

2021 NAEMT General Membership Meeting
Honoring Our Past – Advancing Our Future

Remarks of Bruce Evans, NAEMT President

Welcome members and guests to the 2021 NAEMT General Membership Meeting! We understand that for many of you, it was a challenge to take time out to be in Atlanta, and we greatly appreciate your efforts to be with us this evening.

Overcoming challenge... and perseverance... are defining traits of our profession and workforce. From responding to the public health emergency, national disasters, MCIs, an epidemic of mental health crises and drug overdoses, to violence against our practitioners and the resulting stress and impact to our own wellbeing... Our profession has navigated these challenges and persevered for our patients.

Our response to help our patients and communities has been unparalleled. We have been put to the test over and over again through the COVID-19 pandemic, civil unrest and natural disasters. EMS is serving as a pillar of strength and a leadership voice for our communities.

As a representative of our association, I am humbled and honored to be with you this evening to share the body of work that our incredible members have achieved. On behalf of the NAEMT Board of Directors – we thank you and all our members across our United States and territories, and in 121 other countries – for your membership and for your support of NAEMT.

COVID-19 and the variants that have emerged remain a global crisis. The medical, economic, and social scope of the crisis has brought about unprecedented changes to our society and in healthcare. For EMS, the pandemic has brought a greater awareness within our communities and the healthcare system of the role that EMS plays in population health, and an expansion of services including administration of vaccinations and antibodies, transport to destinations other than the ED, telehealth facilitation, and treatment in place. The pandemic has also brought an exponential increase in workforce stress and illness, compounded by a shortage of personnel never before experienced.

And, we lost many of our colleagues in the line of duty deaths from crashes to shootings to coronavirus. More than 160 Paramedics and EMTs in the U.S. have died to date in the line-of-duty during the pandemic. We must honor and remember our brothers and sisters for their sacrifice. We owe it to them to do everything in our power to make sure that communities and elected officials recognize their sacrifice and provide EMS with the resources needed to protect our workforce.

In July, the National EMS Memorial Service was held in Arlington, Virginia, to recognize and honor the sacrifices of our colleagues who died in the line of duty during 2019 and 2020, as the ceremony for the 2019

line of duty deaths could not be held in person last year due to the pandemic. To pay tribute to those brave Paramedics and EMTs who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their patients during that time, Rachel Tester from the National EMS Memorial Service will lead us in a prayer for our fallen heroes.

Thank you, Rachel. These EMS heroes will never be forgotten. Their sacrifice inspires us to make our EMS profession better — and safer — for our practitioners and for the patients we serve.

In accordance with our bylaws, the NAEMT President provides an annual report on the achievements of our association at the General Membership Meeting. I am proud to share with you the highlights of our association's achievements so far this year.

- On March 12, the American Rescue Plan was signed into law. This legislation **included waiver authority to allow Medicare to reimburse ground ambulance services for treatment in lieu of transport during the public health emergency**. The law also increased the Provider Relief Fund by \$8.5 billion, targeting the money to rural providers and suppliers, including ground ambulance services. NAEMT partnered with the AAA, IAFC, and IAFF in leading the effort to get these EMS provisions included in the final legislation.
- We have been advocating for laws to help EMS agencies and personnel recover from the pandemic and build back their resiliency, including:
 - Fiscal Year 2022 Funding for SIREN Grants
 - Extending Medicare add-on payments for 5 additional years
 - the EMS Counts Act of 2021, introduced in the House as 2354, and a Senate bill was just introduced by Senators Casey and Collins in the Senate.
 - Making permanent the COVID reimbursement waivers on treatment in place, transport to alternate destinations, and telehealth facilitation.
- To help EMS agencies prepare for cost collection, we developed and published the **NAEMT CMS Cost Collection Guide**. This new FREE guide helps EMS agencies gain the full scope of costs involved in operating their ground ambulance service. We also have been working with CMS to ensure that the cost data collection schedule, delayed because of the pandemic, will support accurate data being transmitted to CMS.
- Through published comments and positions, we spoke out on issues important to our profession and our patients:
 - NAEMT collaborated with the AAA, IAFC, and IAFF to express deep concern to congressional leaders with the impending 2% Medicare sequestration cut scheduled to take effect on April 1,

2021. Congress voted to delay Medicare payment cuts for the rest of the year—a big win for all Medicare providers, including EMS.

- NAEMT, IAFF, and IAFC requested HHS to ensure hospitals are complying with the infectious disease notification requirements under the Ryan White Act, including notification of exposure to COVID-19.
- NAEMT supported the U.S. Department of Transportation recommendations and opposed legislation that would increase the legal size or weight limits of trucks.
- NAEMT, along with AAA, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, IAFC, IAFF, and the National Volunteer Fire Council urged HHS Secretary Becerra to distribute the remaining monies from the Provider Relief Fund to help offset costs to EMS due to our pandemic response. HHS announced in September that the remaining funds would be distributed.

I submitted written testimony on behalf of NAEMT to the House Appropriations Committee to raise awareness of the critical funding shortfall of EMS in communities; and requested funding to enable EMS agencies to ensure that our professionals are provided a safe, healthy, and respectful work environment, and that their EMS agency can effectively serve their communities.

- We sent a letter to the CMS Administrator requesting that CMS wait for the recommendations from the Ground Ambulance Advisory Committee on surprise billing, as Congress stipulated, and opposing language in the CMS Interim Final Rule on the No Surprises Act that expands the scope of the regulations to include ground ambulance services.
 - We joined with 7 other national EMS organizations in a statement encouraging local healthcare systems, government leaders, EMS agency leaders, regulatory officials, and the EMS workforce to collaboratively develop and implement multi-disciplinary strategies that protect and preserve the EMS workforce.
 - NAEMT joined with NAEMSP and NASEMSO on a statement on the clinical care and restraint of agitated or combative patients by EMS practitioners.
 - And, we updated our position statement on **EMS as an Essential Public Function** originally published in 2011. This updated version includes new references, highlights the role of EMS in our nation's pandemic response, and reaffirms the need for EMS to be recognized and financially supported by all levels of government.
- NAEMT hosted its first virtual **EMS On The Hill** event on April 12-16. This year, 292 EMS professionals from all 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico attended meetings with 95 Senate offices and 148 House offices to discuss key EMS issues. We are planning to return to D.C. for EMS On The Hill

Day on April 6 with our pre-hill briefing on April 5.

- We continue to grow the NAEMT EMS Political Action Committee or PAC. While the pandemic has made it more difficult to solicit contributions to our PAC, we do continue to add funds. We ask all of our members to help us grow the PAC so that we can support federal legislators who champion EMS in the House and Senate. Even a \$20 contribution makes a difference. At the Member Reception right after this meeting, there will a PAC table when you can learn more about the PAC and make a contribution.
- We partnered with ACEP to promote the 46th annual **National EMS Week** on May 16-22. This year's theme, *THIS IS EMS: Caring for Our Communities*, highlighted the important contributions of EMS practitioners in safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of our communities. During the week, we highlighted the tremendous work of EMS practitioners across the country through our social media platforms.
- The results of our national survey on the impact of **COVID-19 on EMS agencies and personnel** were published and provided to all members of Congress, federal agencies, national organizations, and the media. The results provided a national snapshot of the continued impact of the pandemic on EMS agency operations and personnel.
- NAEMT partnered with Genentech to launch a **Public Service Announcement** campaign to urge the public to call 9-1-1 when they or someone they know is experiencing symptoms of stroke. We also partnered with FirstNet on a video to promote first responder resilience.

Moving on to education... Amidst the pandemic, NAEMT faculty, authors and medical directors have continued to work to provide our workforce with the very best continuing education available. We have witnessed so many outstanding examples of our faculty making extraordinary efforts to ensure that their students are receiving the education they need. **We thank NAEMT's global faculty for their great efforts.**

- NAEMT published new education curricula to strengthen the knowledge and skills of EMS practitioners:
 - The first three courses in NAEMT's **Community Paramedicine course series** were published. **Motivational Interviewing, Hospice and Palliative Care, and Wellness and Nutrition** are now available for all NAEMT training centers to conduct. These courses are all approved for CAPCE credit.
 - **First On the Scene**, a new course designed to teach the general public basic emergency response to life-threatening emergencies until EMS arrives on the scene, was published.

Developed in partnership with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), this course includes didactic instruction and hands-on skill stations to teach participants how to access help in the event of a life-threatening emergency and what to do until EMS arrives. All NAEMT training centers and other qualified members are eligible to offer this course.

- The **AMLS** 3rd edition **Refresher** and **Hybrid** courses were published. And, we published a new, very timely chapter on Behavioral Emergencies for the 3rd edition.
- And, the 4th edition of Emergency Pediatric Care has published. This new edition has a brand-new Course Manual for students, new case studies, and new patient simulations. The 16-hour course is offered in a traditional classroom format, in a combined live virtual/classroom format, or as a hybrid online interactive/classroom format. In addition, there is a new 8-hour EPC refresher course as well.
- We continued to offer our members **FREE CE webinars** presented by top EMS experts on topics such as the management of abdominal complaints, reading EKGs in the prehospital environment, burn trauma, prehospital stroke management, strengthening EMS agency and practitioner resilience, and a three-part series on telehealth. All are available to members at any time via the Member Portal on the NAEMT website.
- Today, we held a fantastic World Trauma Symposium as an in-person and live streamed event. Over 300 practitioners, physicians and educators participated in the event to learn from global leaders in prehospital trauma care. Thank you to Dr. Warren Dorlac Dr. Meg Morgan for developing such a tremendous trauma program.
- NAEMT provides EMS scholarship opportunities to our members to assist them in furthering their EMS education. Thousands of dollars in scholarships are awarded each year for EMRs to become EMTs, for EMTs to become Paramedics, and for Paramedics to advance their EMS education. We also partner with Columbia Southern University to offer a scholarship to one member each year of up to 60 credit hours towards one online degree program.
- We also award scholarships to people interested in a career in EMS:
 - Through the NAEMT Foundation, scholarships - up to \$1,000 each – are offered. This year the Foundation awarded scholarships to eight individuals to begin their career in EMS.
- We also offer scholarships for individuals from underserved communities - up to \$1,250 each - for them to become an EMT or Paramedic.

- NAEMT also rolled out many new member benefits, including:
 - A 25% discount on stethoscopes from Eko.
 - Discounted rates for the EMS Wellness Support Program from healthPERX, including FREE Telemedicine and Behavioral Health services.
 - NPPGov Group Purchasing Organization membership with exclusive discounts for NAEMT members.
 - And at the beginning of this year, we upgraded your existing Amazon account access to include Business PRIME benefits! This has resulted in well over \$30,000 in savings to our members for shipping costs so far this year!

- This year, we also held our first virtual member listening sessions to allow members to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns with their regional directors. In addition to regularly surveying our members, we will continue to offer listening sessions in the future as another way for members to connect with their elected Board.

These are just some of the highlights of the tremendous work being accomplished by the hundreds of members who volunteer their time to these projects and keep our association moving with forward momentum. The active engagement of our members is NAEMT's greatest asset. With your continued support, we will continue to advance the EMS profession. It is my honor to serve you. Thank you sincerely for your support!

It seems that the informal slogan for our pandemic response has been "we are all in this together." That statement has truly been the hallmark of our NAEMT Board this year. Many of our Board members continue to serve in some of the "hottest COVID-19 hotspots" in our country. With this additional burden, they have remained actively engaged in NAEMT, dedicating their time and expertise to our profession and association. I am honored to work with them. Here are the members of the 2021 NAEMT Board of Directors:

1. Bruce Evans, President
2. Susan Bailey, President-elect
3. Chris Way, Treasurer
4. Troy Tuke, Secretary
5. Matt Zavadsky, Immediate Past President
6. Robert Luckritz, Region I Director
7. Bryan Nelson, Region I Director
8. Melissa McNally, Region II Director
9. William Tatum, Region II Director
10. Eric Van Dusen, Region III Director
11. Deborah Von Seggern-Johnson, Region III Director

12. Karen Larsen, Region IV Director
13. Macara Trusty, Region IV Director
14. Allison G.S. Knox, At-Large Director
15. Garrett Hedeem, At-Large Director
16. Dr. Douglas Kupas, Medical Director

Thank you all very much for your dedication and commitment!

I also want to recognize and thank Dr. Jeff Jarvis who serves as NAEMT's Associate Medical Director.

While NAEMT is a forward-focused association, we never forget how we have grown over the years and the leaders who led us through the challenges along the way. We are very grateful for the leadership provided to NAEMT by our Past Presidents. Thank you very much for your service.

It's now my pleasure to ask NAEMT Treasurer Chris Way to recognize our Corporate Partners.

NAEMT's Corporate Partners are just that – our partners. They support our mission and the programs that represent and serve the EMS profession. On behalf of all members of NAEMT, please accept our appreciation and gratitude. It is my pleasure to recognize all of NAEMT's 2021 Corporate Partners:

Prestige Partner:

1. FirstNet, built with AT&T

Elite Partners:

1. Columbia Southern University
2. EMS World
3. ZOLL

Premier Partners:

1. Eko
2. Public Consulting Group
3. RQI

Diamond Partners:

1. Panorama Travel / Heroes Vacation Club

Platinum Partners:

1. Journal of Special Operations Medicine
2. Jones & Bartlett Learning Public Safety Group

3. Lenco
4. Reel DX
5. Safeguard Medical
6. Stryker

Gold Partners:

1. Amazon Business
2. Bound Tree Medical
3. Demers Braun Crestline
4. McKesson
5. MD Ally
6. Medline
7. Wheeled Coach

Silver Partners:

1. American College of Emergency Physicians
2. Change Healthcare
3. CM&F
4. DrFirst
5. ESO
6. Genentech
7. Horton Emergency Vehicles
8. iSimulate
9. Life-Assist
10. Loperamide Safety
11. Ninth Brain
12. NPP gov
13. OnStar
14. Sovereign Laboratories

Bronze Partners:

1. The Morgan Lens / MorTan Inc.
2. Skedco
3. Special Operations Medical Association (SOMA)

Annual Partners:

1. 5.11 Tactical
2. BioXcel Therapeutics
3. Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

4. FirstNet Authority
5. Gaumard
6. General Devices
7. Health Scholars
8. International Police Mountain Bike Association
9. Logis Solutions
10. Mayo Clinic
11. Muertos Coffee
12. Nasco Healthcare
13. National EMS Museum
14. North American Rescue
15. Page Wolfberg & Wirth
16. Panakeia
17. Phokus Research Group
18. Pulsara
19. SAM Medical
20. Solutions Group
21. Teleflex
22. Temptime / Zebra Technologies
23. The Critical Care Pocket Guide
24. The University of Chicago
25. TrueClot by Luna

Service Partners:

1. And all the service partners you see here on the screen.

Thank you to all corporate partners for your support and for the innovations, products and services you provide.

In late 2019, we launched a new EMS Corporate Engagement Council to provide a forum for those who supply the EMS industry with products and services and those who provide EMS care to discuss key issues impacting the industry and their implications. Thirteen national and international EMS companies are participating. The Council has been instrumental in helping align our industry around the key issues that impact agencies, practitioners, and our patients. And, they have partnered with us to advocate for critical legislation. Thank you to the members of our Corporate Engagement Council.

I will now turn the podium back over to Bruce.

Thank you, Chris.

Our accomplishments would not be possible without the active engagement of our committees and councils. NAEMT committee and council members spend many hours on our projects and initiatives. We will post a PowerPoint presentation on our website that highlights all our committee and council activities to date. Our committees and councils want to receive input and feedback from members on the important issues which they are addressing.

It is my pleasure to present the 2021 NAEMT Committees and Councils, and their Chairs:

1. Advocacy Committee, chaired by Troy Tuke
2. Affiliate Advisory Council, chaired by Chris Way
3. Advanced Medical Life Support Committee, chaired by Jeff Messerole
4. Candidacy and Elections Committee, chaired by Dennis Wilham
5. Education Committee, chaired by Rick Ellis
6. EMS Disaster Preparedness Committee, chaired by Susan Bailey
7. EMS Economics Committee, chaired by Matt Zavadsky
8. EMS Lighthouse Leadership Committee, chaired by Macara Trusty
9. EMS Workforce Committee, chaired by Rob Luckritz
10. Emergency Pediatric Care Committee, chaired by Shannon Watson
11. Executive Committee, which I chair.
12. Finance Committee, chaired by Chris Way
13. Latin American Regional Education Committee, chaired by Elkin Fuentes
14. Membership Committee, chaired by Henry Lewis
15. Military Relations Council, chaired by Michael Williamson
16. Prehospital Trauma Committee, chaired by Dennis Rowe
17. Regional European Education Committee, chaired by Patrick Wick

I also wish to recognize those members who serve as coordinators within their states and regions, and internationally to support our programs.

1. Our network of state, provincial, regional, and national education coordinators in the United States and in countries around the world.
2. Our network of state-level Advocacy Coordinators. These members are our grassroots advocacy powerhouse.

And, our network of Membership Coordinators working to recruit, retain and engage our members. Thank you for your outstanding work in the field!

Now, I would like to recognize and thank the Board of Trustees of the NAEMT Foundation. The NAEMT Foundation is a separate, non-profit organization. Its mission is to support a better future for EMS. The NAEMT Foundation awards scholarships to individuals interested in pursuing careers in EMS.

1. Don Lundy, President
2. Cory Richter, Vice President
3. Chris Way, Treasurer
4. Connie Meyer, Secretary
5. Rod Barrett, Trustee
6. Rick Ellis, Trustee
7. Fergus Laughridge, Trustee
8. Scott Matin, Trustee
9. Jason Scheiderer, Trustee

Now, I would like to recognize a very special friend who will be retiring from the Board at the end of the year.

As one of our Region 1 Directors, Bryan Nelson has ably served our members. Bryan joined the Board in January 2020. Shortly after getting acclimated to his new role, the pandemic hit and the U.S. government declared a public health emergency. Bryan served as NAEMT's representative to the federal task force that addressed PPE shortages and other critical EMS issues. He has served on several NAEMT committees and workgroups and will certainly be missed on the Board.

Although Bryan will be retiring from the Board, he will not be retiring from NAEMT. He will continue to serve our profession and association in many capacities. On behalf of all of our members, Bryan, thank you for your service to our association, our profession and our patients.

Thank you, Bryan!

Each year, the NAEMT President has an opportunity to select individuals to receive Presidential Leadership Awards for their outstanding contributions to NAEMT. This year, I would like to recognize some of our members for their outstanding service to our association.

First, I recognize our Immediate Past President, Matt Zavadsky. Matt, please join me at the podium...

Since Matt first came on the Board several years ago, he has devoted an incredible amount of time in service to our members, leading major initiatives and bringing leaders from other organizations together to solve problems and advance our profession. In his role as Immediate Past President, I was hopeful that Matt would remain engaged and continue to help us out. But he has surpassed any of my expectations. Not only is he chairing our EMS Economics Committee, he led the development of our webinar series on EMS in Telehealth,

was the driver on getting CMS to reimburse for treatment in place during the public health emergency, and actively participates on our regular calls with the AAA, IAFF and IAFC. NAEMT is blessed to have Matt on our side.

I would now like to recognize the members of NAEMT's Lighthouse Leadership Committee. Will all members in attendance please come to the podium, as well as NAEMT Secretary Troy Tuke to assist in this presentation...

The Lighthouse Leadership Program was the brainchild of one of the founders of modern EMS – James O. Page. Jim strongly advocated for our industry to mentor EMS professionals to prepare them to take on EMS leadership roles. Although the program never got off the ground during Jim's lifetime, many of us who knew Jim believed in his vision for such a program. NAEMT has long recognized the need for an EMS leadership mentor program, and so I recruited an outstanding team of EMS leaders to develop a program for approval by the NAEMT Board.

- Juan Cardona
- Chris Cebollero
- Rom Duckworth
- Dave Edgar
- Baxter Larmon
- Steve Wirth, and
- Macara Trusty, who serves as the Committee Chair.

This new program – the EMS Lighthouse Leadership Program – will pair experienced EMS leaders with EMS professionals who desire to advance into a leadership position. Once matched, the EMS mentors will work with their assigned mentees to identify their goals, and develop and implement a leadership plan to help their mentees prepare to advance their careers. Mentors will provide mentees with guidance and feedback through regular virtual one-on-one meetings over a period of 18 months. Those who complete the program will attend a Lighthouse Leadership graduation that will be held in conjunction with EMS World Expo. This new program will be open to EMS professionals from all sectors of EMS. The application process will begin in January 2022. Look for more information about this program on our web site and in our digital and print newsletters.

Thank you to the committee for developing such a promising program and helping to give wings to Jim's vision.

Congratulations to the 2021 recipients of the NAEMT Presidential Leadership Awards!

The safety of EMS practitioners has always been a priority for NAEMT. It became even more critical over the last two years as we saw so many in our profession fall ill from COVID, and tragically, too many of them died from the virus. NAEMT and ACEP partner on an award to recognize an EMS agency for its outstanding work to protect the safety of our practitioners. This award is generously sponsored by Horton Emergency Vehicles. Joining me to present this year's Safety in EMS Award is Dr. Doug Kupas representing ACEP and Lance Randolph from Horton Emergency Vehicles.

It is our honor to announce the 2021 recipient of the national Safety in EMS Award... **HealthNet Aeromedical Services of Charleston, West Virginia!**

With us today representing HealthNet is Clinton Burley, President and CEO, Jeffrey White, Director of Safety, and Justin Koper, Safety Officer. Gentlemen, please join us on stage to accept your award.

HealthNet Aeromedical Services has successfully implemented several strategies to support a Culture of Safety in their agency. They have:

- An internal, full-time safety department focusing solely on the day-to-day development, implementation, and oversight of safety-related initiatives;
- In-house emergency vehicle operator training within six months of an employee's hire date for those with previous EVOG training to reduce the risk of motor vehicle collisions;
- Fleet-wide use of video telematics in all ambulances to protect employees from potential liability in events that occur through no fault of their actions;
- Daily pre-shift fatigue assessments, pre-transport risk assessments for long distance transports, pre-shift crew rest requirements, and maximum duty length limits; and
- All EMS personnel complete the NAEMT EMS Safety Course within 6 months of hire and biennially afterwards.

Our congratulations to the team of Healthnet Aeromedical Services.

[\[National EMS Awards of Excellence Presentations\]](#)

[\[Presentation of the Rocco V. Morando Lifetime Achievement Award\]](#)

We are now at the conclusion of this year's General Membership Meeting, generously sponsored by Columbia Southern University and FirstNet built with AT&T. I invite you all to join us in the next room for some fun at the NAEMT Member Reception. Thank you!