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NEWS RELEASE

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Twenty-Seven EMS Professionals from Across California to Be Honored as *Stars of Life* for their Life Saving Efforts at the State Capitol

Their Stories Demonstrate the Critical Importance of Healthcare's Safety Net

Sacramento, CA --- Twenty-seven paramedics, emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and emergency medical dispatchers from across the state of California will be recognized as *Stars of Life* at the State Capitol on **April 12, 2011**. Their actions, whether from a single life-saving event or a career-long exemplary performance record, demonstrate they have stood out from their peers as the best of the best among California's ambulance providers. Statewide there are 60,000 EMTs and 18,500 paramedics working within both the public and private sector.

Their stories demonstrate the courage, discipline and skill needed to remain calm under pressure while delivering basic and advanced life support care in the field. Paramedic Chris Brooks and EMT Heather Drolette (**ProTransport-1, Cotati, California**), were flagged down by a pregnant woman on the side of the road. Her water had already broken and the severity of her contractions were increasing rapidly. With a calm demeanor, the EMS crew guided the expectant mother into the back of the ambulance, where they performed an in-field delivery.

Nearing the completion of his paramedic training, intern Brandon McNamara (**Hall Ambulance Service, Inc., Bakersfield, California**) got the opportunity to put his newly acquired training to the test when he and his partner responded to a call for cardiac arrest. Upon arrival they found a man unconscious, and not breathing. Under the supervision of McNamara's Paramedic Preceptor George Baker, he initiated CPR and advanced life support measures including ECG, endotracheal intubation, IV and medication administration. His efforts were a success. Within minutes, they witnessed the return of spontaneous circulation ultimately resulting in a positive patient outcome.

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ADD ONE:

Aside from their core responsibilities of caring for those who fall victim to sudden illness or injury, some of this year's *Stars of Life* recipients are being honored for their efforts to train new employees as well as coordinate continuing education for EMS first responders.

As a lead emergency medical dispatcher, Sara Fitzpatrick (**Riggs Ambulance Service, Inc., Merced, California**), ensures the company's communications center meets all of the demands placed upon it in an efficient and professional manner. Fitzpatrick also volunteers her time as one of two communications training officers responsible for training new dispatchers to the high quality level demanded for ensuring requests for medical aid are handled quickly and efficiently.

Paramedic Mark Leonard, (**Coast Life Support District, Gualala, California**) is being recognized for developing a singularly effective Mass Casualty Incident training program. He has conducted several inter-agency exercises throughout this extremely remote section of California coast, raising both the response capability and confidence of scores of volunteer firefighters and EMTs. Always looking to improve care for his patients during transport times averaging close to two hours, Leonard took a leadership position in developing a pilot program for administering fibrinolytic drugs to cardiac patients and secured regulatory approval for a single-agency trial study.

Additionally, EMS personnel from Merced, Manteca, San Leandro, Sacramento and Orange, California will be recognized as *Stars of Life*.

The *Stars of Life* program begins with a presentation ceremony in which a *Stars of Life* medal is bestowed upon each honoree. A legislative briefing takes place just prior to the Stars and their hosts taking a short walk to the State Capitol where they will meet individually with their elected members of the State Senate and Assembly. During their visit, the Stars will share their life-saving stories with the legislators and deliver important first-hand information regarding the essential service provided by California's ambulance providers, who must, by law, respond, treat and transport emergency patients and cannot refuse care because of a patient's lack of insurance. **As a result, statewide, ambulance providers deliver an estimated \$500 million in charity care and uncompensated care with no federal or state funding that is available to hospitals and physicians.** Chairman Bob Barry stated, **"As our State and local communities grapple with great challenges, it is inspiring to focus on the personal character of these outstanding men and women. Our local EMS systems are a critical component of the statewide health care safety net, even though we are often under recognized for the significant role we play."** The day's festivities conclude with a networking reception followed by an awards dinner at the Sheraton Grand where the Stars will receive their *Stars of Life* lapel pin and be presented with legislative certificates honoring their service and dedication to the communities they serve.

Founded in 1948, the California Ambulance Association assures the delivery of excellent pre-hospital care to the people of California by promoting recognized industry best practices. The mission of the CAA is to: serve as the voice and resource on behalf of private enterprise emergency and non-emergency ambulance services; promote high quality, efficient and medically appropriate patient care; advocate the value that pre-hospital care provides in achieving positive patient outcomes; and promote effective and fiscally responsible EMS systems and establish standards for system design.

Photo Opportunities:

Event	Time	Location
Stars are presented with their Stars of Life medals	8:30a.m.	Sheraton Grand Hotel Sacramento
Group photo of Stars on West Steps of Capitol	9:45a.m.	Capitol grounds Center Lawn on West steps
Stars Awards Dinner	6:00 – 8:00p.m.	Sheraton Grand Hotel Sacramento

Attention assignment editors: To coordinate morning show appearances on the morning of Tuesday, April 12, or to arrange for interviews with the Stars outside of the time-line listed above, contact:

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