



WINTER 2023

NAEMT NEWS

A quarterly publication of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians

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National Report on Engagement and Satisfaction in EMS Reveals What EMS Personnel Want from Employers

Across the nation, EMS agencies have sounded the alarm about ongoing difficulties with recruiting and retaining EMS personnel.

Equally worrisome: the labor shortages are taking a toll on the EMS personnel who remain on the job. EMS practitioners report feeling under strain due to heavier workloads, and pressure to work long hours, including excessive overtime. Some agencies have implemented mandatory overtime to ensure that ambulances are available to respond.

Against that challenging backdrop, NAEMT conducted a survey of field practitioners nationwide about various aspects of their work, including pay, how well supported they feel by employers, their feelings of satisfaction and engagement in their jobs, and if they had plans to leave the profession.

Nearly 1,300 paramedics, advanced EMTs, EMTs, and emergency medical responders in all 50 states, and representing all EMS delivery models, responded. The results painted a picture of a workforce that remains steadfast in caring for patients and serving the community, but is under a high degree of strain.

EMS practitioners also shared their ideas for how EMS agencies could improve retention, all of which was shared in our just-published report, *2022 National Survey on EMS Workforce Engagement and Satisfaction*.

Survey finds low pay and work-life balance are top concerns

In the survey, many respondents indicated that pay was a top concern – 63% said they felt their pay and benefits were not adequate for the work performed. Likewise,

SEE PAGE 8



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Outgoing FDNY EMS Chief Lillian Bonsignore looks back at her groundbreaking career.

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PRESTIGE



ELITE



PREMIER



DIAMOND



PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



ANNUAL

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What's On Deck for 2023

By Susan Bailey, MSEM, NRP

Greetings from Louisiana! I hope all of you were able to enjoy the holiday season

with family and friends, hopefully with a greater sense of peace and normalcy than we've felt during the last two years.

As I embark on my tenure as president of NAEMT, I am prouder than ever to be a part of the EMS profession, and thrilled to be leading our nation's largest EMS practitioner organization.

We have weathered so many trials and tribulations over the past several years – events that I could not have imagined when I started as an EMT for a hospital-based ambulance service in rural, east-central Louisiana in 1990.

Despite the challenges, I am grateful for, and proud of, the career path I chose. I moved to the Baton Rouge area in 1999 and worked for 17 years for a municipal third service EMS agency, where I was promoted through the ranks to assistant training director and paramedic program director. In 2016, I had the great honor of being selected as the NAEMT/NASCO Paramedic of the Year.

Since 2017, I have served as the director of the Louisiana Bureau of EMS. While we are small in number, we are proud of the customer service that we provide as the state's EMS regulatory agency. To ensure I could stay involved in one of my earliest passions, EMS education, I also accepted a position as part-time faculty at Columbia Southern University (CSU), teaching multiple courses such as EMS Operations and Personnel Management, Risk Management in EMS, and EMS Finance. I was honored to receive CSU's "Raising the Bar Award" in July.

As we start the New Year, I encourage you to join our advocacy efforts in support of the EMS profession. EMS On The Hill Day is scheduled for March 29-30, 2023. There are many issues to address with our congressional leaders – supply chain shortages, workforce shortages, accurately counting the number of EMS practitioners in the United States, and reimbursement reform – to just name a few. Become acquainted with your congressional representative and your senators. There is power in numbers, and the more practitioners who are contacting their congressional leaders, the more education concerning the EMS profession will be provided.

As your president, I will work with the board members to continue to support the initiatives we have worked so hard on over the last several years. These include advocating for reimbursement reform, alleviating workforce shortages, fixing supply-chain issues and supporting mental health resilience for practitioners.

We will continue to inform and engage our members through our monthly e-newsletter and quarterly printed newsletter, by publishing association news on our website, posting EMS and NAEMT news on our social media platforms, and through listening sessions with our members. (2023 dates coming soon).

We will also expand and improve our engagement with members through a new mobile app to alert members to advocacy opportunities, special benefit offers, and course locations. We also will produce monthly NAEMT podcasts from board members, medical directors, and other subject matter experts on NAEMT initiatives and key EMS events, trends, and news on a national level.

Another initiative that's in the early stages: exploring ways to vet mental health clinicians and treatment centers for specialization in EMS practitioner mental healthcare. Our members have told us in our listening sessions and in our national surveys that maintaining their mental health and well-being can be tough given the job-related stress that we face. Our goal is to be able to confidently direct EMS practitioners to therapists and other resources who understand EMS and are best positioned to help.

The strength of our association comes from our members. I look forward to working with NAEMT members, staff, board members, committees, councils, and our membership, education and advocacy coordinators, to strengthen and advance the EMS profession. Thank you, NAEMT members, for your confidence in me to be your president for the coming two years. I look forward to working with you to accomplish great things for our profession.

About NAEMT President Susan Bailey, MSEM, NRP

Susan Bailey is an experienced and dedicated long-time NAEMT volunteer leader. She has served on the NAEMT Education Committee, as vice chair of the Advocacy Committee, chair of the Disaster Preparedness Committee, and a member of the Executive Committee. She has served as NAEMT's representative on the CAPCE Board of Directors, and has attended many national conferences and meetings as NAEMT's representative.

SAVE THE DATE!

EMS On The Hill Day 2023 is Back, In Person, in Washington, D.C.!

EMS On The Hill Day 2023 is back as an in person event! On March 30, join your EMS colleagues on Capitol Hill for a day of grassroots advocacy on behalf of EMS and the communities we serve.

The annual event brings together hundreds of EMS professionals from around the country to Washington, D.C., to meet with the elected officials who make decisions that impact our workforce and our patients. NAEMT has proudly hosted the event for the past 13 years.

"We are so looking forward to getting back to Capitol Hill," said NAEMT President Susan Bailey.

During the last three years, a time when Capitol Hill visits were curtailed due to the pandemic and security concerns, NAEMT has been able to schedule hundreds of successful remote meetings with members of Congress, she added.

"But we all know that to make connections, and make the biggest impact, it's important for us also to be visible on Capitol Hill," Bailey said. "Our presence reminds elected officials of the tremendous service we provide to our nation, and the issues that matter to us."

The legislative priorities identified for the 2023 event include:

- ✓ Increasing funding for federal grant programs to assist EMS agencies with hiring and training personnel, and equipment and supplies.
- ✓ Increasing the reimbursement rates for ambulance services and securing reimbursement for EMS care without transport.
- ✓ Passage of the EMS Counts Act, to ensure that EMS practitioners are accurately counted in labor statistics that are used to allocate resources and prepare for mass casualty and major disasters.
- ✓ Federal funding for mental health services to support the health and well-being of the EMS workforce.



Who can participate?

All EMS professionals who are interested in advocating on behalf of your EMS colleagues and patients.

What's the schedule of events?

EMS On The Hill Day 2023 will span two days.

Wed., March 29, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The event kicks off with a briefing and welcome reception at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, 1700 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA.

Thurs., March 30, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visits with members of Congress and staff at their offices on Capitol Hill. A post Hill-visit networking reception will immediately follow. Registration and hotel information can be found at naemt.org/events/register.

What's covered at the briefing?

You'll hear presentations about what to expect during your Capitol Hill visit, review the legislative priorities, and have a chance to meet with your EMS colleagues who will be part of your state delegation.

Who will I meet with on Capitol Hill?

Members of Congress appreciate hearing from their constituents. NAEMT will work to schedule meetings for you with the House representative from your congressional district, as well as your senators. You will also attend meetings with the other delegates from your state, so you will likely meet with their legislators as well.

Why should I participate in EMS On The Hill Day?

We feel our past participants say it best. "What I like most about participating is feeling like I'm actually part of the process," said Shaun St. Germain, a paramedic and EMS educator from Maine. "It's easy to complain. It's another thing entirely to take steps toward solving those problems. I left Capitol Hill feeling like I made important strides toward solving some of the issues we face."

Advocacy Update

NAEMT Reaffirms Support for Accreditation of Paramedic Education Programs

In an updated position statement, NAEMT reaffirmed support for requiring accreditation of paramedic education programs. Accreditation assesses the “quality of institutions and their programs and services by measuring them against agreed-upon standards to ensure those standards are met.”

“NAEMT supports accreditation of paramedic programs to verify that institutions are preparing competent entry-level paramedics capable of becoming personnel for employment in the EMS workforce,” the statement says. However, recognizing the costs of accreditation, the position statement noted that more than one accrediting organization should be considered.

Currently, CoAEMSP is the only paramedic program accreditation organization in the U.S. To become accredited, education programs must pay application fees, site visit fees, renewal fees and other costs associated with preparing for accreditation.

Request for \$15 Million in SIREN Funding

In letters to Senate and House leaders, NAEMT and nine other national organizations requested \$15 million in funding for SIREN grants to support rural EMS agencies in fiscal year 2023. The grants, also called the Rural EMS Training and Equipment Assistance (REMSTEA) program, can be used to pay for EMS equipment, training and personnel.

The most recent House version of the bill to fund the grants includes \$10 million, while the Senate bill includes \$15 million. The bills must be reconciled before final passage.

NAEMT Asks Congress to Extend and Boost Medicare Ambulance Add-On Payments

In a request to House and Senate leadership, NAEMT and a coalition of national fire and EMS organizations asked that Congress extend and boost the Medicare add-on payments for ground ambulance service to reflect cost increases.

The letter to Congressional leaders was sent by NAEMT, the American Ambulance Association (AAA), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and the National Rural Health Association (NRHA).

In it, the coalition asked that the Medicare add-ons be raised from 2% to 3.4% for ambulance services provided in urban areas, 3% to 4.3% in rural areas, and 22.6% to 26.7% in super rural areas for the next five years. The current add-on payments were set to expire at the end of 2022.

“Ground ambulance service organizations and fire departments are facing unprecedented financial challenges. It is critical that Congress first and foremost extend the

temporary increases, and also raise the percentages to reflect the escalating costs of providing vital emergency 911 and non-emergency ambulance services,” the letter states.

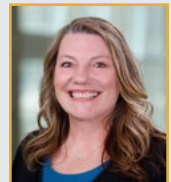
“Now more than ever, the temporary Medicare increases are critical to the survival of ambulance services across the U.S. and in particular in underserved parts of our country.”

View all NAEMT position statements, letters and comments at naemt.org > Advocacy.

Welcome New Advocacy Coordinators!

NAEMT advocacy coordinators build and support NAEMT’s advocacy efforts in their state. Welcome to our newly appointed advocacy coordinators, and thank you for your efforts on behalf of your EMS colleagues.

- Wilma Vinton, Alaska
- May Braido, California
- Jeremy Sidlauskas, Florida
- Jeremy Lingard, Illinois
- Stephanie Norwood, Louisiana
- Christian Zazzali, Maryland
- Deb Von Seggern-Johnson, Nebraska
- Steven McDade, South Carolina
- Glenn Glorioso, Virginia



Becoming an advocacy coordinator is a great way to get more involved with NAEMT. Advocacy coordinators communicate with the elected officials in their state about important issues impacting EMS, help NAEMT build a grassroots network of EMS advocates, and attend monthly virtual briefings.

We have several states with open advocacy coordinator positions. To learn more or apply, visit naemt.org > Advocacy > Advocacy Coordinators.

Growing the NAEMT EMS Political Action Committee (PAC)



The NAEMT EMS PAC is a key part of the association's strategy to advocate on behalf of the EMS profession, our patients and communities.

Voluntary contributions made to the NAEMT EMS PAC help advance legislative goals by supporting elected representatives who understand the vital role of EMS.

"The PAC helps elect and re-elect federal candidates who are friendly to the EMS profession and our mission to serve," said Steven Kroll, NAEMT Region I director and NAEMT EMS PAC chair. "Each individual who contributes to the PAC helps us stand together and promote the strength and future of EMS."

Other key components of NAEMT's advocacy strategy include grassroots advocacy by members and NAEMT's professional lobbyists in Washington, D.C.

"The NAEMT EMS PAC gives a united voice to thousands of paramedics and EMTs, so that candidates for Congress are made aware of the policy priorities of the EMS community," Kroll said. "I hope you will join me in contributing to the PAC fund so that we can create strength in numbers and have a seat at the table."

To make a voluntary contribution, visit [naemt.org > Advocacy > NAEMT EMS PAC](https://naemt.org/advocacy/naemt-emt-pac).

For more information about the NAEMT EMS PAC, email advocacy@naemt.org.

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See how **Bangs Ambulance** is using FirstNet to stay connected and serve its community.

Visit FirstNet.com/ems to learn more and sign up today.



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when asked about their degree of satisfaction with their current job, pay and benefits was the source of the most discontent. Asked for advice on how agencies could improve retention, the vast majority of respondents said boosting pay and benefits could improve retention.

However, a second major source of concern was work-life balance. Among those who stated they had plans to leave EMS, work-life balance edged out pay as the top reason. Many respondents wanted relief from long hours and a lack of flexibility in their schedules. They felt overworked, which was leading to mental fatigue and burnout. Some mentioned workforce shortages as the underlying cause of their stress – “Have enough staffing to avoid working ourselves to death,” wrote one respondent.

Among EMS practitioners, low wages and difficulties achieving a work-life balance go hand in hand. In the survey, 60% of respondents said they worked two or more jobs. As one put it: “Significantly increase pay so employees don’t have to work several jobs to make enough to live and can avoid burnout.”

Changes Needed

Boosting the pay of EMS practitioners must be a top priority for EMS leaders and local, state and federal government officials. NAEMT has long advocated for structural changes in reimbursement to enable EMS agencies to pay more. Current constraints include the under-valuing of EMS from Medicare and Medicaid relative to the cost of providing services, and the chronic underfunding of EMS by some city, county and state governments. We will continue our efforts to advocate for regulatory and legislative changes that will ensure EMS is properly resourced throughout our country.

But research shows that two other measures – employee satisfaction and engagement – can also have a significant impact on whether someone stays or

goes. Research from Gallup has shown that engaged employees perform better on multiple performance outcomes. They have lower turnover, lower absenteeism, and fewer patient safety incidents or safety incidents of any kind.

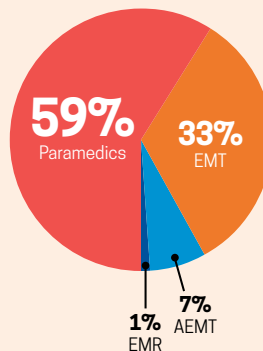
- Employee satisfaction is the extent to which employees are happy or content with their jobs or work environment.
- Employee engagement is the extent to which employees feel invested in the success of an organization. According to hireology.com, engaged employees feel “connected and committed to their organization.”

While wages and benefits certainly impact how someone feels about their job, there are many factors that go into building a satisfied and engaged workforce. These include making employees feel appreciated and respected, recognizing employees for quality performance, providing regular feedback, and improving communications from management. Each of these are issues EMS employers can address, starting today.

Survey Demographics

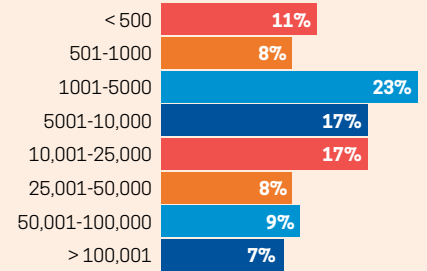
All respondents’ primary job for their EMS agency was a field practitioner. 88% worked for agencies that either exclusively or mostly provided 911 response; 12% worked for agencies that either exclusively or mostly provided inter-facility transports.

TRAINING LEVEL OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



Agency Characteristics

Respondents worked for agencies with a range of call volumes, including paid and volunteer services, and representing every type of delivery model.



Pay in EMS

The majority of EMTs reported making under \$40,000 a year.

- 41% of EMTs make less than \$15/hour.
- 36% make \$15-\$20/hour.

77% of EMTs make under \$40,000 a year.

Many paramedics make substantially more, with most earning between \$42,000 and \$80,000 a year.

- Nearly half (49%) make \$21 - \$30 an hour.
- 19% make \$31 to \$40/hour.

68% of paramedics make between \$42,000 and \$80,000 a year.

Plans to Leave EMS

The survey found that 9% of respondents had plans to leave the profession within the year, and 18% planned to leave within 3 years. Another 18% planned to be gone within 6 years.

That means 45% of EMS practitioners plan on leaving the profession within 6 years.

41% of EMTs plan on leaving EMS within 6 years.

47% paramedics plan on leaving EMS within 6 years.

➔ READ THE FULL REPORT, 2022 National Survey on EMS Workforce Satisfaction and Engagement, at naemt.org.

Reasons for Leaving EMS

Many respondents cited a combination of reasons for leaving the EMS profession.



What Respondents Had to Say About Why They Are Leaving

Many expressed frustration with a job that doesn't pay well yet requires so much from them.

- Too many hours for not enough pay.
- Not paid enough or respected enough for the work.
- Physical demands of the job have taken a toll on my physical health.

Pay not keeping up with inflation and cost of living, and not a clear path to move up and make enough in the EMS field.

The standard of compensation is just absurd for someone who not only has a special skill set, but who has to sacrifice so much personally just to do this profession.

Making \$16 an hour to destroy my body for what?

Lack of professional development opportunities. If I become an RN, the sky's the limit. If I stay where I am, there's nowhere for me to go.

I don't believe I will be able to work longer due to mental fatigue.

Low pay, aging equipment, management failures to employees, scheduling and failure to take care of employees.

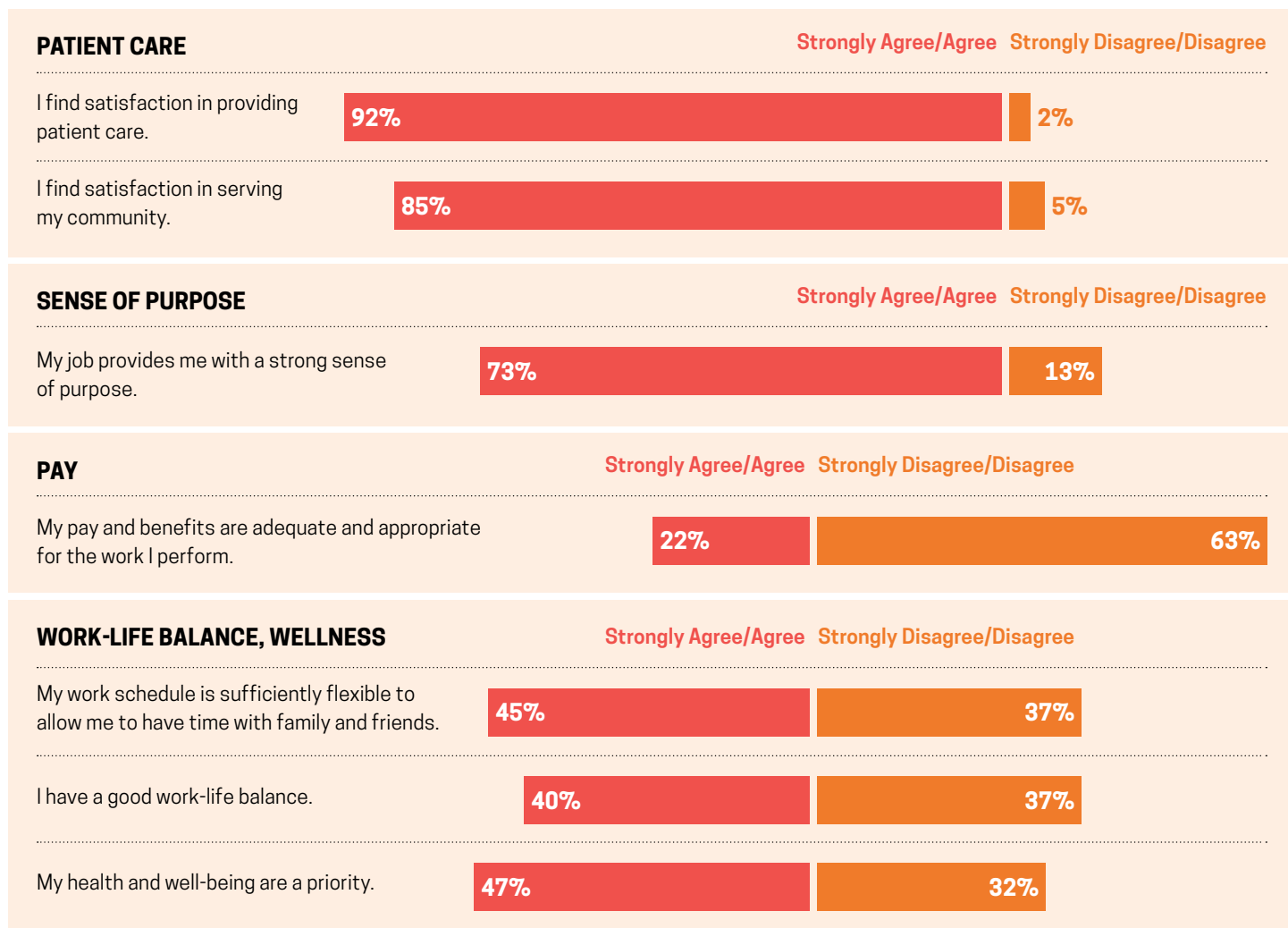
When They Leave, Where Are EMS Practitioners Going?

- About 27% plan to stay in the healthcare field, only in a different job.
- About 37% are leaving the healthcare field.
- 36% haven't yet decided.
- Nearly half (49%) of respondents say they will need additional training and education, while 18% say they won't. The remainder don't know.



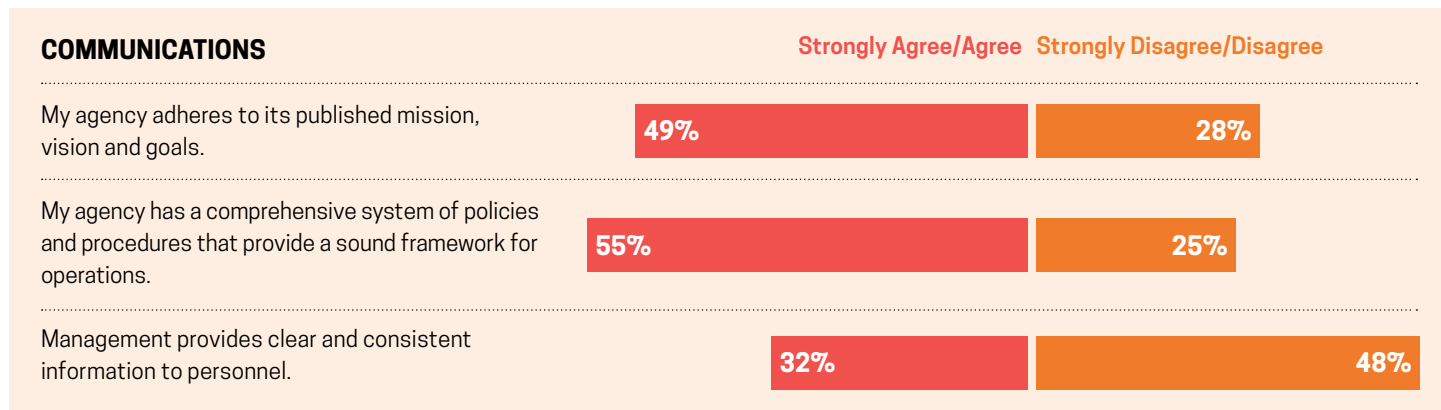
Job Satisfaction in EMS

EMS practitioners were asked to rate their beliefs on a series of statements about aspects of their job that impact satisfaction. Respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Neutral answers were omitted.



How Well Do Employers Support and Engage EMS Practitioners?

Respondents were asked to rate their beliefs on a series of statements on EMS agency policies and practices that impact how well supported employees feel in doing their jobs, and employee engagement. Respondents could choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Neutral answers were omitted.



EQUIPMENT

Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree

I am provided with the appropriate equipment and supplies to perform my job.

69%

18%

MANAGEMENT

Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree

I feel valued by my employer.

35%

42%

I feel my supervisor is invested in my success.

45%

31%

There is mutual respect between EMS practitioners and managers.

40%

37%

Practitioners can share concerns and problems with management without fear of retaliation.

40%

39%

My agency acts on employee feedback.

29%

48%

CULTURE OF ENGAGEMENT

Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree

My agency fosters teamwork, inclusiveness and camaraderie.

39%

37%

My agency supports my health, wellness and resilience.

38%

37%

RECOGNITION, FEEDBACK

Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree

My agency has a constructive quality improvement program through which practitioners receive feedback on performance and outcomes.

36%

39%

Management provides regular constructive feedback on my overall performance as an employee.

28%

48%

My agency provides easily accessible patient outcome information to its EMS practitioners.

28%

48%

My agency shows support and demonstrates recognition of its EMS practitioners during National EMS Week.

43%

33%

Management provides recognition and praise for excellent performance.

35%

40%

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree

My agency offers training and mentoring opportunities for practitioners.

51%

27%

NAEMT ANNUAL MEETING & EVENTS 2022

A RECAP

Orlando's warm breezes and famous attractions were the perfect backdrop for the 2022 NAEMT Annual Meeting. Held in conjunction with EMS World Expo, the meeting is an opportunity for NAEMT members to reconnect with colleagues and friends, get to know association leaders, celebrate outstanding achievements in EMS, and of course, socialize in a fun and relaxing environment.

Other events hosted by NAEMT in Orlando included several education workshops, the renowned World Trauma Symposium, receptions, and meetings to update members on association activities and chart the course for the coming year.



OCTOBER 10

NAEMT International Reception

After a two-year hiatus, NAEMT was thrilled to welcome colleagues to the International Reception. The reception brings together EMS professionals from around the world to share ideas, get connected to the global EMS community, and make lasting friendships.

ALSO ON OCT. 10: The NAEMT Board met and received updates from several national EMS organizations, and NAEMT held two pre-conference workshops: the Mental Health Resilience Officer (MHRO) course and the Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) 10th Edition instructor update.



SAVE THE DATE

The 2023 NAEMT Annual Meeting, will be held Sept. 18-20, in New Orleans, in conjunction with EMS World Expo. NAEMT members save \$125 on Expo registration.

World Trauma Symposium Held In Person and Live-Streamed

The 2022 World Trauma Symposium was a resounding success. Featuring presentations by U.S. and international experts in prehospital care on topics ranging from the response to the Beirut Port explosion to treating burn and penetrating chest trauma, over 430 participants heard about the latest research, best practices and lessons learned on prehospital trauma care.

The World Trauma Symposium was created by NAEMT's Prehospital Trauma Committee to offer EMS practitioners a forum for hearing updates on trauma research, debates among top experts, time for participant questions, and opportunities for networking.

This year's symposium was offered both in person in Orlando and livestreamed for those who could not travel to Orlando. Dr. Warren Dorlac and Dr. Margaret Morgan, both trauma surgeons with years of military and civilian experience, moderated. Dorlac is the medical director for the NAEMT PHT committee; Morgan is associate medical director.



WORLD TRAUMA SYMPOSIUM AWARDS



Shawky Amine Eddine, MD, was recognized as the 2022 Scott B. Frame Memorial Lecturer for his keynote presentation on the medical response to the Beirut Port explosion, and a career dedicated to prehospital trauma care and military medicine.

Riana Constantinou, director of EMS for Cyprus, was recognized with the 2022 Scott B. Frame Service Award. She is affiliate faculty for several NAEMT courses, and has served as the vice chair of NAEMT's Regional European Education Committee. She has helped establish new NAEMT training centers in Greece, Kenya, Romania, Georgia, Bulgaria, Lebanon and the Czech Republic.

Eileen Bulger, MD, FACS, received the 2022 Dr. Norman E. McSwain, Jr., Leadership Award. A renowned trauma surgeon, researcher and educator, Bulger serves as the chief of trauma at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle and professor of surgery at University of Washington. She is the immediate past chair of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma (COT), and currently serves as COT medical director.



NAEMT Affiliate Advisory Council Meeting and Luncheon

Over 70 representatives from state EMS associations, federal partners, national EMS associations, public health, EMS agency leaders, NAEMT board members and advocacy coordinators attended the Affiliate Advisory Council Meeting to discuss urgent issues facing EMS at the state and local levels. Panelists included leaders from AAA, AIMHI, IAEMSC, IAFF, NAEMSE, NAEMSP and state EMS associations. Attendees also received a briefing from the policy experts at Winning Strategies Washington and the National Conference of State Legislatures. The event was moderated by Chris Way, Affiliate Advisory Council chair.



General Membership Meeting and Awards Presentation

The NAEMT General Membership Meeting and Awards Presentation highlights the association's accomplishments, recognizes the service of NAEMT's volunteer leaders, and celebrates outstanding achievement with the presentation of the National EMS Awards of Excellence and other national EMS awards. Jana Williams from the National EMS Memorial Service led a prayer for the EMS heroes who lost their lives in the line-of-duty. The following awards were presented:

PRESIDENTIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The NAEMT Presidential Leadership Awards recognize dedicated individuals for their outstanding contributions to EMS and our association. 2022 honorees were:

Jana Williams and **Rachel Tester** from the National EMS Memorial Service for their volunteer efforts to recognize and honor EMS professionals who have made the ultimate sacrifice in serving their patients.

Tim Rubert from Bound Tree Medical for his tireless advocacy for EMS workforce development funding, working with Congressional leaders to advance EMS legislation, and helping to lead the effort to send donated medical supplies to Ukraine.

Mieko Doi from FirstNet®, Built with AT&T, for her advocacy and support for EMS practitioner health and well-being. Doi and her organization provided financial support that enabled NAEMT to develop the Mental Health Resilience Officer (MRHO) course. In addition, FirstNet sponsored 50 MHRO scholarships that were awarded to NAEMT members during EMS Week.

Dr. Roxolana Horbowyj, for her service to Ukrainians by training them in bleeding control and other life-saving techniques. Horbowyj introduced TCCC and PHTLS to Ukrainians several years ago. At the start of the Russian invasion in February, she began offering remote Stop The Bleed courses and other education for civilians, first responders, military personnel and medical providers.

Rocco V. Morando Lifetime Achievement Award



Baxter Larmon, Ph.D., MICP, received the 2022 Rocco V. Morando Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifetime of commitment to excellence in EMS. The award is NAEMT's most prestigious and is sponsored by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT).

For over 40 years, Larmon has been involved in EMS as an EMT, lifeguard-paramedic, firefighter-paramedic, educator, researcher, mentor and author. He is a professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and emeritus director of the Center for Prehospital Care and the Prehospital Care Research Forum (PCRF).

Larmon is a leader in EMS and true friend to many. His interests run the gamut from best practices, research, evidence-based medicine, community health, patient safety, and mentoring. Throughout his career, Larmon has presented at hundreds of national and international conferences, authored 90 journal publications and four textbooks.

Larmon "is a visionary who sees our investments in innovation and the EMS workforce as being vital to the future of our EMS profession," said Bruce Evans, NAEMT immediate-past president.

Dr. Kevin Mackey, NREMT board chair said: "When anyone in medicine thinks of Dr. Larmon, whether it is a seasoned firefighter doing their 10th EMT recert, a medical student learning to read an EKG, a state director being informed about cutting-edge research that will improve patient care, or an audience held captivated by his ability to teach through storytelling – when anyone at any level in medicine thinks of Dr. Larmon, they think of a passionate professional, an energetic, spontaneous, and fun ambassador of EMS who has inspired generations of EMS professionals."

NATIONAL EMS AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

The National EMS Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding contributions to emergency medical care.

- **John Ehrhart**, EMT-P, San Diego, California
NAEMT/Prodigy Paramedic of the Year
- **Eldon Headrick**, Norwich, Kansas
NAEMT/Demers-Braun-Crestline-Medix EMT of the Year
- **Dan Talbert**, MHS, EMT-P, FPC, St. Augustine, Florida
NAEMT/Jones & Bartlett Learning Public Safety Group
EMS Educator of the Year
- **TSGT Jack Williams**, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska
NAEMT/North American Rescue Military Medic of the Year
- **Dan Godbee**, MD, FACEP, NREMT-P, TP-C, FP-C, CCP-C, Zachary, Louisiana
NAEMT/Bound Tree EMS Medical Director of the Year
- **Mark X. Cicero**, MD, FAAP, Cromwell, Connecticut
NAEMT-AAP/Handtevy Pediatric EMS
- **Delaware County EMS**, Delaware, Ohio
Dick Ferneau Career EMS Service of the Year
NAEMT-ACEP/Technimount EMS Safety in EMS
- **Utah Navajo Health System EMS**, Montezuma Creek, Utah
EMS World Volunteer EMS Service of the Year
- **Lainey Volk**, Friday Harbor, Washington
EMS World/Dynarex EMS Caring
- **Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue**, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida
EMS World/FirstNet, Built with AT&T Wellness and Resilience



ALSO ON OCT. 11: NAEMT held the EMS Safety 3rd Edition course as a preconference workshop.



Enjoying an Evening With Colleagues at the NAEMT Member Reception

NAEMT members and invited guests enjoyed connecting with colleagues at the NAEMT Member Reception. The annual event is a chance to meet fellow EMS professionals from around the U.S. and the world, share stories, network and best of all, enjoy the company of friends.

NAEMT Faculty Meeting

Nearly 150 NAEMT instructors attended the NAEMT Faculty Meeting to hear updates on NAEMT courses, reports from NREMT, IBSC and IPR, and for an open forum on hot topics in EMS education. A highlight was the presentation of the Education Service Awards, which recognize outstanding contributions to NAEMT education. A reception immediately followed. 2022 honorees included:

- **Jeff White**, West Virginia state education coordinator, for his work as an author of the EMS Safety Course and reviewer of the EMS Safety Officer Course. White has excelled as an NAEMT affiliate faculty and instructor for PHTLS, AMLS, EMS Safety and EVOS.
- **Oscar Figueroa**, for bringing NAEMT education to more prehospital practitioners in El Salvador. He has taught PHTLS, AMLS, EPC, FOTS, PTEP, GEMS, AHDR and TECC to hundreds of students there.
- **Marsha Frontz**, Kentucky state education coordinator, for bringing NAEMT education to hard-to-reach areas in Kentucky. She has excelled as an NAEMT affiliate faculty and instructor for PHTLS, AMLS, TCCC and TECC.
- **Peter Laitinen**, Region 1 education coordinator and Massachusetts state education coordinator, who served as a CAPCE reviewer for the EPC 4th Edition and NAEMT education



webinars, and helped NAEMT obtain nursing credit for TCCC. As affiliate faculty for PHTLS, AMLS and TCCC, he has helped to build and strengthen his region's education network, setting up new training centers, and mentoring new state education coordinators.

- **Tomas Wetterling**, MD, who has excelled as an active PHTLS instructor and the PHTLS medical director for Sweden. We deeply appreciate his tremendous work in translating the PHTLS 9th Edition textbook into Swedish, and his valuable insights and expertise as a member of the Regional European Education Committee.

ALSO ON OCT 12: The Latin American Education Committee, Regional European Education Committee, and Mideast Education Committee met. (Other NAEMT committees that did not meet during the annual meeting met remotely during September and October.)

Paramedics, *Ready to Earn Your Degree?*

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At Columbia Southern University, paramedics may gain academic credit from their previously earned paramedic certificate toward an Associate of Science in emergency medical services.

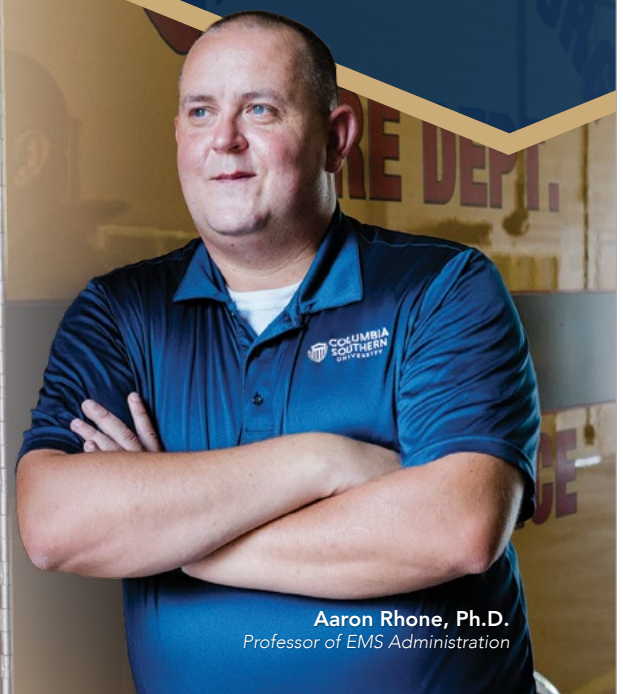
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Located in Orange Beach, Ala. Transferring credits does not guarantee reduced tuition or number of courses.



Aaron Rhone, Ph.D.
Professor of EMS Administration

Explore NAEMT Courses in Our Latest Education Catalog

Check out NAEMT's 2022-2023 Education Catalog for a full list of NAEMT courses available in 2023. NAEMT curriculum is evidence based, field tested, and quality assured. Many courses are offered in flexible formats – classroom, online or combination classroom/online formats.

Also in the catalog: a step-by-step guide to how to become an NAEMT instructor or NAEMT training center. Share the catalog with your EMS colleagues, training officers, and medical directors, and ask them to bring the best EMS education to your agency!

"NAEMT is the premier provider of EMS-specific continuing education... We are proud to have been a provider of NAEMT education programs for more than 30 years."

Jay Gould, Director, Center for Trauma & Critical Care Education,
Virginia Commonwealth University



➔ View NAEMT's 2022-2023 Education Catalog at naemt.org/education.

NAEMT Webinars: Free CE for NAEMT Members!

NAEMT webinars feature timely topics in EMS clinical care and operations, presented by leading experts in their fields.

NAEMT members earn free CE credit for attending the *live* webinars. Recorded webinars are available for viewing at any time in the NAEMT Member Portal at naemt.org. (CE credit is only offered for the live webinars).

Look for upcoming webinars in your email and NAEMT Pulse!

RECORDED Defining the Standard of Care in Prehospital Airway Management

Airway management is one of the most critical interventions EMS clinicians perform. The standard of care for these procedures is typically defined by legal cases and textbooks, but these

are usually out of date by the time they get to clinicians. Dr. Henry Wang and Dr. Jeff Jarvis discussed the recent National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP) compendium of peer-reviewed documents, which provides an up-to-date summation of current evidence and controversies.

RECORDED Strategies for Creating a Culture of Engagement in EMS

EMS managers can improve retention by creating a culture of workforce engagement within their EMS agency. This webinar offered insights from EMS managers from a variety of EMS delivery models on cost-effective strategies they have implemented to engage their workforce, increase recruitment and retention, and minimize turnover costs.



Get Ready for the PHTLS 10th Edition

NAEMT's Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) is recognized as the EMS profession's premier continuing education program for prehospital emergency care. Developed by NAEMT in cooperation with the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Trauma (ACS-COT) and taught by over 9,700 instructors worldwide, PHTLS has helped hundreds of thousands of EMS practitioners master critical techniques for saving the lives of multi-system trauma patients.

In keeping with that tradition of excellence, PHTLS recently underwent a review and revision. The review process ensures that PHTLS, and all NAEMT courses, continue to reflect the most up-to-date evidence, and that the learning experience is engaging and effective for students.

The new, 10th Edition of PHTLS will be available to NAEMT training centers starting in April 2023. NAEMT recruited leading subject matter experts from around the world for the review and revision, said Dr. Andrew Pollak, PHTLS medical editor.

"This amazing group of physicians and prehospital practitioners poured their passion and expertise into this 10th edition to ensure it is an up-to-date, evidence-based resource," said Pollak, chief clinical officer of the University of Maryland School of Medicine and medical director of the Baltimore County Fire Department.

"We were so fortunate to be able to bring together some of the greatest thought leaders in prehospital trauma to work on the 10th edition. Understanding the critical role of the prehospital practitioner to the survival of the trauma patient, each of our chapter editors



applied their expertise to ensure that the full spectrum of trauma care was addressed."

The new textbook features an inspiring forward from Dr. Eileen Bulger, immediate past chair of ACS-COT, who reminds us of Dr. Norman McSwain's words: "Trauma care begins when the first emergency medical technician or first responder arrives on the scene, not when the patient arrives at the hospital." The late Dr. McSwain was a renowned trauma surgeon from New Orleans and the founder of PHTLS.

Trauma care begins when the first emergency medical technician or first responder arrives on the scene, not when the patient arrives at the hospital.

The PHTLS 10th Edition textbook is rich with vital information for prehospital practitioners. Some key updates include:

- ✓ The Scene Management chapter provides an emphasis on situational awareness, safe positioning of an apparatus at the scene of an incident in traffic, enhanced information on active assailant hazards, and updated

information on PPE in the context of airborne illness transmission.

- ✓ The Patient Assessment and Management chapter provides an advanced discussion about the challenges of prolonged scene time, the relative value of a definitive airway versus an advanced airway, pain management and an introduction of the new ACS National Guidelines for the Field Triage of Injured Patients.
- ✓ The Airway and Ventilation chapter provides updated guidance on the use of supraglottic airways, and has removed advanced airway techniques that are rarely employed and not evidence based, such as needle cricothyrotomy.
- ✓ The Head and Neck Trauma chapter provides an enhanced discussion of mild TBI, an expanded discussion of categories of intracranial hemorrhage, and the challenges of coagulopathy in TBI patients.
- ✓ The Spinal Trauma chapter removes references to short boards and short extrication devices, which are no longer commonly used and are not evidence based. The chapter also emphasizes that the use of spinal motion restriction should consider individual challenges in patient transport, including comfort and risk of

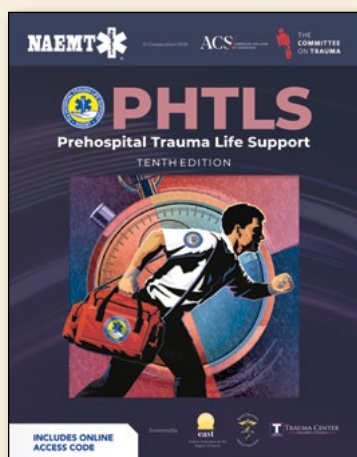


airway compromise or pressure sores.

- ✓ The Abdominal Trauma chapter included more content on traumatic injuries in pregnant patients, such as chest tube placement, commonly encountered injury patterns, and specific risks based on injury types, as well as the emerging role of prehospital blood transfusion in hemorrhagic shock in reducing 30-day mortality.

PHTLS is endorsed by the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma (EAST), the Special Operations Medical Association (SOMA), and the Trauma Center Association of America (TCAA).

Important Dates for PHTLS Instructors



The online PHTLS 10th Edition Instructor Update (English version) will be available in March 2023.

The PHTLS 10th Edition Instructor Toolkit and Course Manual will be available by April, 2023. PHTLS instructors will receive an email from NAEMT when it becomes available.

The PHTLS 10th Edition Refresher course will be available in Fall 2023.

NAEMT is collaborating with the Committee on TCCC to develop the PHTLS 10th Edition Military version. Publication in English is expected at the end of 2023.

NAEMT Education Updates

Endocrine Disorders is the Latest Course in the Community Paramedicine Series

The Community Paramedicine Series continues to expand with the latest course now available, Endocrine Disorders.



The course provides a detailed overview of the anatomy and physiology of common endocrine disorders and methods to help patients manage chronic, sub-acute, and acute endocrine conditions. Students will discuss healthcare and community resources, medications, patient education approaches, and goals of care for patients with endocrine disorders.

The course is approved for 3.5 hours of CAPCE credit. For a full list of courses in the series, visit naemt.org > Education > Community Paramedicine Series.

Online Component of EPC 4th Edition Hybrid Course Now Available

The online component of NAEMT's Emergency Pediatric Care (EPC) 4th Edition hybrid course is now available.

The hybrid course provides students with the same content as the 16-hour classroom course. Students receive 8 hours of didactic content in an interactive and engaging online format and 8 hours of in-class instruction focused on skills and patient simulations. The EPC 4th Edition hybrid course provides 16 hours of CAPCE credit.



Mental Health Resilience Officer (MHRO) Available for In-Person Instruction

NAEMT's Mental Health Resilience Officer (MHRO) course is now available as an instructor toolkit for faculty to teach as a classroom course, in addition to being available in an online, interactive format for individual learners.



After NAEMT introduced MHRO as an online course last year, many training centers expressed an interest in teaching it in-person as well. The first MHRO classroom course sold out in Orlando, where it was offered as an EMS World Expo preconference workshop in October. Learn more about MHRO at naemt.org > Education > Mental Health Resilience Officer.

NAEMT Regional European Education Committee Meets in Vienna

On December 1-2, NAEMT faculty leaders representing more than 25 countries in Europe met in Vienna to discuss a variety of prehospital education issues encountered in the region and how to continue to grow and strengthen NAEMT education courses across the continent.

The meeting included presentations from regional prehospital experts and panel discussions on differences in trauma guidelines throughout the region, treating illness and injury in refugee populations, and providing the appropriate prehospital trauma training (PHTLS, TECC, TECC-LEO, TCCC) to different student populations. Congratulations to Armin Reisinger, NAEMT national education coordinator for Austria, and his colleagues at the Austrian Paramedic Association, for hosting a very successful event!

EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program Has Successful First Year

The EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program was launched in 2022 in response to member feedback expressing a desire for mentors to help with career and professional development.



Spearheaded by NAEMT Past-President Bruce Evans, the mentoring program matches NAEMT members who are seeking to step into an EMS leadership role with experienced EMS leaders. Mentors provide guidance, may serve as a confidential sounding board, and provide support and encouragement to their mentees in expanding their vision for themselves and what they can achieve.

NAEMT sincerely thanks the nationally recognized EMS leaders who volunteered their time as mentors for our inaugural class: Macara Trusty, Juan Cardona, Chris Cebollero, Rom Duckworth, David Edgar, Baxter Larmon, Steve Wirth and Jon Politis.

Mentees are about a year into the 18-month program, and their feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

"My mentor, David Edgar, has been an asset both personally and professionally. He as well as the other mentors care about us as people first and professionals next," said Kevin Miller, paramedic. "He pushes me to be my best and stretches the possibilities that I have laid out for myself. He holds me accountable and I will be forever grateful for him and his mentorship."



Hear from the First Class of Participants in the EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program

CASEY SMITH

Charge Paramedic
Manatee County EMS
Bradenton, Florida

MENTOR: Baxter Larmon



What have you gotten out of the Lighthouse Leadership Program so far?

It's been wonderful. It has exposed me to individuals and organizations that I would not have had access to on my own. Baxter Larmon is my mentor, and I have been so fortunate. The connections and experience he and the other mentors have are invaluable to us in helping us grow as individuals and as professionals.

I've also had the opportunity to network with some absolutely amazing professionals, including the other mentees. In Orlando, we got lost in a three-hour conversation – brainstorming, tackling issues and having discussions. We all have diverse backgrounds and work experiences, so we learn a lot from each other.

How often do you meet with your mentor?

We talk every two weeks via Zoom to discuss things going on in my career and my goals in growing as an EMS professional. I am finishing my bachelor's degree in public safety administration in the next year, and looking at a master's degree program. My focus is toward education training. Baxter encouraged me to take the NAEMSE Level 1 Instructor Course, which I'm doing this weekend.

Would you encourage others to apply?

Absolutely. The mentors have been in the industry, they know our industry, and they are able to facilitate what we may not be able to do on our own. They are able to take the passion and the drive we have and focus it or make suggestions we might not have thought of. It's hugely beneficial to us in an industry where we have such high turnover. I've been registered in EMS for 24 years and I feel I'm getting opportunities I've never had before.

ELIZABETH BEATTY

Brigade Chief
City of Virginia Beach,
Department of EMS

MENTOR: David Edgar



Why did you apply for the mentor program?

I don't believe any one agency has all of the answers. Many times within our own agencies, we have a degree of group-think. We don't see things because we are so engrossed in them. Since no one agency knows it all, I wanted to be outside of the silo. I wanted to learn best practices from other agencies and carry some best practices back.

What activities have you found the most useful?

One of our first assignments was to think about our own personal mission and values, and to create our own mission statement. It's incredibly hard to do that. I think it's hard because we are so used to focusing as caregivers for others. But it helps us to make smart goals and define where we want to be as a leader.

What goals did you decide on?

I set a true timeline for how I wanted to further my education. Chief Edgar helped me ensure that it was realistic, and an appropriate time frame so you don't set yourself up for failure. Also, we talked about "how to take care of me" goals, and making that a priority. I can't be good for anyone else unless I take care of myself. So for me that is setting aside time to do physical activity, which I did not do before, and bringing my own meals. It's too easy to eat out all the time. Creating healthy meals and the daily exercise is about my mental and spiritual health. I feel more centered, and more grounded. My education plan is to finish off my bachelor's degree, and increase my teaching credentials.

Do you think others should apply?

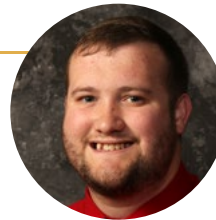
100%. Having the feedback from somebody not within your own agency

is an unbiased view of you and what you want to achieve. The mentors also talk to each other and bring back ideas to us. Chris Cebollero wants me to write a book. I said, "I don't think I'm up to that." And he said, "You have that in you." Chief Edgar is also great. Our agencies are very similar, and we have been able to compare notes. He is also such an amazing sounding board for problems and new ideas. He's so supportive. He calls me between our sessions. I have really enjoyed working with him.

KEVIN MILLER

Emergency Services
Education Coordinator
Northwest Iowa
Community College
Ph.D. student

MENTOR: David Edgar



What attracted you to the program?

I think that it is important to be able to grow as a person and as a professional. When I heard about the program, I knew that with the quality NAEMT puts into their other programs, this mentorship program would rise to the challenge of what up-and-coming EMS leaders need.

What do you feel you've gained as a mentee?

I have gained more than I thought I ever would. I have not only learned crucial soft skills, such as time management, networking, and motivation (getting rid of self-doubt is included in this). I have also gained lifelong friends, a network of EMS leaders that have pushed me out of my comfort zone for the better, and I have sat at tables that I thought were too large for me.

What I realized is it takes all of us in EMS to make a difference and each one of us has the ability to do our small part. I hope to gain more insight on how to advocate on a national stage and I know someday I will look back and say, "This would not have been possible without the Lighthouse Leadership Program and the vision of Jim Page." [Page, a founding father of modern EMS, originally

Apply for the EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program

The EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program will accept applications for the next class of mentees from Jan. 9 to Feb. 3.

QUALIFICATIONS

Mentees must:

- Be members of NAEMT
- Have at least five years of experience in EMS.
- Demonstrate that they are actively engaged in EMS as a volunteer or employee.
- Show commitment to a career in EMS.

The selection process will also include an interview. The program includes an orientation, virtual workshops, one-on-one mentoring, opportunities for group networking via Zoom, and in-person networking at the NAEMT Annual Meeting/EMS World Expo.

To apply, visit naemt.org > Initiatives > Lighthouse Leadership Program.

conceived the idea of a national EMS mentorship program].

What advice do you have for someone thinking about applying?

What matters is that you have a passion for EMS and becoming a leader in EMS, not necessarily just within your department, but in the big picture of helping shape the future of EMS. If that sounds like you: apply. Don't wait for opportunities to come to you – chase them and never stop. You can pave the path for your own success- don't let yourself get in the way.

Welcome 2023 Board of Directors

NAEMT congratulates and warmly welcomes three new directors to the 2023-2024 NAEMT Board: Rommie Duckworth (Region 1), Shannon Watson (Region 3), and Timothy Dienst (Region 4).

In addition, Christopher Way was elected president-elect and Matt Zavadsky was elected at-large director. Troy Tuke (secretary) and Melissa McNally (Region 2) were re-elected.

The NAEMT Board of Directors is responsible for the general management and oversight of the association. Board members generously give their time and expertise to advance NAEMT projects and initiatives and represent our association on national committees and workgroups.

Thank you to all of the candidates who ran, and to the active NAEMT members who voted in the election. We appreciate your service!

ROMMIE L. DUCKWORTH

Region 1



Rommie L. Duckworth, MPA, LP, EFO, is a captain, shift commander, and EMS coordinator for the Ridgefield Fire Department

in Connecticut. He is also founder and director of the New England Center for Rescue and Emergency Medicine. Duckworth is a dedicated emergency responder, author, and educator with more than 30 years of experience working in career and volunteer fire departments, hospital healthcare systems, and private emergency medical services.

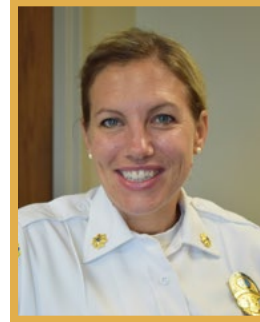
Duckworth has contributed to the NAEMT AMLS and PHTLS textbooks. He is a 2021 recipient of the NAEMT Presidential Leadership Award for his work on the Lighthouse Leadership Committee, for which he also serves as a mentor. Duckworth is also the recipient of the American Red Cross Hero Award, Sepsis Alliance Hero Award, the EMS10 Innovators Award, and the Western Connecticut Health Network Lifetime Achievement Award.

He is the NAEMT representative to the American College of Surgeons Rural Trauma Advisory Committee, the CT-EMS for Children representative for the Ridgefield Fire Department, and an instructor for EMS, fire, rescue, law enforcement, and dispatch education programs.

He's the author of "Duckworth on Education," as well as chapters in more than a dozen EMS, fire, rescue, and medical textbooks and over 100 published articles in fire and EMS magazines. He holds positions on other national and international advocacy and advisory boards, where he continues to work for the advancement of emergency services professions.

SHANNON WATSON

Region 3



Shannon Watson, MHA, NRP, CC-EMTP, CP, began her EMS career in North Carolina, where she attained her paramedic and associate

degree in emergency medical science. She came to Christian Hospital EMS in 2008 and worked full-time as a paramedic serving north St. Louis County. She was promoted through the ranks of educator, clinical supervisor, mobile integrated health supervisor, and is currently assistant chief of EMS.

Watson is an EMS educator and teaches nationally at EMS conferences. She is secretary for the East Central Region EMS Committee for St. Louis. In 2012, Watson became a contributing author of the resuscitation chapter in the Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals book. She also served as chair of the NAEMT Emergency Pediatric Care (EPC) Committee.

During her EMS tenure, Watson assisted in growing and developing the Christian Hospital EMS Academy and developing and implementing a mobile integrated health program for Christian Hospital. She has continued her education as a critical care paramedic, community paramedic, and she completed her bachelor's in business and master's in healthcare administration. She is married to a firefighter-paramedic, and they have three children. She enjoys spending her free time with friends and family engaging in outdoor activities.

TIMOTHY DIENST

Region 4



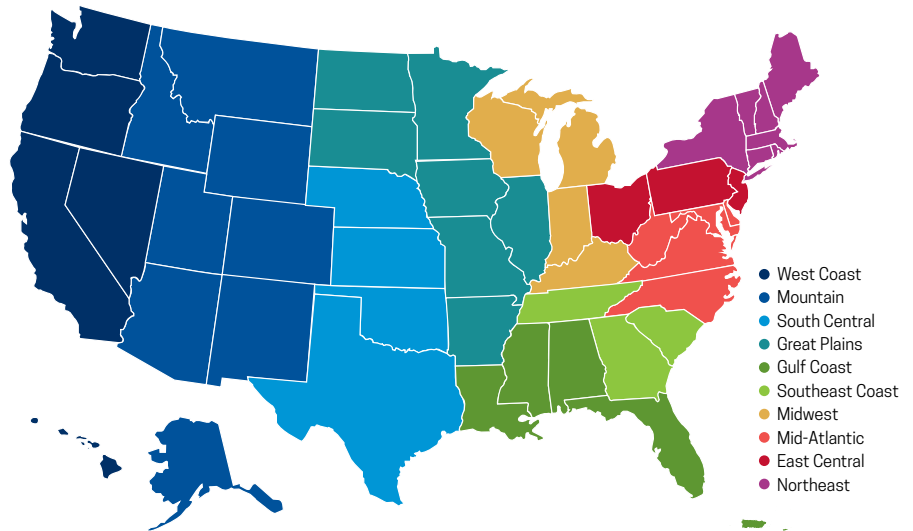
Timothy Dienst, MPA, NRP, has been an emergency medical services professional for nearly 30 years, working as a paramedic

in both the private and public sectors, and is currently the chief executive officer for the Ute Pass Regional Health Service District in Woodland Park, Colorado. He has helped guide the ongoing growth of the district's ambulance services and implemented several innovative programs, including a model single-provider mobile crisis response and behavioral health support team, a rural community paramedic service, and a nurse triage program for rural services. He also serves as the NAEMT advocacy coordinator for Colorado, and is a member of the Advocacy and Economics Committees.

Locally, Dienst is chair of the Colorado State Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Advisory Council (SEMTAC) and serves as the treasurer and advocacy coordinator for the Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado (EMSAC). He is passionate about EMS and is actively involved in simplifying regulatory challenges as the SEMTAC chair. As well, he works with the Colorado State Legislature to advance paramedic practice, improve funding, and expand business opportunities for EMS agencies.

Dienst earned his BA in geology and his Master of Public Administration from University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. He enjoys skiing, scuba diving, hiking and camping, and spending time with his lovely wife, Liz, and his two dogs.

NAEMT To Increase Number of Voting Regions Starting in 2024



The NAEMT Board includes 10 directors and five officers, including the president, president-elect, immediate past president, treasurer and secretary, according to the NAEMT bylaws.

To ensure equal representation of active members, the Board divided the U.S. into four geographic regions that are generally equal in terms of the number of active members. For each geographic region, two directors are elected for staggered, two-year terms. In addition, two at-large directors are elected by all active members for staggered two-year terms. This voting framework has been in place for 15 years.

Last year, the Board reviewed this framework and noted that each of the four regions cover such large geographic areas, and the at-large directors cover all of the U.S. as well as international active members. They felt that the framework

made it difficult for individual directors to connect with members in their voting regions. In an effort to better serve our members, the Board voted to increase the number of voting regions from four to 10, with each of these new regions being generally equal in terms of the number of active members.

This new voting framework will become effective with the 2023 election cycle to vote for directors who will serve two-year terms beginning in 2024. The number of board members, which includes five officers and 10 directors, will not change. However, increasing the number of voting regions to 10 will help ensure that board members are more closely connected to the geographic region in which they are elected. Directors who represent a region must reside in that region. The election cycle for 2024 directors will commence in July 2023.

Bylaws Changes Approved



The 2022 ballot also included proposed bylaws changes, which were approved by Active NAEMT members. The bylaws changes can be found at naemt.org > About NAEMT and took effect on Jan. 1.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Lillian Bonsignore

Chief, FDNY Bureau of EMS
City of New York

Since her history-making promotion in 2019, Lillian Bonsignore has blazed a trail as the first woman to serve as FDNY EMS chief, and the department's first openly gay 4-star chief.

Her journey to the top started when she was a young, single mom. She had an interest in medicine, so her pediatrician and mentor suggested she become an EMT.

"I fell in love with this job," said Bonsignore, who later became a paramedic. "This felt like home to me. It was exactly everything I needed it to be. It was the adrenaline. It was the service. It was being able to help and not being behind a desk and being on the street in the South Bronx where I was born and raised. Here I am 31 years later. I have worked my way through the ranks. And it's really been an extraordinary career."

Bonsignore talked with NAEMT News about running the nation's largest EMS agency, why she loves the job, how her experiences on 9/11 shaped her and a generation of New York City first responders, and her recent decision to retire. (Her last day on the job was Dec. 30.)

"For the last three decades, my family has worked around my job and service to the city. It's my turn to give back to them for the years of love and support," said Bonsignore, who plans to continue to teach and speak on EMS issues.



Photo credit Nicholas Truong

Can you give us a sense of the size of the FDNY and its Bureau of EMS?

The FDNY consists of 17,000 people. More than 4,500 are in EMS. We have over 10,000 uniformed firefighters, and the rest are civilians. It's a huge organization that services all five boroughs. EMS does 1.5 million runs a year.

You're the highest-ranked woman in the FDNY's uniformed service. Recently, the mayor appointed the city's first female fire commissioner, who oversees the department's \$2 billion budget. Is diversity important in fire and EMS leadership, and why?

Diversity is important everywhere, not only in leadership roles but throughout all organizations. Without having a multitude of perspectives, there is no way of really getting the answer right. We find our strength in each other. We were all born of mothers. We are used to listening to women throughout our lives. It would only make sense for that perspective to be brought to the workplace as well.

We have a lot of different types of cultures and people that we serve in New

York City. The way to get that right is to lean on people who have experience with those cultures, those priorities, to help us serve them better and communicate with them better. Diversity is our strength. We are way stronger together. If I filled a house with plumbers, we wouldn't have electricity. Everybody brings a different specialty and a different perspective, and as a result of that, we get better and stronger.

What do you like best about your job?

I hold EMS very close to me. For me, it's really all about the people. And it's not just the people we serve, although they are a huge part of it. It's the people who serve those people. EMS is such an amazing profession. It is filled with people who are willing to leave their own families to take care of strangers in their darkest time. And that level of service and commitment is just awe-inspiring. I feel honored to be amongst that group.

What I enjoy the most is knowing what we do for those folks who are at their worst moment, and call us and we show up and make a positive difference. We know it doesn't always end in a positive way. But there are people at the end of the

phone line that will show up at your door, with the skills of the emergency room, and give everything they have to keep you alive, solve your problems, care for you.

Take us back to the beginning. How did you get interested in EMS?

I always say, “EMS saved my life.” Not in a medical way but in a lifestyle way. When I was very young, two women – one was a doctor and one was an educator – took an interest in a kid from the Bronx.

I was the oldest child of a single parent, and she really wasn’t equipped to keep me moving in the direction I needed to be moving in. We struggled, but I always did well in school. That was the one place I could really be myself. I ended up married at a very young age and had a child at 18. At that point, your path forward is filled with obstacles.

The pediatrician said, “Hey, enough is enough. You’re going to EMT school.” I said, “What’s EMT school?” But I trusted her, so I went, thinking it would be temporary.

I worked for a private ambulance service. And I absolutely fell in love with this job. This ended up being the longest summer job I have ever had. But if it wasn’t for somebody who just took a moment to care, I would have never made it.



With her mentors, Stacey Weber and Naomi Barber.

Are you still in touch with your mentors?

They both came to my promotion ceremony when I became the chief of EMS. I owe my entire life to that mentoring. They’ve stuck it out with me

the whole time. I’m in my 50s now, and they are still around me, still loving me, still supporting me.

Can you tell us about your experience during the attacks on the World Trade Center in September 2001. Did it change how you approach your work or life?

It changed everybody’s life. I was an instructor at the academy when it happened. I had two daughters. I had just started building a relationship with the woman I ended up marrying. She’s been with me 22 years now. When we saw it was an actual commercial plane that hit the building, it just stunned us. It almost felt impossible.

The instructors and students commandeered a couple of city buses to pile us in and take us down there. We get there just as the second tower fell and we’re enveloped in this dust and debris. Everybody walking past is just gray. We know there are going to be so many people. So many people were in those buildings. I got sent down to what was supposed to be triage. And there were no people to triage. Our unit ended up being a morgue unit instead. We lost 333 of our own that day. How can it not change your life? We lost so many who were so brave and saved so many lives.

It’s now 2022. It’s a long time ago. We bring all of our probies down there to the reflecting pools, and to the museums, which I can barely get through. When I go down there, I still smell it. It’s a trigger.

An event like that changes you. The things that used to bother me, just don’t anymore. It did teach me not to sweat the small things. If today is the day I have, I need to make it a good day. Tomorrow isn’t guaranteed.

We’ve lost over 300 people from the fire department from post-9/11 illnesses. This coming year, we are likely to exceed the number we lost on the day the towers came down. Every one of us who were there is being chased by this possibility that you are going to develop cancer or something. We’ve lost a lot of friends and family members and we continue to do that. We sometimes go to



three or four funerals a week from post-9/11 illnesses. It’s a constant barrage of memories of that time. Every one of us who was down there is kind of on the clock. Is today the day? You never know. So let’s have a good day.

The amazing thing though is that the folks who are suffering, they wouldn’t do anything different. None of us would. If you knew back then what was going to happen, I don’t think anybody would change their mind. We were intrinsically driven to respond. That is what EMS, and fire and PD do. They have committed their lives and are willing to risk their lives to save others. It’s so deeply ingrained. Even if you had the opportunity to change your mind, you just can’t.

Your department recently suffered another tremendous loss when EMS Capt. Alison Russo-Elling, a 24-year veteran, was fatally stabbed outside her station. How are you helping your crews deal with their grief?

Alison was the second FDNY EMS female to be murdered in the streets in five years. We still had the memory of Yadira Arroyo, who was run over by her own ambulance in 2017. These deaths shake you to the core. It’s so tragic and painful.

In EMS, we do medicine. We are here to help and deliver a high level of medical care. We are not a threat to anybody. In fact, we don't judge who our patients are. We don't judge what they've done. We deliver the highest level of care whether you are a criminal or not, whether you're rich or poor, whether you believe in God or don't. It doesn't matter to us. We are there to help.

Alison was a firecracker. She loved EMS. She loved the people she worked with. And you could tell, because the people she worked with loved her too. She trained so many people and influenced so many people. She had 30 years of showing up at people's worst moments and saving their lives. She did it on 9/11, and through COVID, and she was rescue medic, which is an elite paramedic in the fire department. She was an amazing woman.

So how do you help people through that? That is the question of the year. Grief is such a personal thing. For me, it was important that I be out there visible with them. At the hospital. That I be by their side. Our pain is a collective pain, but our grief is individual. Our goal is to provide as many outlets as possible for people who need to tap into them as they go through their grieving process. Making sure our clergy is with them. Our peer support is activated. Our counseling services are available.

And simply hugging each other and crying and being normal human beings together. Acknowledging the pain we all feel and not trying to minimize it. As a fire department, we have so much experience with death that it's unbelievable. But the way we handle it is together. We stand shoulder to shoulder with each other. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the family members. We find strength in each other. But we also have to allow people to grieve. Some people may benefit from counseling. Some people may benefit from just hanging out with their friends. Some people may benefit from being in a religious environment. Some people just want to be home with their families. Some just want to be silent in the presence of somebody else who feels the same thing.

What are the qualities that make a good EMS leader?

The first is kindness. You must be kind. You cannot expect people who dedicate their lives to service to be treated unkindly. You have to be kind to the people who are kind to others.

You have to listen to people. Even the stuff you don't like to listen to. There are so many different perspectives out there and if you are a leader who is unable to process different points of view, you are going to be a terrible leader. You need to be able to consider other points of view and be able to pivot.

Is FDNY dealing with workforce shortages like other departments around the nation?

We are in much better shape than some, but we share the problem of retaining people. People are looking for jobs that are less dangerous, with more pay, they're not going to get punched in the face, and you don't have to work multiple jobs to pay rent and support your family.



Some of what we've done is engaging with the youth community. We have our own high school, where we start teaching young people about EMS and fire. We are very active in community outreach.

EMS is a young service. Fire and law enforcement have a significant blood line. EMS is just building a blood line. There are a lot of young people who don't even know EMS is an option. Getting out and talking to the younger people about this profession is important. When you listen to law enforcement or firefighters, they talk about it as if it's the greatest thing in the world. In EMS they talk about all the negative stuff. It's like taking a bite of a candy bar and saying, "This is absolutely terrible, do you want a bite?"

We have to remember to sing our own praises. EMS when it started was about moving people off highways. We are not that anymore. We have to figure out how to talk about this and be proud of the job we do as well as what the challenges are.

Why is it important to you to be an NAEMT member?

We are still very young in the profession of emergency services. We're like a 2-year-old compared to college kids being fire and law enforcement. The modern EMS systems we function under have only been around since the late 70s.

Some of the benefits and progress that's been made in law enforcement and fire are the result of minds that are interested in pushing a profession forward, coming together to solve these problems. EMS is still struggling with that. We are still very compartmentalized.

NAEMT really helps us bring some of those resources together. We have to link arms when it comes to the future of EMS. I'm always interested in joining something that can bring us together. We can accomplish any goal if we put our minds together. We just have to be willing to stand together and not fight each other.

What's your favorite spot in all of NYC?

I would recommend anybody in New York City go down to the World Trade Center memorial. We hold very dearly a promise to never forget, and that is a way that we never forget.

Mets or Yankees?

I am a Bronx native so I can only say Yankees. But I'm not big on sports. I think they should be looking at us. They make millions of dollars to play a game and we make peanuts to save lives.

Congratulations to Our Scholarship Winners!

NAEMT education scholarships support full NAEMT members in advancing their education and careers. To apply or learn more, log in to the Member Portal and click "Scholarships." Special thanks to NPP.Gov and Page, Wolfberg & Wirth for sponsoring the NAEMT EMS scholarships.

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Samuel Miller, Shell, Wyoming

A member of the Big Horn Search and Rescue team, Samuel Miller works as an advanced EMT in his rural ranching community and volunteers with his local fire department.



Dovid Plym, Lakewood, New Jersey

Dovid Plym is college student, volunteer EMT, part-time facilities manager and a volunteer with Bikur Cholim, which provides food deliveries, non-medical transports and other services for the ill.

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Joshua Poff, Powell, Wyoming

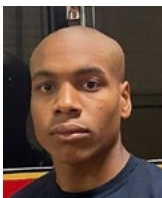
A U.S. Army veteran, former police officer and now a paramedic with North Big Horn Hospital EMS, Joshua Poff is pursuing a bachelor's degree in EMS management at Eastern Oregon University.

2022 Diversity Scholarships

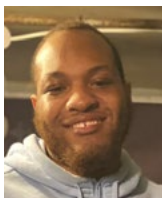
Diversity scholarships provide up to \$1,250 to cover tuition, fees and books for members of underrepresented groups who want to join the EMS profession. Applications accepted: February 1 to March 31. Learn more at naemt.org > Initiatives > Diversity and Inclusion. The Diversity scholarships are sponsored by FirstNet, Build with AT&T.



Kevin Morales,
Kissimmee,
Florida



Zion Mallette,
Chicago, Illinois



Corey Terrell,
Lansdowne,
Pennsylvania



Members of the team at Northfield Hospital + Clinics EMS.

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NAEMT warmly welcomes our newest agency members.

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- Georgia Institute of EMS, Winder, GA
- Haddam Volunteer Ambulance Service, Higganum, CT
- Northfield Hospital + Clinics EMS, Northfield, MN
- Piedmont Technical College, Greenwood, SC
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