

MIEMSS Presents Statewide Awards during EMS Week

In a two-part ceremony at the Miller Senate Office Building on May 20, MIEMSS honored children from across the State and also presented its annual Stars of Life Awards to honor EMS personnel, citizens, and EMS programs. Photos of the winners receiving their awards, as well as summaries of why they received them, follow. Unfortunately, two children (Mairead Elise Carey and Allaurra Townes) and three adults (Cathy and Jimmy Nerantzis and William Fast) were unable to attend the ceremony to receive their awards, so their photos are not available.

Five children were recognized for their actions which ensured that people in Maryland received “the right care when it counts,” by assisting in providing a life-saving service to someone in their community. Each of the following received a “Right Care When It Counts” Award.



MIEMSS Executive Director Dr. Robert R. Bass holds the Maryland EMS Week Proclamation signed by Gov. Martin O'Malley that Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County) presented to him.

Mariah Johnson (Frederick Co.): On July 2, 2009, Mariah, then 5 years old, dialed 9-1-1 when Joyce Paulsgrove, her childcare provider (“Nanny”), felt ill and then fainted. Mariah stayed on the phone with the dispatcher and allowed the EMS crew to come into the home to help her Nanny. She also stayed with her 1-year-old brother and tried to keep him calm and out of the way so the EMS providers could care for Nanny. According to Mariah, “they did lots of stuff to make her [Nanny] better.”

Mairead Elise Carey (Frederick Co.): On August 19, 2009, Mairead, then 13 years old, saw her little sister Emma floating in the pool and not responding. She pulled Emma from the pool and checked for breathing; there were no breaths and Emma’s lips were purple. Mairead started CPR which she had learned in Girl Scouts. Emma quickly started to cough up water . . . and then lunch. Mairead’s friend, Abby Yoder, went into the house to get Mairead’s mother. After one night in the hospital, Emma was discharged home and is fine, thanks to the quick thinking of Mairead.

Kayla Robertson (Carroll Co.): On October 15, 2009, Kayla, who is 5 years old, heard the smoke detector go off within her

home. She went to get her father and alert him. Kayla, her father, and her siblings were able to get out of the house; she then dialed 9-1-1 as she had learned during the previous week at a kindergarten school visit to the New Windsor Fire & Hose Company # 1.

Allaurra Townes (Baltimore City): On January 27, 2009, Allaurra, 6 years old, heard the smoke alarm and woke up her mother. Because of her quick response, they were both able to get out of the house before the first floor was engulfed in flames.

Samantha Mason (Charles Co.): On August 1, 2009, Samantha, 4 years old, found her mother unconscious on the floor and dialed 9-1-1. She told Dispatcher Jaime Ostrander that her mother “has diabetes and needs to get sugar.” She stayed on the phone for the entire time until the EMS providers arrived. Samantha was taught when and how to dial 9-1-1 by her mother because of her grandmother’s medically fragile condition—but on this day—she used those skills to help her mother. She was also careful to warn the EMS crew to watch out for her toys in the living room so they would not hurt themselves.

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Mariah Johnson holds her award, surrounded by (l-r) EMS Lt. Charity Rinker, Joyce Paulsgrove (Mariah’s “Nanny”) who is holding Mariah’s brother, Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Cyndy Wright-Johnson, MSN, RNC (EMS-C Program Director at MIEMSS), Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County).



Kayla Robertson holds her award, surrounded by (l-r) her dad Tony Robertson, Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Cyndy Wright-Johnson, MSN, RNC (EMS-C Program Director at MIEMSS), Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County)

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There were nine categories of EMS Star of Life awards, with two winners in the category "Leon W. Hayes Award for Excellence in Emergency Medical Services."

Maryland Star of Life Award

Kelley Smith, NREMT-P (Charles Co.)

When the medic unit in which she was riding was hit by a drunk driver on the driver's side, Paramedic Kelley Smith went into action. Despite the darkness, the irrigation-ditch rocks, and her own injuries, Paramedic Smith was able to save the life of the seriously injured ambulance driver, CRT-I Anthony Cooper. He was not only the driver but her fiancé.

After being hit on Solomon's Island Road, the medic unit traveled sideways on the shoulder of the road for a distance before coming to a stop down a rock-filled irrigation ditch. Suffering from injuries herself and dazed, Paramedic Smith was able to locate the radio and call 9-1-1. She then managed to instruct a passer-by, who stopped to offer assistance, to get the medical bags out of the rear of the medic vehicle so she could begin to help CRT-I Cooper. He was unconscious and having severe difficulty breathing. Paramedic Smith sawed through his seatbelt with a pen-knife, placed him on 100 percent oxygen, and started an IV for fluid replacement. She had to work in complete darkness, except for the passer-by's car headlights. Paramedic Smith accomplished all of this before the first EMS

and fire equipment arrived.

CRT-I Cooper suffered serious chest, head, and internal injuries. Since the Medevac helicopter could not fly due to the fog, he was transported by ambulance to Calvert Memorial Hospital where he was stabilized and then transported to a trauma center. Paramedic Smith was also transported to Calvert Memorial Hospital and released later that day.

Maryland EMS Citizen Award

- **Cathy Nerantzis (Montgomery Co.)**
- **Jimmy Nerantzis (Montgomery Co.)**
- **William Fast (Montgomery Co.)**

Shari Fast and Cathy Nerantzis were friends who frequently jogged together. Both

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Samantha Mason holds her award, surrounded by (l-r) her mother Sharon Mason, Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Dispatcher Jaime Ostrander, Cyndy Wright-Johnson, MSN, RNC (EMS-C Program Director at MIEMSS), Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County).



(L-r) Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Paramedic Kelley Smith (Maryland Star of Life Award), her fiancé CRT-I Anthony Cooper, and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County).



(L-r) Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Paramedic Shawnya Bray (EMS Provider of the Year Award), Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County).



(L-r) Sen. Donald F. Munson (District 2, Washington County), Joe Besche (member of the EMS Department at Charlestown Retirement Community), Del. David D. Rudolph (District 34B, Cecil County), Mike Tiberio (EMS manager at Charlestown Retirement Community) holding the Maryland EMS-Geriatric Award, and Sen. Barry Glassman (District 35, Harford County).