

# Award winners announced



*Texas Commissioner of Health David Lakey, MD, left, presents EMS Administrator to Eric Maloney, LP. Maloney works for Kerrville Fire/EMS.*

**EMS Administrator – Eric Maloney** for his contributions to Kerrville Fire/EMS. Maloney took over as EMS administrator five years ago and began several programs that improved morale within the ranks. He implemented online continuing education, added training classes and began using progressive protocols that expanded medications carried on the units. New recruits go through a week of intensive training to be thoroughly knowledgeable about protocols and standard operating procedures, and are then tested on their skills. Under his administration, new paramedics must complete a probationary period and pass a medication exam before they are considered proficient. One nomination praised the progress Kerrville has made under his leadership.



*Jorie Klein, RN, center, won GETAC's Journey of Excellence Award, announced by GETAC Interim Chair Pete Wolf. Here, Klein stands with David Lakey, MD, and Kathy Perkins, RN, MBA, assistant commissioner of Regulatory Services.*

**GETAC's Journey of Excellence – Jorie Klein, RN**, for her experience, knowledge and dedication to the Texas EMS/trauma system through her work developing and nurturing the Texas EMS, Trauma and Acute Care Foundation. Although she's served in many roles at Parkland Health and Hospital Systems and is an internationally recognized speaker, Klein's primary focus has always been patient care. Klein has been involved in regional and state advisory committees for years, and she helped develop many of the standards used today, providing input from a clinician's perspective when the trauma system rules and policies were being developed. Texas and the EMS/trauma system are better off today than ever before, thanks to Klein's passion and unwavering dedication to improving patient care.

**Private/Public Provider Award – Medina County EMS** for its commitment to collaboration, education and quality patient care. Medina County EMS is comprised of two entities: Medina Valley EMS and Community EMS. The two agencies joined forces and resources in 2008 and began operating cooperatively. MCEMS operates under progressive protocols for medications, hypothermia and cardiac arrest management. The service provides continuing education for its own medics as well as those from surrounding agencies and opened an educational facility that teaches CPR, ACLS, PALS, AMLS, ICS and many other courses. MCEMS even presents the courses to local hospital and nursing home personnel and the public, and it takes courses to rural and frontier areas that don't always have access to education. MCEMS works within the community to provide safety programs to children and older adults, and provides free stand-by coverage at local events. MCEMS is an active participant in regional response—several members of MCEMS serve on the RAC and MCEMS participated in state responses to hurricanes Rita, Katrina, Dolly and Ike.



*Medina County EMS was honored as this year's EMS Public/Private Provider.*

**EMS Public Information/Injury Prevention Award – Holly Pichette, LP**, for her outstanding work in building injury prevention coalitions and developing and

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# at Texas EMS Conference

implementing injury prevention programs in Montgomery County. Pichette has been an enthusiastic supporter of programs such as Shattered Dreams, which she produces for six area high schools each year; CPR/AED classes, which she holds several times each month; and the Child Passenger Safety Program, which brought together a coalition of organizations from across the county to check car seats and distribute booster seats. The event has grown from one lane and three technicians to 12 technicians and six lanes booked solid for four hours. Pichette developed and manages the “Kids Don’t Float” program, which stations volunteers at boat ramps on Lake Conroe on busy weekends to loan life jackets to children. Nominations for Pichette came from people she works with throughout the county, including a park ranger, a minister who hosts child passenger events and her colleagues.

**EMS Medical Director – Levon Vartanian, MD**, for dedication to his medics and to patient care in his role as medical director for Cypress Creek EMS in northwest Harris County. Vartanian began as an EMT in Galveston before moving on to paramedic and then to medical school. When he became a board-certified emergency physician, he returned to Houston to work and was soon recruited by Cypress Creek. Nominators praise Vartanian’s progressive protocols they say come out of his deep commitment to quality patient care. Paramedics of a certain level must pass an oral exam from Dr. Vartanian before they are allowed to practice. But he keeps his finger on the pulse of the street, too. It’s not uncommon for “Dr. V.,” as he is affectionately known, to show up on scene and offer assistance. Vartanian has served as medical director in Cypress Creek since 1998.

**Designated Trauma Facility – University Medical Center at Brackenridge and Dell Children’s Medical Center**, both in Austin,

for achieving an unprecedented Level I trauma designation at the same time. Up until then, Austin had been the largest city in Texas without a Level I trauma facility. Although both facilities had already been providing many components of the Level I designation for some time, they increased their trauma research and education activities as well as added certain special procedures, such as microvascular surgery and limb reattachment. University Medical Center at Brackenridge



*Holly Pichette, LP, took home the top honors for EMS Public Information/Injury Prevention. Pichette works for Montgomery County Hospital District.*



*University Medical Center at Brackenridge and Dell Children’s Medical Center won the Designated Trauma Facility awards. Steve Janda, RN, left, Gaylen Tipps, RN, center, and Dave Golder, right, accept the awards from Health Commissioner David Lakey and Assistant Commissioner Kathy Perkins.*



*Levon Vartanian, MD, won the award for EMS Medical Director. Vartanian is medical director for Cypress Creek EMS.*



*Brandon Porter, EMT-I, won EMS Person of the Year for his efforts in reviving Stacey Thompson's daughter. Thompson, left, told her story to a hushed crowd before Porter's name was announced. State EMS Director Maxie Bishop, third from left, and David Lakey, MD, presented the award to Porter. Porter works for East Texas Medical Center EMS.*



*Katie E. Moore of Victoria won Telecommunicator for her actions in guiding medics to the scene of a cardiac arrest.*



*Johnston "Ozro" Henderson, who passed away last November, was posthumously awarded EMS Educator of the Year.*

had been a Level II since 1996, but a trauma designation for Dell Children's was new. Texas currently has 12 Level I trauma centers; Dell is just one of three pediatric Level I centers in the state.

**EMS Person Award – Brandon Porter, EMT-I**, for his selfless actions in helping a child while he was off-duty. Stacey Thompson had been running errands when she glanced at her child strapped in a car seat in the back and saw she had stopped breathing. She stopped the car and jumped out, holding out the baby and screaming for help. Porter was running errands on his day off when he noticed Thompson. He made a U-turn and came back to her. Thompson marvels now at how calm Porter was when he took the baby, gently rubbing her chest and keeping her airway open, all the while asking Thompson questions about the baby's medical history. Porter, who works for East Texas Medical Center EMS, stayed with the baby even after the ambulance arrived. He has also stayed in touch with the Thompsons and, as Stacey Thompson says, has become part of their family.

**Telecommunicator Award – Katie E. Moore** of Victoria for her role in helping a man experiencing cardiac arrest get medical help. On September 10, 2008, as the Texas Coast prepared for the arrival of Hurricane Ike, Moore took a call from an elderly woman whose husband was experiencing chest pains. The man, who was driving the car, lost consciousness soon after he pulled the car over. The woman did not know where she was. Moore, working with OnStar, found the general location and sent crews out to search for the car. Meanwhile, the man quit breathing and Moore had to instruct his wife to recline the seat and begin CPR. Still, two crews searching did not find the car for several minutes. When they arrived, they began treatment. The patient went to Citizens Medical Center but was soon transferred to a Houston hospital when weather forecasts called for Ike to hit the Victoria area. The last word the crews got was that the man was going to survive. Moore has been with the Victoria Police Department since 2006.

**EMS Educator – Johnston "Ozro" Henderson (posthumous)** for his dedication to his students, passion for teaching and willingness to get there early and stay late to help a student learn. Henderson retired from the Irving Fire Department and began training paramedic students at North Central Texas College about 15 years ago. Former students say he continually set higher goals for himself and his students, reminding them that 80 percent right was not good enough when giving life-saving care. Colleagues cite his encyclopedic knowledge and ability to get all students to understand the material, especially anything about cardiology. Henderson passed away last November but such was the strength of his legacy that he received several nominations a year after his death.

**EMS Air Medical Service – Shannon AirMed1** for the dedication of its crews and the professionalism demonstrated to citizens in the Concho Valley since 1994. Nominations praised AirMed1's commitment to the patient by employing advanced protocols as well

as its commitment to partner EMS ground agencies and hospitals. AirMed1 crews provide educational programs for rural hospitals and EMS providers, and they continually strive to build rapport with the physicians, nurses and medics they work with. Crews also volunteer at community events, such as car safety programs at area schools, and invite area school children to visit the crew quarters and helipad. This year Shannon AirMed1 participated in the Children's Miracle Network Telethon, Make-a-Wish Fishing Tournament, Toys for Tots, Shattered Dreams and several other events. AirMed1, which joined with Med-Trans in July, has a goal of superior level of care, excellent customer service and a flawless safety record.

**EMS First Responder Award – Salado Volunteer Fire Department**

for giving selflessly to provide the citizens of Salado with initial medical care. Salado volunteers are not only available day or night for medical emergencies, they are also credited with always being the first to step up to help with fund-raisers and other events that benefit the community. The nomination said how proud the town is of these volunteers who give so much of themselves to help others while asking nothing in return.

**EMS Citizen Award – Joey Krnavek,**

**Sabrina Seitter and Stuart Seitter** for their quick actions in saving a person in a burning vehicle. On January 30, 2009, Krnavek drove up on a two-vehicle MVA in front of the Seitter's home. When Krnavek's fire extinguisher did not quench the flames, he and the Seitters pulled the passenger out of the sunroof and to safety and then went back for the driver. When Fayette County EMS and the La Grange Fire Department arrived, the car was fully engulfed in flames. Unfortunately, the driver did not survive, but the passenger was transported to Memorial Houston. Certainly, the quick actions of these bystanders saved the passenger's life.

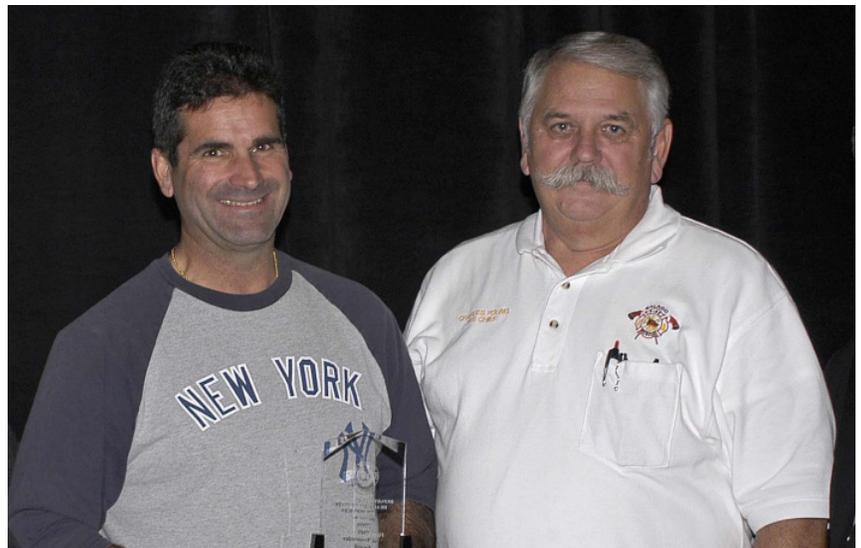
**Outstanding RAC Award – Central Texas**

**RAC** for not only the excellent representation of EMS and hospitals within the region, but for encouraging the participation of many other multi-disciplinary agencies such as universities and public health, emergency management and mental health providers. An example was partnering with University of Mary Hardin Baylor nursing department for a regional trauma needs assessment that will provide the

RAC with the data to drive decision-making and allow students to satisfy graduation requirements. The RAC has an established a first-of-its-kind Disaster Behavioral Health committee, which offers critical incident stress management assistance. The RAC's bylaws were revised to include injury prevention activities as a requirement of participation. Other committees analyzed data to improve transfer protocols and provide faster access to receiving hospitals; these best practices are shared across the RAC. Central Texas RAC strives to improve its regional system, which benefits the entire state.



*Shannon AirMed1 of San Angelo won EMS Air Medical Service of the Year.*



*Salado Volunteer Fire Department took home the EMS First Responder Award.*