staff to experience receiving such care. Willits has built relationships, and has participated in many workgroups, organizations, and local/regional advisory groups. His efforts have helped garner support for MIH-CP. He has contributed to the success of key legislation, such as increased Medicaid rates for MIH-CP services and a new pathway for reimbursement of public MIH services. Willits, the NAEMT Advocacy Coordinator for Oregon, actively encourages others in the profession to advocate for EMS. He travels extensively to meet with and present content to leaders across the industry and across the country. He is an influencer in the advancement of EMS and mobile integrated health.

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 92,000 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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