

EMS STRONG

The Virginia Office of EMS wants to thank all participants of the “EMS Strong” essay contest, which was hosted during National EMS Week, May 17-23. Shared below, are the remarkable submissions provided by EMS agencies from across the Commonwealth, expressing how their agency is “EMS Strong.”

Winner!

Fort Valley Volunteer Fire Department

Submitted by Lt. Sylvia Dorham, NREMT-B

“Fort Valley is EMS Strong. This little town, tucked between two ridges in the Shenandoah Valley, sports a qualified, crazy-dedicated, all-volunteer EMS squad. In fact, we are one of the few remaining squads in the Commonwealth who provide EMS service for free. We keep an eye on the residents, hikers, hunters, equestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists who seek out the magnificent views in our 20-mile-long first due. It's us, their rescue squad, that teaches CPR, maintains wilderness rescue equipment, visits the pre-school, trains incessantly, and stands by pagers every hour of the day and night, ready to serve. The citizens back us, making our service possible by supporting our Bingo nights, open houses, and Ham-'n'-Oyster dinners. Somewhere in there, the lines blur. Who is helping whom? They help their rescue squad. We help them. Together, Fort Valley is strong.”

Winner!

Newport News Shipbuilding Fire Department

Submitted by Jason B. McKeeby, Firefighter/Paramedic

“The Newport News Shipbuilding Fire Department is EMS Strong. We are a small department but we take pride in the service we provide to our customers. These customers are builders of the world's greatest ships. We are their protectors. We also serve as an afterhours clinic for yard workers sustaining non-emergent injuries and work with the Navy to treat their sailors when called upon by their shipboard medical team. We stay EMS Strong by identifying deficiencies and handling them in a proactive manner. We hold mandatory quarterly meetings with all providers present to identify potential problems, train on the latest, and have constructive conversation with our medical director. We are proud of what we have accomplished and strive to remain EMS Strong. By doing this our shipbuilders can keep building and our Navy can keep serving. It's the least we can do.”

Winner!

Galax-Grayson EMS

Submitted by Freddie Stump, Jr., EMT-Intermediate99

“What makes Galax-Grayson EMS, EMS Strong? Is it our ambulances that are stocked above the standard, and equipped with the best tools of the trade; in our effort to preserve life? Is it our staff development, with all full time staff being Nationally Registered Paramedics, and all part time staff acquiring their paramedic education? Is it our mission to keep the

citizens of the City of Galax and the County of Grayson safe in their time of need? Is it our commitment to Twin County Regional Hospital to provide intrafacility transports around the clock? This is why our small rural agency is EMS Strong, but the real reason our strength shines the brightest is our providers! Galax-Grayson EMS strives to be the best, with every provider sharing this responsibility. With the level of care provided, commitment to academics and their support of each other; this makes Galax-Grayson EMS Strong!"

Winner!

Department of Military Affairs

Submitted by Rebecca Moses, Occupational Safety and Health Manager

"The Department of Military Affairs is EMS strong because it provides the highest quality of emergency medical care to Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers, civilians (state and federal employees), and training units on the Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett in Blackstone, Virginia. Our 22 providers maintain the highest level of training and provide care in adverse situations (training areas during all types of situations and weather) daily. Additionally, they conduct in-house training, on-site training in areas such as first aid and fire prevention and updated their hiring process to include scenarios to adequately test the knowledge of incoming candidates. This team of employees deserves recognition due to their countless hours of dedication to our soldiers and civilian population."

Winner!

Richmond Ambulance Authority

Submitted by Rob Lawrence, Chief Operating Officer

"The Richmond Ambulance Authority is EMS Strong because it values two important things. First it's people, they are our most valuable asset and we cherish, nurture, support and mentor them at every stage and phase of their career. We believe they deliver world class EMS and we promote them and their successes constantly. Our other important group are our patients. We understand it is not our emergency, but the patients and we ensure we have the right resource in the right place at the right time ready to save a life or in some cases just lend a sympathetic ear. We are strong because we constantly seek to win the EMS prize, which is to do it all again tomorrow!"

Honorable Mention!

Goochland County Fire-Rescue

Submitted by Doug Pruiett Jr., Volunteer

"Goochland County is a rural EMS and fire department, the members consist of both paid and volunteer staff, but that does not differentiate the job performance. We seek for each and every one of our providers to exemplify the attributes and qualities consistent to those of "EMS Strong" we persevere, train constantly, advance, and not only provide the best patient care possible, but also let our hearts guide us toward compassion and understanding for those who are in difficult situations.

Emergency- All of our calls are an emergency whether it be an elderly person who has fallen down and needs assistance getting up; or someone who is suffering a cardiac arrest. We don't let the severity of the call affect the level of care that we provide. Each and every one of our citizens are valued to the utmost with respect and compassion to our fellow man.

Medical- The medical training that we provide and participate in are the best of it's kind, professionalism and attention to detail are key factors in excellence and are a must in our department.

Services- We have pride in what we do, not due to the prestige of the job, but the opportunity and ability to serve those in need. We are the only employees who are trusted enough to go into someone's house when the owners don't even know us, to help them when they need it.

STRONG- we excel, we give everything that we have within us, we care.
GOOCHLAND county Fire-Rescue, is "EMS STRONG"!"

Honorable Mention!

The Eagle Rock Volunteer Rescue Squad

Submitted by David Cox

"The word "strong" has numerous connotations. Related to the military it speaks of might. In sports it speaks of power. But to the volunteers of the Eagle Rock Rescue Squad it pertains to their ability to cope. It may mean going from their job, to the school safety program to the cardiac call. Coping demands adopting. Recently an exploding car engine demanded a significant coordinated medical response to secure the well being of the patient. His catastrophic injuries necessitated a competent crew. For the neighbor, relative or stranger in distress this squad responds with care and professionalism. The horror of the events has not deterred them from being the strength needed for their community. To the one experiencing an injury or illness in our remote areas, this skilled and capable crew offers a sense of hope to the patient, peace to the family and confidence to the community at large."

Honorable Mention!

Madison County EMS

Submitted by Lucian Mirra, M.Ed., NRP, FP-C

"The citizens of Madison County can be at ease knowing that the men and women of the Madison County Emergency Medical Service (MEMS) are always at the ready. This career agency provides numerous services to the community. Besides being recognized for providing outstanding patient care, the department is active in community outreach and education. Its "Med Minders" program is a free service offered to the senior citizens of the county, where MEMS providers visit the homes of seniors to monitor vital signs and help organize and refill prescriptions. Beyond this program, MEMS supports its partner volunteer agency, the Madison County Rescue Squad (MCRS), by offering training classes open to these members. In addition, MEMS supports the MCRS by allowing its ALS students to collect calls with its experienced providers, providing valuable teaching opportunities. Through its efforts in patient and provider education and service, MEMS is truly "EMS Strong."

Honorable Mention!

Aquia Harbour Volunteer Rescue Squad

Submitted by Ericka Daley, NRP

"Aquia Harbour Volunteer Rescue Squad has over twenty years of dedicated service to Stafford County. This year our squad partnered with Kohl's department store for their annual, "Save Your Heart for Love" event. We educated the public on bike safety, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, poison control, and other important topics. Our squad members arrived at the station hours before commencement in order to prepare goodie bags for the children and to stock the units with literature that will be taught. After the event, squad members remained behind for several more hours to clean units and store

supplies. In addition, we've conducted cardiopulmonary certification classes to the general public, basic first aid to various scout troops and administered bike helmets with complimentary fittings to community children as well as participating in holiday functions throughout the year. In short, Rescue 9 is an integral part of many whose influence keeps us EMS strong!"

Honorable Mention!

Hollins Fire and Rescue

Submitted by Hunter Weikel

"EMS Strong, from having the strength to do chest compressions for 10 straight minutes waiting on assistance to arrive, to being able to cope with a pediatric call, or simply having the strength to come back night after night to face the worse. Being EMS strong means all of these, but most importantly, it means being one strong and cohesive unit. Knowing your other squad members and trusting them is paramount in EMS. From knowing they will know what to do on a code to having them support you during your lowest moment after the toughest call. Being EMS Strong means having a strong family in your squad. It is for this reason why, Hollins Fire and Rescue is EMS Strong."

Mid-County Volunteer Rescue Squad

Submitted by Janice M. Kauffman, President

"Mid-County Volunteer Rescue Squad is staffed by all volunteers that are dedicated men and women that serve Northumberland County. Our members are proud of what we can accomplish in the community and support that we have for each other. We train to be the best we can be and our success is due to each and every member. We do many standbys in the community and we also promote this in our community classes of CPR/First aid. We are an ASHI training Center with 6 Instructors and have a community class every other month. We also sponsor our Local school future problem solvers "Team 911". Our current Fundraiser is to promote "911" signs and First aid Kits. As president of Mid-County, I would like to express my pride and gratitude in our organization and our members."

Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad

Submitted by Ryan Schlobach

"The Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad represents the epitome of what is EMS Strong. We are currently celebrating our 55th year of service to the Greater Charlottesville community. We are one of the few volunteer rescue squads left in our area, and many of our members run two or three shifts each week, much more than the required one shift per week. Many of our members also work in the TJEMS Council to prepare new protocols, train members in the entire region, and improve communication between EMS agencies and local hospitals. Operating out of one building, we service an area of over 40,000 people during the day and even more at night. As a result, we run many calls of all types to keep our members fresh. Finally, we are constantly training new members, many of whom are University of Virginia students, keeping our organization young and community oriented."

Dinwiddie County Fire & EMS

Submitted by Dawn M. Titmus, EMS Captain

"Dinwiddie County Fire & EMS is an elite group of professional providers that consist of both career and volunteer. All of this is accomplished by following Dinwiddie County's core principles; integrity, value added customer service and teamwork. As well respected providers in our community, we offer cutting edge care and state of the art training. We

contribute to education and leadership of the community by providing patient education during patient contacts and providing CPR/First Aid training to different county departments and the school system. Our department prides itself in offering superior customer service and innovative patient care practices. We accomplish this by mandating continuous training and continuously seeking new technology and techniques. These concepts create a unique bond, tying us together, united we stand, EMS Strong."

West Hanover Volunteer Rescue Squad

Submitted by Chris C. Stanford, 1st Lieutenant

"WHVRS shows community leadership through its annual Open House. In addition to food and children's activities, the program includes activities such as vehicle extractions and K9 search demonstrations, health screenings, fire safety trailer, ambulance tours, and blood drives. For many years, we have offered annual EMT-B courses and CPR classes, open to both members and the general public. To maintain the provider skills necessary for high quality care in a rural area, we believe that continuing training is the key. Every year, our squad organizes a two day Super CEU weekend (open at no cost to any Hanover County provider and a minimal cost to anyone else). We have one hour training classes conducted monthly prior to our business meetings and pay for members to go to Symposium. WHVRS provides regular EVOC, ACLS, PALS, PHTLS, and EPC classes, all of which are taught by WHVRS members who are certified instructors."

Gretna Rescue Squad

Submitted by Coleman W. Mayhew, II

"Gretna Rescue Squad was founded in 1968 by a group of concerned citizens wanting to help their community. That tradition continues today as our agency maintains the highest level of patient care. In order to stay abreast of critical changes in the EMS protocol we regular attending meetings and programs provided by the hospital and Virginia Office EMS. By maintaining this direct contact it allows us to provided up to date critical patient care. We are currently offering an Emergency Medical Tech. Class for our future EMS Providers. In addition to these classes we offer CPR Classes for EMS Providers and the community on a monthly basis. We also reach out to other agencies in the community to help them maintain their continuing education hours. With these components in place it makes stronger providers and leaders. By simply caring for our patient's; this is what makes Gretna Rescue Squad, EMS strong."

Danville Life Saving Crew

Submitted by Bob Marion

"The Danville Life Saving Crew in Danville, VA remains one of the largest ALL volunteer Rescue squads in Virginia. Approaching their 70th anniversary, we continue to excel daily, providing Emergency Prehospital patient care 24 hours a day seven days a week. We are very active in the community and continue to educate the community with classes in CPR/First Aid, EMT-B through the Paramedic level ad EVOC to all other local agencies. DLSC is a non-city agency that has developed a fascinating report with the other city affiliated agencies (Danville Fire and Police) that we are the preferred agency for the city. When working Medical Emergencies, Traffic Crashes, Water Rescue and other Technical Rescues, DLSC, DFD and DPD work together like well-oiled machines. The three public services have trained and conducted training exercises together that show the agencies cohesiveness. Working together as one team being EMS strong."

Danville Life Saving Crew

Submitted by Peyton Parrish

"On behalf of the Danville Life Saving Crew, I am proud to say we serve our community as a volunteer agency that is committed to our mission, "to save life, administer first aid, and teach safety." Each member would agree that our service is to provide the best care to every patient and their family under all circumstances that come before us, as we strive to earn the constant respect of our community and first responders. Together we have formed a bond like no other, a family, that all share the love for everything EMS that drives us each and every day to better ourselves and the community we serve. As partners of Danville Area Training Center and our local community college, we provide quality training to individuals from all areas so they can be prepared to lead healthier and safer lives in the surrounding communities. We are EMS strong."

Botetourt County Fire & EMS

Submitted by Jason Ferguson, Deputy Chief

"The combined agencies that make up Botetourt County Fire & EMS are "EMS Strong" because: Each and every day the men and women of our system go above and beyond the basics of rendering medical aid. Our folks are engaged, active, compassionate, responsive citizens that make a huge difference in the community. They are advocates for their patient, activists for doing the right thing, leaders in their own right. Whether holding a hand or making a meal for a lonely and scared 911 caller, our EMS personnel are top notch. The level of dedication shown to the community through their actions makes each and every one of them heroes. Whether day or night, sunshine or rain, Botetourt County residents and visitors can rest assured they are well protected and have responders ready to spring into action at a moment's notice."

Giles Lifesaving and Rescue Squad

Submitted by Sara Midkiff

"I believe Giles Lifesaving and Rescue Squad is "EMS Strong" because of the continuous dedication despite obstacles. With members ranging from 50 plus years of experience to only 50 minutes of experience, support for each other is maintained. We strive to excel against adversities such as difficult scenes and tragic, traumatic loss of members. Among our own are a few instructors, however they place the needs of the crew and community well above themselves, providing countless hours of EMT class, CE's, clinical assessments, and general ride time to go beyond the classroom with our young providers. Tomorrow's future is bright, so allow us to lay a solid path of knowledge and experience from which to move forward."

Virginia Beach EMS

Submitted by Greg Postlewait, NREMT

"Virginia Beach is EMS Strong! Having just completed their BLS Academy, it was immediately evident this is not a class, where you read a book, show up, and take a test. Week after week, dozens of volunteers were investing their time in our education. From paramedics to former providers, police officers, firefighters, and division chiefs, all graciously shared their knowledge and experience with the goal of shaping us into safe and effective providers. This does not stop at the academy door, it is simply part of the culture of Virginia Beach EMS. We are stronger because of the genuine care and compassion for our brothers and sisters as well as our patients."

Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services

Submitted by Jeffrey J. Meyer, BBA, NREMT-P

Over the past three years, Portsmouth Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (PFRES) and the EMS Division has bolstered their reputation for excellence through community involvement, progressive staff development and support, patient care advancement and improved operational efficiency. The system accomplishments include:

- 2013, PFRES and Bon Secours Maryview Medical Center (MMC) have worked to ensure that our PFRES staff are well educated in the delivery of STEMI care, and as a result, we have successfully reduced the time from initial patient contact to 12 Lead EKG from 11.2 minutes to 5.5 minutes.
- 2014, PFRES and MMC successfully team up to reduce the Door to Needle (D2N) time for stroke patients to receive TPA. Prior to April 1, 2015 Maryview was meeting the D2N time of 60 minutes approximately 33% of the time and since initiating the Code S system pilot on April 1, 2015 MMC has meet the D2N 90% of the time!
- PFRES has established a community based, Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) program which is fully coalesced into the City of Portsmouth's healthcare system.
- Increase in ROSC from 3% to 12%. This due increase training on the pit crew approach an introduction of Lucas device.
- Standardization of medical equipment throughout PFRES's fleet with capabilities for 12 lead EKG, Entidal CO2, and EZ IO on all ALS units. Along with PowerLoad systems and stair chairs with track system for all medic units.
- Participated in Mass Casualty, Submarine Fires, and active shooter exercises.
- PFRES participate in local, regional, state, and federal medical team. Team include:
- Portsmouth SWAT, Hampton Road Medical Strike Team, VA1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team.
- 2014 Tidewater EMS Council Regional Award Recipients for Outstanding EMS Agency.
- 2014, Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services have received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® EMS Bronze Award
- 2015, Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services have received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® EMS Silver Award.

Buena Vista Firefighters, Inc.

Submitted by Ronald Telsch

"Our company is dedicated to providing first responder services. All firefighters are required to have EMR or higher. And now we are expanding our membership to allow for EMS-only membership. When you call, We come."

Greater Manassas Volunteer Rescue Squad

Submitted by Peter Rockx

In 1973, President Gerald Ford authorized EMS Week to celebrate EMS, its practitioners and the important work they do in responding to medical emergencies. Back then, EMS was a fledgling profession and EMS practitioners were only beginning to be recognized as a critical component of emergency medicine and the public health safety net. This year EMS Week is celebrated on May 17-23, under the theme "**EMS Strong**" to recognize, celebrate, unify, and inspire EMS professionals nationwide.

In 1973, the Manassas Volunteer Rescue Squad (now the Greater Manassas Volunteer Rescue Squad (GMVRS)) was already seven years old and served nearly all of western Prince William County. Now, nearly 50 years later, while our first due (primary dispatch

area) has shrunk to the City of Manassas, our call volume has increased many times over – nearly 1,200 runs by the volunteer crews in 2014. But more importantly, our primary mission remains the same....**to serve the greater Manassas community with quality pre-hospital care.**

Quality pre-hospital care doesn't just happen. It takes a group of intensely dedicated volunteers (many who also have full-time jobs) working together internally and with the City's Fire and Rescue Department to ensure the myriad of Squad, City, and State EMS related requirements are met and maintained both personally and organizationally. At the heart of GMVRS are our core values

– principles by which we strive to live by. They are:

1. **Professionalism** – we seek to earn the admiration and respect of our peers and those we serve through the EMS skills we demonstrate every day.
2. **Respect** – we listen to and treat all others, especially our fellow EMS providers and patients, with patience, kindness, empathy, and compassion.
3. **Integrity** - we are honest, doing what is honorable and trustworthy in all matters, and owning our "stuff" when we fall short.
4. **Dedication** - we are committed to serve our community, its citizens, and our patients with ongoing high quality care and exceptional organizational performance.
5. **Excellence** – we strive to exceed expectations; learning new skills, having fun, and growing personally for the benefit of the Squad and those we serve.

Our commitment is to serve the community with PRIDE and to remain EMS Strong.