

For Immediate Release



Westchester Regional EMS Council

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EMS Providers Recognized for Exceptional Service

Valhalla, NY – May 19, 2005 – The Westchester County Regional EMS Council recognized the emergency medical providers in the county by hosting the 32nd annual EMS Awards Dinner at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown, NY.

More than 240 attendees from police, fire, and EMS agencies attended the event, where honors were awarded for the following categories:

- **EMT of the Year: Laura Brooks, Empress EMS.** Dan Minerva, Chief Operating Officer of Empress Ambulance presented the EMT of the Year award to Laura Brooks for her outstanding commitment to EMS. On May 6, 2004, while off-duty, Laura stopped her car when she came upon an accident on the Saw Mill River Parkway. She entered the damaged car and provided care for an infant in the back seat who was the only survivor in the accident.
- **Paramedic of the Year: Malcolm Dixon, TransCare.** Laura Murphy of TransCare presented the award for Paramedic of the Year to Malcolm Dixon, who, during his many years of service, has provided exemplary professional care to his patients.
- **EMS Agency of the Year: Sleepy Hollow Volunteer Ambulance Corps.** Jeff Mead of Phelps Memorial Hospital presented the award for EMS Agency of the Year to Sleepy Hollow Volunteer Ambulance Corps for their exceptional dedication to providing services for Sleepy Hollow and the surrounding communities, with new initiatives such as epinephrine administration for allergic reactions, albuterol administration for asthmatics, a “BLS Fly Car,” which provides immediate patient care while the ambulance responds, and formation of their Junior Corps.
- **EMS Leadership Award: Jeffrey Pitonza, Transcare.** James O'Connor, Chairman of the Regional EMS Council presented the EMS Leadership Award to Jeffrey Pitonza for his outstanding management of nearly 300 EMS employees throughout New Rochelle, Mount Pleasant, and Mount Vernon.
- **EMS Educator of Excellence: Raymond Thompson, Bedford Fire Department.** Dr. Marcus presented the EMS Educator of Excellence award for Mr. Thompson's strong commitment to EMS and his pioneering spirit during his significant tenure in the Bedford Fire Department.
- **EMS Communications Specialist of the Year: Jeanette Drexler, Empress EMS.** Jeanette Drexler started her career as an EMT. In March of 2004, she was promoted to Systems Status Controller, where she oversees all communications at Empress EMS, which responds to more than 34,000 calls per year.
- **Registered Professional Nurse of Excellence: Sari Maenza, White Plains Hospital.** Presented by Dr. Tim Haydock, Sari is described as an intelligent, hard working, warm, and personable care giver. Her dedication to patient care and EMS is exemplary.
- **Physician of Excellence: Dr. Emil Nigro, Phelps Memorial Hospital.** Keith Sapien, President and CEO of Phelps Hospital, presented Dr. Nigro with the Physician of Excellence Award for his directorship of the Phelps Hospital Emergency Department, his development and management of the Poison Control Center at Phelps Hospital, and for his dedication to Quality Assurance for EMS in Westchester.

- **EMS Volunteer of the Year: Armand D'Amour, Elmsford Fire Department.** Chief John Reynolds of the Elmsford Fire Department presented the award for EMS Volunteer of the Year to Armand D'Amour for his strong commitment to EMS. Armand was instrumental in establishing EMS in the village of Elmsford more than 40 years ago.
- **Civilian Award: Al Miskiewicz.** Presented by Chief Ed Burnes of Somers Fire Department, the Civilian Award was presented to Al Miskiewicz for his heroic response to a house fire on his way home from a wedding, where he ran into a burning building to attempt to extricate its inhabitants.
- **Civilian Award: Barbara Ryan.** Presented by Dr. Nigro and Dr. Matthews of Phelps Hospital, Barbara Ryan was recognized for her brave and quick response to an endangered automobile which had broken through the guard rail on the access road to the Bear Mountain Bridge. Barbara climbed down a steep embankment and waded in chest-deep water to help the victim, Dr. Matthews, until EMS arrived.
- **William P. Dawson Award: Lawrence Klecatsky, Sound Shore Medical Center.** James O'Connor presented the Dawson Award to Dr. Lawrence Klecatsky for his integrity and compassion as former Vice Chair of the Regional EMS Council and former Chairman of the Westchester County Regional Medical Advisory Committee.

“This ceremony is an excellent vehicle to acknowledge the emergency service providers whose selfless commitment is seen in our communities every day,” said Chris Kalish, Chairman of the Public Information and Education Committee.

The Westchester Regional EMS Council (WREMSCO), one of eighteen EMS regions in New York State, sponsors the annual awards ceremony. Regional EMS councils are provided for in NYS Public Health Law to work in conjunction with the New York State EMS Council and the New York State Department of Health Bureau of EMS. The Westchester EMS Region is coterminous with the County of Westchester and represents over 70 ambulance and first response agencies, 12 emergency receiving hospitals, and more than 2000 paramedics and basic life support personnel.

For more information on the Westchester Regional EMS Council, contact the Westchester Regional EMS Office at (914) 231 - 1616, or visit <http://www.wremSCO.org>.