

# EMS/Trauma award



*Pete Wolf, EMT-P, was presented GETAC's Journey of Excellence for his tireless work as a GETAC member for the last 12 years.*



*Arlington Fire Department won EMS Public Information/Injury Prevention Award for implementing CPaRlington, which reached its goal of training ten percent of the city's population in CPR and increasing the number of AEDs available throughout the city.*

The Texas EMS and trauma community honored its best during Texas EMS Conference in November. The awards were announced at the Tuesday luncheon. Congratulations to the 2011 winners!

**EMS Public Information/Injury Prevention – Arlington Fire Department** for its development of CPaRlington, a hands-only CPR program with a goal of training about ten percent of Arlington's 377,000 residents in CPR and embracing new guidelines for "hands-only" CPR from the American Heart Association. With AFD in the lead, a partnership was

formed with the AHA and UT-Arlington's School of Nursing to improve cardiac arrest survival. In a little more than four years, about 40,000 people were trained in group sessions at businesses, schools, churches and events, including 4,626 eighth-graders at one huge event in Cowboy Stadium. The city council encouraged citizens to purchase AEDs and register them with the fire department, who then entered the information into the dispatch system so call-takers know an AED is available at that address. The council also authorized the purchase of AEDs for all city facilities. In June of 2009, a city employee used one of the AEDs to revive a patient attending a soccer game. The man survived and was discharged with no neurological deficits.

**EMS Citizen – David "DJ" Herbert Jr.** of Fredericksburg for his response to critical injuries his stepfather suffered in a fall. Ten-year-old DJ was watching television with his five-year-old sister while his mother worked an ambulance shift, and his stepfather, Stacy, a firefighter, was at home. While climbing into a nearby hunting blind, Stacy fell backwards head first, a metal peg step partially degloving his leg from just below his knee. He was unconscious for a while, then managed to walk the three-hundred yards back to the house. DJ managed to stay calm, even as his blood-soaked stepdad went to his truck to radio



*DJ Herbert, right front, won EMS Citizen of the Year for his calm and quick action when his stepfather was seriously injured. From left, Catherine Kuhlmann, Paige Kuhlmann, DJ Herbert and Stacy Kuhlmann. DJ wants to grow up to be a firefighter.*

for help. DJ put in a DVD for his sister to watch and told her to stay inside. He then gathered towels and pillows and applied pressure to the wound and tried to make Stacy comfortable in the driveway where he had collapsed. DJ stayed stoic until first responders arrived, not breaking down until Stacy was loaded in the ambulance. He remained in the hospital for three weeks, undergoing five surgeries. Today, Stacy is completely recovered and back to work at the Fredericksburg Fire Department. And DJ still wants to be a firefighter!

**EMS Educator – GETAC's Education Committee** for its tireless efforts to improve EMS education in Texas. For the first time, an entire committee has won a Texas EMS/Trauma award. Nominations praised the committee's vision, persistence and

# winners announced

dedication to EMS in Texas, noting how they'd gone above and beyond to help educators, providers and the most important stakeholders – the patients. The committee traveled all over the state, many of the members at personal expense, for committee meetings and to offer assistance to paramedic education programs seeking national accreditation. Members of the committee are: Jodie Harbert, LP (chair); Robert Gonzalez, MD; Scotty Bolleter, EMT-P; Jeffery Hayes, LP; Sandra Crady, NREMT-P; Robert Knappage, EMT-P; John Creech, LP; Gregory LaMay, EMT-P; Lorie Lefevers, LP, Oscar Salazar, LP; and Scott Mitchell, LP.

**Designated Trauma Facility – Shannon Medical Center** for playing an integral part in the community as a trauma center, with the highest designation in a 14-county service area, for supporting the RAC and assisting in disaster coordination, and for providing injury prevention and health education. Shannon, located

in San Angelo, first received its Level III trauma designation in 2000 and has maintained it ever since. The trauma program includes a regional communications center that provides dispatch for Shannon AirMed1, the trauma team and regional EMS partners. During the recent wildfires in the Concho Valley, the communications center coordinated response of ambulances and personnel. Shannon supports the Concho Valley RAC by providing meeting, office and warehouse space. The medical center also believes in education, offering frequent trauma education.

**EMS Administrator – Ernesto Rodriguez, LP**, for improving service to the community by introducing new business processes and establishing a new organization model within Austin-Travis County EMS. Since 2006, Rodriguez has worked to develop business practices and improve reporting, eventually aligning a new electronic patient record system



*Ernie Rodriguez, LP, got EMS Administrator of the Year for his work as director of Austin-Travis County EMS.*

with new reporting processes. He linked the department's budget to the business plan, including identifying upcoming issues, service deployment strategies and key performance indicators. He created a strategic plan that includes, among other things, a community health section intended to help frequent users of A/TCEMS navigate the health care system to find the long-term assistance they need. Rodriguez made it a goal to share information with other EMS agencies, and is now working with a coalition of 24 other major EMS services to share information and best practices. In short, Rodriguez is committed inspiring his staff at A/TCEMS to achieve great things and to make A/TCEMS – and EMS in general – better each day.

**EMS Medical Director – Levon Vartanian, MD**, for his leadership in setting organizational goals centered on surpassing national EMS standards at Cypress Creek



*GETAC's Education Committee took home EMS Educator of the Year. This is the first time a committee has ever won an award. Several members of the Education Committee were present to accept the awards and congratulations from supporters.*



*Capital Area Trauma RAC was honored for its work during the catastrophic wildfires that plagued Central Texas last fall.*

EMS. Vartanian has put into practice advances in research and treatment protocols, fostered health care partnerships to improve patient outcomes for cardiac arrest and STEMI care, and increased the number of community education programs to help prevent injuries. Vartanian has been quick to embrace new technology such as the ResQPod, induced hypothermia protocols, and Lucas Chest Compression System, which resulted in a ROSC rate of nearly 50 percent in all cardiac arrest cases in Cypress Creek. Vartanian has also worked with health care providers in the community to decrease the time it takes to get a patient from the scene to a cath lab. CCEMS now maintains a door to balloon time of 38 minutes, well below the national average of 90 minutes. One nomination states that through his commitment to making a positive impact on the community, Vartanian creates

higher expectations for the EMS profession.

**Outstanding RAC – Capital Area Trauma RAC** for taking a leadership role in coordinating resources when one of the largest wildfires in Texas history burned nearby. When many of the people the RAC typically relies on for help were responding to fires near their own homes, the RAC reached out to find resources from as far away as Alaska. The RAC contributed to evacuation, sheltering and firefighter rehab efforts, and it coordinated communication between agencies. The RAC made sure assets such as mobile medical units, ambulance strike teams and an Ambus supplied by SETRAC, were put to good use. In Bastrop alone, about 100 firefighters a day took advantage of the rehab offered by these resources. Any disaster takes coordination, and CATRAC stepped up when the wildfires began, coordinating and

collaborating so that the citizens could confidently rely on their emergency response system.

**EMS Air Medical Service – Southeast Texas Air Rescue**, of Beaumont, for the compassion they offer not only to patients but also to the EMS personnel they work with. One nomination, from a rural 9-1-1 provider, describes how grateful she is when treating a patient “out in the middle of nowhere,” to hear the aircraft land. The air service also provides free continuing education hours to local EMS and hospital personnel. The air service’s staff was praised for the emotional support they provide as well. On a recent call, medics responded to a three-month-old child in full cardiac arrest. Despite the care of medics, nurses and a physician’s assistant, the patient did not survive. An emergency responder writes that as she cried in the back of the ambulance, a flight nurse sat with her and cried as well, genuinely distressed about the call. The compassion of that Southeast Texas Air Rescue nurse, the nominator says, will stay with her forever.



*Southeast Texas Air Rescue took home EMS Air Medical Service for its support of local EMS and compassionate care.*

## EMS First Responder – Blue Mound VFD and Windthorst VFD (tie)

Blue Mound VFD, outside Fort Worth, upgraded the level of service it offers to ALS. Impressively, once the group decided to upgrade the service, they established all protocols, and procured supplies and equipment in the short span of six months. The service uses MedStar as its transport agency. Blue Mound VFD also recently began tracking its response times and found that in the first three months, response time was 4.8 minutes from dispatch to scene – terrific numbers for an all-volunteer service.

Windthorst VFD, located in Archer County, maintains a full roster of 25 volunteers, including three with advanced certifications. With an annual budget of only about \$40,000, the department makes it a high priority to have excellent equipment. The volunteers will maintain, repair and customize the equipment themselves in many cases. The crews do not hesitate to travel to neighboring counties to help out. In 2011, the department assisted in some of the wildfires that plagued the state. Windthorst also sponsors several education classes each month for surrounding areas and was named Trauma Systems Advocate of the Year in 2010 by North Texas RAC.

**EMS Public/Private Provider** – Cypress Creek EMS for excellent patient care, setting high goals and a strong leadership that demonstrates a commitment to professionalism, knowledge and the community. CCEMS has been at



*One of the winners of EMS First Responder of the Year was Windthorst Volunteer Fire Department for its dedicated volunteer personnel and work on wildfires.*



*Blue Mound Volunteer Fire Department also won EMS First Responder of the Year for upgrading its level of service to ALS and for improving response time. The all-volunteer service now responds in less than five minutes.*

the forefront of new technologies, including ResQPod, Lucas Chest Compression System and induced hypothermia, resulting in a ROSC rate greater than 50 percent. Executive Director Brad England joined forces with medical centers in the area to improve cath lab times, greatly reducing the time it takes to get a patient to the lab. The service's first responder program works with each fire department and law enforcement

agency in the ESD, partnering on protocols and other programs. CCEMS believes in education, and regularly provides continuing education, EMT to paramedic courses and special continuing education symposiums. In 2010, they trained thousands of people in CPR and first aid. CCEMS also provides injury prevention education to schools and gives free car seat inspections at its station.



*Public/Private Provider of the Year went to Cypress Creek EMS for its leadership and commitment to professionalism, knowledge and the community it serves.*



*Shannon Medical Center, a Level III trauma facility, took home Designated Trauma Facility of the Year for its commitment to the 14-county area it serves.*

**EMS Person of the Year – Lisa Camp, LP**, for her commitment to emergency medicine, patient care and Friendswood. Raised in a fire/EMS family and with 33 years’ experience in EMS herself, Camp has worked tirelessly to improve patient care, public access, disaster preparedness, public education and EMS training – not just locally but across the country.

She has pushed for protocols proven to improve outcomes, such as induced hypothermia. In her job as chief of Friendswood Volunteer EMS, Camp leads by example, working several shifts and attending continuing education classes with her crews. She performs as a safety clown at schools and community events and formed a bike medic group

after getting bicycles donated to FVEMS. She has bachelor’s degree in public management and serves on the College of the Mainland Public Service Advisory Board. If that weren’t enough, Camp joined Texas-3 Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and responds to disasters.

**GETAC’s Journey of Excellence – Pete Wolf, EMT-P**, for providing service, dedication and leadership to the EMS and trauma community in his years as a volunteer fire chief, medic and RAC advocate and member. Appointed to the first Governor’s EMS and Trauma Council by George W. Bush, Wolf has served as vice chair, interim chair and EMS committee chair in the last 12 years. He helped write the first Elected Officials Guide to EMS, a book that helped the public better understand the importance of EMS and trauma systems to all Texans. GETAC Chair Vance Riley says Wolf provided a voice of reason during sometimes contentious times, and that he truly cares for Texas and EMS and understands the decisions made in GETAC affect stakeholders and citizens. EMS and trauma are better off, Riley says, for sharing this journey with Pete Wolf.

*—Photos by Matt Bowman*



*Lisa Camp, LP, was honored as EMS Person of the Year for her work as at Friendswood EMS and the community.*