



CALIFORNIA AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL
— Stars of Life —
CELEBRATION
AND LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT



MARCH 7-8, 2016
EMBASSY SUITES HOTEL – SACRAMENTO, CA

HEALTH CARE'S ESSENTIAL FIRST RESPONDERS

Stars of Life



Eb Muncy
Chair, Board of Directors
California Ambulance
Association

Congratulations to all of our 2016 Stars of Life. Your actions, whether from a single heroic incident or a career-long performance record, demonstrate that you have shown the spirit and commitment that it takes to be the best of the best.

Too often the work of our paramedics, EMTs, emergency medical dispatchers, and other key support personnel goes without notice. Neither the public nor the media get the opportunity to see the contribution each of you makes to ensure that highly specialized pre-hospital medical care is delivered day in and day out to the communities you serve. The single common thread that links you all here today is that you do not do it for the money or the glory, you do it because you love it.

Today, you had the opportunity to meet with your assembly members and/or state senators. I am hopeful you found it to be a positive and informative experience. The California Ambulance Association is working hard to secure increased reimbursement for the services

we provide to California's over 10 million Medi-Cal beneficiaries. We also advocate for you in the regulatory process working to ensure that proposed changes in education, training, equipment, or other areas that impact your work environment are fair, practical and necessary. Your first-hand experience as EMS professionals is a message that will resonate with our legislators.

Let us not forget our generous sponsors of this year's Stars of Life Celebration, for without their support, this event would not have been possible. Thank you American Legion Post #108 Ambulance, Bound Tree Medical, DerManouel Insurance Group, Hall Ambulance Service, Inc., King American Ambulance, Life-Assist, Inc., Medic Ambulance Service, Paramedics Plus and San Luis Ambulance.

Lastly, we are honored to have Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez and EMSAAC President & EMS Director of the Central California EMS Agency, Daniel Lynch as our special guests at this event.

Tonight we celebrate you, the private ambulance industry's Stars of Life. We thank you for your commitment to your patients, co-workers, companies and communities you serve. 

Stars of Life Awards Banquet — March 7-8, 2016 —

Welcome

Eb Muncy, Chair of the Board

Guest Speaker

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez

Guest Speaker

Daniel J. Lynch, EMS Director, EMSAAC President

Presentation of Stars of Life Recognition

Closing Remarks

Thank You Sponsors!



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INSURANCE GROUP
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Making Precious Minutes Count...™



American Legion Ambulance



Freddie Rodriguez **Assemblymember, 52nd Assembly District**



Born and raised in the City of Pomona, Freddie Rodriguez has dedicated his life to serving his community. He has worked as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) in the San Gabriel Valley for over 29 years.

As an EMT, Freddie was awarded the California Star of Life award, for his outstanding community volunteer contributions and lifesaving rescues. In 2005, Freddie journeyed to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to help the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Freddie was elected twice to the Pomona City Council. On the City Council, Freddie helped improve public safety, expanded Neighborhood Watch programs, created new jobs as a result of the economic development

projects he championed, and delivered balanced budgets while protecting city services during tough economic times. He led the effort to restore firefighting positions in Pomona, ensuring that each shift was fully staffed and that firefighters were properly equipped to respond to fire and emergency calls.

A leader in helping jumpstart the local economy, Freddie brought together community and business leaders to help revitalize downtown Pomona, generate new economic investment, and create new jobs.

Freddie lives in Pomona with his wife Michelle. They have four children, Desirae, Freddie Jr., Vincent, and Selena, and two grandchildren, Jayden and Jacob. Their son, Vincent, currently serves as a Deputy Sheriff for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. 

Daniel J. Lynch, EMS Director, EMSAAC President **Central California Emergency Medical Services Agency**



Dan Lynch has been involved in Emergency Medical Services for 33 years. He is currently the EMS Director for the Central California EMS Agency, which oversees the provision of Emergency Medical Services in Fresno, Kings,

Madera and Tulare Counties. In March 2015, he was elected as President of the EMS Administrators Association of California.

Dan has been an EMT, EMT-II and a paramedic. He has served several years in the public and private administration of emergency ambulance services in Fresno, Madera and San Diego Counties. For the past 20 years, he has been working for the County of Fresno Public Health Department as the EMS Director. 

Stars of Life



**Jason
Achterberg**
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield*

Jason Achterberg **Paramedic**

Paramedic Jason Achterberg started his career at Hall Ambulance in September 2010. He currently works night shifts in the Bakersfield 911 system. He also serves as a Field Training Officer.

On Saturday, January 16, San Juana Bayar was at the Bakersfield Eagles Club celebrating her retirement from county service with friends and family. She had complained of not feeling well earlier in the evening. Just before 8:00 pm she suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. When Paramedic Achterberg and his partners, EMT Adrianna Neal, and EMT trainee Enrique Puente arrived, they found Bakersfield firefighters on scene performing CPR. The AED had shocked twice with no change. CPR continued while the crew deployed their equipment. Paramedic Achterberg defibrillated the patient, completed a successful intubation and started an IV and administered medications. During transport to the emergency department, an organized rhythm returned with pulses and the patient started to breathe on her own.

Paramedic Achterberg, EMT Neal, and EMT Puente were awarded the Hall Ambulance Star of Life and now a California Ambulance Association Star of Life for their efforts, which saved a life. ✨

Stars of Life



Terry Adams
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield*

Terry Adams **Manager, Facilities Maintenance Division**

Terry Adams started his tenure at Hall Ambulance in November 2001. He oversees the Facilities Maintenance Division. His crew of eighteen employees is responsible for washing, waxing and detailing more than 100 vehicles. They complete janitorial duties at more than 20 buildings used to support ambulance response to more than 90% of Kern County.

His knowledge is equal to a general contractor with expertise in mechanical, electrical, air conditioning and plumbing allowing Hall Ambulance to complete most repairs without using outside contractors. Terry and his staff respond 24/7/365 to any building maintenance need. Whether a power outage from a storm or an air conditioner out during 110-degree days, Terry and his staff are there to mitigate the problem and keep EMTs, paramedics and support staff as comfortable as possible.

Harvey L. Hall, founder and president of Hall Ambulance, created a new award for 2015. Terry Adams was the first to receive this award in recognition of his strong leadership and commitment to excellence. The Founder's Award for Excellence in Management, includes a California Ambulance Association Star of Life nomination. ✨

Stars of Life



Erlinda Aguilar

**King-American
Ambulance
San Francisco**

Erlinda Aguilar
Billing Department

Erlinda started in the billing department of King American Ambulance in 2003. She has been instrumental in training new hires into the billing department. Erlinda is a team player and always makes sure the job is done correctly. Always thinking of others and ensuring their comfort, her peers look up to her as a mentor in both their professional and personal lives. During her personal time, Erlinda enjoys gardening, spending time with her family, cooking and is a huge San Francisco Giants and Golden State Warriors fan. Erlinda is an instrumental part of the King American team and is a leader everyone looks up to. ✨

Stars of Life



David Allard

**Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield**

David Allard
EMT

EMT David Allard started his career at Hall Ambulance in May 2015. He currently serves in the Bakersfield 911 system.

On the morning of May 4, 2015, a Hall Ambulance Advanced Life Support Ambulance staffed by Paramedic William Jaeger, EMT Eric Castro and EMT David Allard cleared Bakersfield Memorial Hospital after dropping off a patient. They were assigned a post, or staging location, in another part of Bakersfield. As the crew approached the intersection of 34th Street and San Dimas Street, they saw a man lying on the ground. The crew stopped to check on the man. Upon examination they found the man to be unconscious, not breathing and pulseless. The crew immediately started CPR then notified the Hall Ambulance Communications Center. A Bakersfield Fire Department Engine Company was started to the scene to assist with manpower.

The crew placed defibrillation pads on his chest, along with a See Through CPR compression sensor. Paramedic Jaeger found the patient's heart in ventricular fibrillation and delivered a total of three shocks. An airway was secured, an IV was established and medications administered according to ACLS and Kern County EMS protocols.

Transport was initiated to the Emergency Department at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital. By the time the patient was delivered to the Emergency Department the patient was starting to breath on his own. Bakersfield Memorial Hospital staff took over care and after several days of cardiac care at Memorial Hospital, the patient, Dr. Jeffrey Child, was released from care and was present when the Hall Ambulance Star of Life was presented to the crew. They are nominated for a California Ambulance Association Star of Life in recognition of their quick actions that saved the life of Dr. Child. ✨

Stars of Life



Alex Balbastro

**Gold Cross
Ambulance
Service
Banning**

Alex Balbastro
EMT, FTO

Imperial County is mostly a rural area. Off-road enthusiasts know Imperial County for the amazing sand dunes. Individuals who like to travel like to come to Imperial for the climate as well as the mineral hot springs near by. With that being said Gold Cross Ambulance Service responds to its fair share of trauma and medical related calls.

Alex Balbastro is being recognized for his outstanding dedication and commitment to people who are in need of medical attention. He is the type of person who will drop whatever he is doing to put the needs of others first.

Alex started his journey over 24 years ago with Gold Cross. During his tenure Alex has responded to just about any kind of call that you could imagine. Whether it be a fighter jet that has crashed, a paratrooper's parachute malfunction, motor vehicle accidents, off highway vehicle wrecks in the dunes, or a variety of medical calls, if you can name it, Alex has been there done that.

As an FTO, Alex is able to utilize those life experiences to enhance the training for new employees. Alex truly enjoys his profession, as well as working with his colleagues. His dedication to family as well as the company is second to none. *

Stars of Life



Lashika Britton

**Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield**

Lashika Britton
EMD

In 2015, Hall Ambulance took on the responsibility for dispatching services to 100% of ambulances operating in Kern County. The ACE accredited communications center processed more than 100,000 requests for service in 2015. All staff assigned to the communications center are certified as emergency medical dispatchers by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch.

Lashika Britton started her career at Hall Ambulance in December 2013. She has mastered her duties in rapid fashion. In 2015, she dispatched almost 8,000 ambulances to calls and handled receiving and processing more than 8,000 requests for service. More than 800 times, she provided pre-arrival instructions to callers. She received a Quality Assurance score of 100%.

In recognition of Lashika's commitment to excellence, she was named the Hall Ambulance Dispatcher of the Year and a California Ambulance Association Star of Life. *

Stars of Life



Charles Brown
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Bakersfield

Charles Brown
Paramedic

Paramedic Brown came to Hall Ambulance in June 2007. A seasoned paramedic, he previously worked for the City of Marysville and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as a firefighter. He serves as a Paramedic in the far eastern edge of Kern County at the Boron station.

Charlie was nominated for a California Ambulance Association Star of Life as part of his recognition as the 2015 Hall Ambulance President's Award for Customer Service recipient. The President's Award recognizes the EMT, Paramedic or Registered Nurse that compiles the best customer satisfaction score. Hall Ambulance surveys all customers for satisfaction. The individual scores are compared against the total completed calls for a customer satisfaction score. The employee with the highest score is honored with the President's Award. This is the second time Paramedic Brown has been honored with the President's Award. ✨

Stars of Life



Jim Bugai
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Jim Bugai
Paramedic Supervisor

Jim started his career in EMS in 1994. He was an explorer with a local fire department. He became an EMT and then, at the young age of 20, became a paramedic. Jim has been a paramedic for 14 years. He spent 8 of those years as a flight medic for Reach Air Medical, serving in many quality roles for the organization. Jim currently works as a Paramedic Supervisor for Medic Ambulance in Solano County. Jim's favorite part of his role as a supervisor, is serving as a mentor and resource for his employees. Jim is married to his wife Katie and has 3 children, Gavin, Jesse and Sophia. Jim was honored as a Star of Life in 2015 for his rapid and immediate care to a 3-year-old child who had a severe stab wound and his role during the Napa Earthquake. Jim is being recognized for his role as one of Medic Ambulance's Community Paramedics. Community Paramedicine is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Jim is one of only 77 community paramedics in the state. Jim dedicated many hours to mandated didactic and clinical training as part of the program, all while still performing his normal job duties as Paramedic Supervisor. Solano County is one of only 12 sites working under a ground breaking pilot program sponsored by the California EMS Authority and the California Healthcare Foundation. Great Job Jim! ✨

Stars of Life



Roberta Casteel

*West Side
Community
Ambulance
Newman*

Roberta Casteel
Administrative Supervisor

Roberta has been the glue that has held West Side Community Ambulance together from the day she was hired. Her wisdom, compassion, and work ethic have endeared her to both the work staff and management. She reaches out to meet the needs of others and asks of nothing in return. The best decision that I have made as a board member was to hire her and I believe the entire board would agree.

Roberta's commitment and dedication to West Side Community Ambulance is proven on a daily basis with her positive attitude and hard work. Roberta goes above and beyond to make sure the needs of the employees are met. She is always willing to help where she can, whether it's with a community event or a personal selfless gesture. Roberta makes everyone's job a little easier and is a true asset to this community and organization

Roberta has been married for 30 years and has two children. She enjoys traveling, gardening, baking, and scrapbooking. ✿

Stars of Life



Eric Castro
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Bakersfield

Eric Castro
Paramedic

Paramedic Eric Castro was hired in September 2014. He currently serves the mountain community of Frazier Park.

On the morning of May 4, 2015, a Hall Ambulance Advanced Life Support Ambulance staffed by Paramedic William Jaeger, EMT Eric Castro and EMT David Allard cleared Bakersfield Memorial Hospital after dropping off a patient. They were assigned a post, or staging location, in another part of Bakersfield. As the crew approached the intersection of 34th Street and San Dimas Street, they saw a man lying on the ground. The crew stopped to check on the man. Upon examination they found the man to be unconscious, not breathing and pulseless. The crew immediately started CPR then notified the Hall Ambulance Communications Center. A Bakersfield Fire Department Engine Company was started to the scene to assist with manpower. The crew placed defibrillation pads on the chest, along with a See Through CPR compression sensor. Paramedic Jaeger found the patient's heart in ventricular fibrillation and delivered a total of three shocks. An airway was secured, an IV was established and medications administered according to Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Kern County EMS protocols. Transport was initiated to the Emergency Department at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital. By the time the patient was delivered to the Emergency Department the patient was starting to breath on his own. Bakersfield Memorial Hospital staff took over care and after several days of cardiac care at Memorial Hospital, the patient, Dr. Jeffrey Child, was released from care and was present when the Hall Ambulance Star of Life was presented to the crew. They are nominated for a California Ambulance Association Star of Life in recognition of their quick actions that saved the life of Dr. Child. ✨

Stars of Life



Travis Curtis
*King-American
Ambulance*
San Francisco

Travis Curtis
EMT

Travis became an EMT in rural Illinois in 2007, getting his first paramedic license there in 2010. He worked in a level 1 trauma center in Illinois from 2008-2010 and received Critical Care Transport Paramedic certification in Portland, OR in 2013. He started working at King American Ambulance in 2013 and became a preceptor in 2015. He began a new relationship with management by becoming a shop steward that promotes open communication. Travis has an excellent attendance record and is always willing to take on new employees and mentor them.

Travis recently completed training to become an HIV/AIDS counselor. His personal hobbies include photography, cycling, and gardening. He has a tropical plant collection with more than 100 specimens. Travis is a key part of our King American Ambulance. ✨

Stars of Life



Marc Domingo
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Marc Domingo
EMT

Marc was born and raised in Vallejo, CA. He grew up around public safety because his mother, Cecile Soto, worked as a dispatcher and is now Operations Manager for San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management. After being picked up for anaphylaxis in high school in 2005 by Medic Ambulance, thoughts of a career in healthcare began. Unsure of what field in healthcare to pursue, Marc attended a first responder class at Napa Valley College and knew he was on the right path. Marc has been an EMT with Medic Ambulance since 2012. After responding to a family member in Vallejo, Marc was inspired to become a Field Training Officer to help those that will help others. Outside of EMS, you can find Marc hanging out with his friends and family, attending concerts and music festivals, playing his guitar, surfing, and recently he's picked up kite boarding. Marc is being honored as Medic Ambulance's 2016 EMT of the Year. Marc has been a model employee at Medic Ambulance, as he has provided excellent service to his patients and also has played an integral role in the company's Quality Assurance Committee and Field Training Officer program. Marc also was awarded Medic Ambulance's 2016 Travis Grace "Excellence in EMS" Award, and will receive a full tuition scholarship for Paramedic School to Napa Valley College. Great Job Marc! ✨

Stars of Life



Christina Faust
Paramedics Plus
San Leandro

Christina Faust
Paramedic

Paramedics Plus is pleased to nominate Christina Faust as our Star of Life for 2016. Christina's EMS experience extends back to 2008 as an EMT for Bayshore Ambulance and then with AMR as a BLS EMT. She was promoted from EMT to Paramedic in 2011 and transitioned to Paramedics Plus after the company secured the Alameda County 911 contract. Christina has received multiple promotions and accommodations including becoming a Field Training Officer, a promotion to Assistant Clinical Field Supervisor in 2015 as well as serving as a preceptor mentoring paramedic students. She also leads the hiring committee where she is largely responsible for a peer-driven process charged with hiring field EMTs and Paramedics. Christina was honored as Paramedics Plus-Alameda County's 2015 Provider of the Year. Her outgoing personality and compassion for those she serves is evident in each and every shift she works. Paramedics Plus is proud of Christina and her accomplishments. ✨



Michael Fenwick

**Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.**

Solano

Michael Fenwick
Paramedic

Michael began his EMS career in the military in Fort Benning, GA as an active duty ground Medic from 1987-1990. He was assigned to the 690th Medical Company whose mission was to support and administer emergency and routine medical treatment on base. In 1988, while stationed at Fort Benning, he was one of the first group of combat medics to be certified nationally registered EMTs. After completion of his active duty tour in 1990, he joined the California Army National Guard as a ground medic with HHB 3/144th Field Artillery located in Van Nuys, California. Michael provided medical and first aid support during regular and annual training for field artillery units. While assigned to the unit, he was activated to support the Los Angeles Riots and Northridge Earthquake. He was honorably discharged in 1994 and continued to expand his EMT experience in a civilian capacity. In 1990, Michael received his civilian EMT certification for Los Angeles County and worked with Schaefer Ambulance Service located in East Los Angeles. He was part of the team that provided 911 services for Santa Monica, Pomona and Los Angeles County, and was with the company until late 1995. Michael relocated to the Sacramento area in early 1996 and joined Medic Ambulance Service as an EMT. In 1999, while working full-time as an EMT, Michael attended a Paramedic program. In 2000, he completed his Paramedic Certification through Northern California Training Institute (NCTI). Upon his graduation, Medic Ambulance Service transferred him to Solano County as a Paramedic. In 2010, Michael re-enlisted in the California National Guard as a flight medic with Co C, 1/168th GSAB in Mather California. Despite the redoing of his 68W qualification upon re-enlistment, he was able to complete all of the RL requirement training within a reasonable time. In 2013, he was deployed to Afghanistan with Co C 1/168th GSAB for 9 months. During deployment Michael did approximately 50 missions in which 70% were critical care transfers and 30% were point of injury missions. During deployment, he was also given an opportunity to provide medevac cross training with the Italian and Slovenian Soldiers. In 2012, Michael was one of only two Soldiers in the California Army National Guard who attended a Critical Care Paramedic course. Michael is being recognized for his superior contributions to EMS over the last 30 years. Michael is one of Medic Ambulance's Community Paramedics. Community Paramedic is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Michael is one of only 77 community paramedics in the state. Michael dedicated many hours to mandated didactic and clinical training as part of the program, all while still performing his normal job duties as a Paramedic. Solano County is one of only 12 sites working under a ground breaking pilot program sponsored by the California EMS Authority and the California Healthcare Foundation. Great Job Michael! 🌟

Stars of Life



Mark Gonzcar
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Bakersfield

Mark Gonzcar **Paramedic**

Paramedic Mark Gonzcar started his career at Hall Ambulance as an EMT in February 2008. His efforts as an EMT were rewarded with 100% sponsorship in the paramedic training program, earning his license in 2013. He currently serves in the mountain community of Tehachapi.

On September 9, 2015 at 1756, Paramedic Gonzcar, and EMT Swerdfeger were dispatched in Tehachapi for choking. The crew arrived on scene at 1759. The crew entered the home to find a 75-year-old female choking, cyanotic, with agonal respirations and a weak pulse.

The Heimlich Maneuver was attempted without success. An attempt to visualize the obstruction was not successful. Cyanosis worsened and the patient lost pulses. CPR was initiated. Another attempt was made to visualize the obstruction. This time, Paramedic Gonzcar was able to clear the airway. CPR continued during transport to the hospital. During the transport, skin signs improved and the patient started to bite down on the oral airway. Shortly after arrival at the Emergency Department, the patient was sitting up in bed able to share her story with the crew.

Paramedic Gonzcar and EMT Swerdfeger were awarded the Hall Ambulance Start of Life and now the California Ambulance Association Star of Life for their quick response and actions, which led to a life being saved. ✨

Stars of Life



Kimberly Goss
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Kimberly Goss **Dispatcher**

Kimberly Goss is a dispatcher for Medic Ambulance. She has been dispatching since June 2014. Kimberly currently holds and maintains her credentials from International Academies of Emergency Dispatch to insure patients are getting the highest level of care from the moment they call for help. Kim gravitated to the EMS field with the inspiration and support of her fiancée who also works in EMS/Fire with the Vallejo Fire Department. Aside from dispatching, Kim has many other talents and interests that range from video games to interior decorating. When Kim is not busy saving lives, she can be found improving her new home or shopping for it! Kimberly is being honored for her outstanding service as an Emergency Medical Dispatcher, as she was the highest rated EMD in Medic's dispatch center with near perfect AQUA/QA scores. She is being honored as Medic Ambulance's Dispatcher of the Year 2016. ✨



**Brandon
Harlander**

*City Ambulance of
Eureka, Inc.
Eureka*

Brandon Harlander
Paramedic

Paramedic Michael Lee and Paramedic Brandon Harlander responded in separate ambulances for multiple gunshot victims in a remote portion of Humboldt County.

Paramedic Lee arrived at the staging area for the call, and was waiting for law enforcement to clear the scene when a vehicle came racing down the road towards him, his partner, and the other units in the staging area. Everyone in the staging area took cover not knowing if the occupants of the vehicle were armed. After it was determined that the occupants of the vehicle were not armed Lee found that the driver of the vehicle was shot multiple times and the passenger of the vehicle had a single gunshot to the head.

Lee loaded both patients into his ambulance, began treating the critical injuries, and started transporting both patients towards the closest hospital, which was over 45 minutes away. Paramedic Brandon Harlander, still enroute to assist Paramedic Lee, coordinated a rendezvous with a life flight helicopter at a rural airport for one of the patients. Harlander and Lee met up, and one of the critical patients was transferred to Paramedic Harlander's ambulance and then to the helicopter rendezvous point. Lee continued to the hospital with the other patient.

Both of the patients survived their critical injuries due to the quick thinking, teamwork, and coordination on a very complicated call. ✨

Stars of Life



**Brian
Henderson**

*American
Ambulance
Fresno*

Brian Henderson
Paramedic

Brian Henderson was selected by his peers as Paramedic of the Year in 2015 for Kings County Operations. Brian started working in EMS at Med Stat Ambulance in 1992. He started his career with American Ambulance in 1995. Brian became a Paramedic in 1999. Brian coordinated our Explorer program for three years, instilling his work ethic in our future employees. Brian is currently a Paramedic Preceptor and oversees the development of new Paramedic Students during their internship. He is also a Clinical Evaluator and a Field Supervisor.

Brian is compassionate about caring for patients as demonstrated by his dozens of commendations for excellent performance. Brian loves 4WD off-roading. His favorite locations are the desert, the coast, and the mountain areas of Bald Mountain and Shaver Lake. He is a member of the Clovis Independent 4WD Club. Brian has been married to his wife Terry for 21 years and has three children, a son Cody who is 24, and daughters Rebecca who is 18 and Rachel who is 16. ✨

Stars of Life



Cliff Henderson
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Solano*

Cliff Henderson
Paramedic

Cliff is the exemplary model of a home grown, made in Solano County success story. Cliff was born and raised in Benicia, CA, where he still calls home today. EMS has always caught Cliff's interest. He went to EMT school at Solano College, and applied at Medic Ambulance, where he quickly became part of the family. Cliff put his time and effort into becoming the best EMT he could be and when it was time he knew he was ready to take the challenge of becoming a Paramedic. Cliff passed that challenge and led the way for others. Cliff is now finishing his 8th year as a Paramedic at Medic. He is a Field Training Officer, county preceptor, and the Chair of Medic Ambulance's Internal Quality Improvement Committee. Cliff is being recognized for his role as one of Medic Ambulance's Community Paramedics. Community Paramedicine is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Cliff is one of only 77 community paramedics in the state. Cliff dedicated many hours to mandated didactic and clinical training as part of the program, all while still performing his normal job duties as Paramedic. Cliff always takes the time to instruct, improve and create a better environment for others. Whether it is a Paramedic Student or a new employee, Cliff is always there to lend a helping hand. Cliff's commitment to excellence shows in everything he does, and thus has been selected for the third year in a row as Medic Ambulance's 2016 Paramedic of the Year. Cliff also will be recognized as a National 'Star of Life' in April at the American Ambulance Association Stars of Life program in Washington, D.C! In Cliff's free time he loves spending time outdoor and with his son CJ! Great Job Cliff! ✨



Eric Holt

**Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Solano**

Eric Holt
Paramedic

Eric has been involved with Fire and EMS since he was 16. Eric's father had been diagnosed with terminal brain cancer when he was 14 years old and during that difficult time, Eric vowed to always remember the paramedics that responded to his house. They were kind and very professional when providing care for his father. Eric realized that public safety and helping others was what he wanted to do with his life. Soon after, Eric started towards a career path in emergency service and this has been what he has been doing since. One of the passions that makes up a big part of his personality has always been rock climbing. He has been climbing for the past 22 years, and some of his most memorable life moments have been climbing huge routes in Yosemite that require lots of experience and skill to navigate. Eric has served as a volunteer firefighter for five years with Napa County, and 3 years with Cordelia Fire Protection District. Eric has been with Medic Ambulance for 10 years. He first served for three and a half years as an EMT and the last six and a half years as a paramedic. During this time, Eric said "I've worked with some great individuals, made some good friends and hopefully was able to provide excellent care to those in need." Eric is being recognized for his rapid and excellent care of a patient with a dissecting aortic aneurysm. He treated a patient in one of the rural most parts of the county, where access to the patient was via rough terrain and unmarked dirt roads. It took EMS and Fire crews over 60 minutes just to access the patient. Eric recognized non typical symptoms and recognized the patient's history of Marfan's Syndrome and its relation to aortic aneurysms, along with the patient's family history of aortic aneurysms. Due to all of these factors, Eric decided to take the patient to the closest center with surgical capabilities to treat a possible aortic aneurysm. Eric gave the hospital early notification and detailed history of present illness and brought the patient in on a Code 3. Upon the patient's arrival, the patient decompensated and was found to have a dissecting aortic aneurysm and went into emergency surgery. Due to Eric's heroic care and extensive knowledge, the patient was able to make it into surgery within the proper amount of time and was treated for her life threatening injuries. She was later discharged from the hospital. Great Job Eric! 🌟

Stars of Life



William Jaeger
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Bakersfield

William Jaeger
Paramedic

Paramedic William Jaeger was hired by Hall Ambulance in May 2014. He works in the Bakersfield 911 system.

On the morning of May 4, 2015, a Hall Ambulance Advanced Life Support Ambulance staffed by Paramedic William Jaeger, EMT Eric Castro and EMT David Allard cleared Bakersfield Memorial Hospital after dropping off a patient. They were assigned a post, or staging location, in another part of Bakersfield. As the crew approached the intersection of 34th Street and San Dimas Street, they saw a man lying on the ground. The crew stopped to check on the man. Upon examination they found the man to be unconscious, not breathing and pulseless. The crew immediately started CPR then notified the Hall Ambulance Communications Center. A Bakersfield Fire Department Engine Company was started to the scene to assist with manpower. The crew placed defibrillation pads on the chest, along with a See Through CPR compression sensor. Paramedic Jaeger found the patient's heart in ventricular fibrillation and delivered a total of three shocks. An airway was secured, an IV was established and medications administered according to ACLS and Kern County EMS protocols. Transport was initiated to the Emergency Department at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital. By the time the patient was delivered to the Emergency Department the patient was starting to breath on his own. Bakersfield Memorial Hospital staff took over care and after several days of cardiac care at Memorial Hospital, the patient, Dr. Jeffrey Child, was released from care and was present when the Hall Ambulance Star of Life was presented to the crew. They are nominated for a California Ambulance Association Star of Life in recognition of their quick actions that saved the life of Dr. Child. ✨

Stars of Life



Tyler Johnson
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Tyler Johnson
EMT

Tyler was born and raised in San Ramon, CA. Tyler enjoys spending time in the outdoors, camping and fishing, and spending time with his family. He was first interested in pursuing a career EMS after becoming a lifeguard at the local city pool. His mentor and close friend was an aspiring firefighter and enrolled in EMT and fire science classes at the local community college. Through talking with him about his studies and experiences, Tyler became interested in following in his footsteps. He took his EMT class in 2011 and shortly thereafter became a nationally registered EMT. He started his first EMT job with Royal Ambulance in Alameda County in 2012 and stayed there for a year before applying to Medic. Tyler is being honored for his exemplary service as an EMT for Medic Ambulance. Tyler has received the highest remarks from every partner, supervisor, patient and hospital staff he has interacted with. Tyler is a model employee who helps define what EMS is all about. Great Job Tyler! ✨

Stars of Life



Keith Kinsella
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Bakersfield

Keith Kinsella
Paramedic

Paramedic Kinsella is a four-year veteran at Hall Ambulance, where he serves as a paramedic in a very busy Bakersfield 911 system. In addition to his paramedic duties, he serves as a field training officer, helping new employees understand what it takes to be a successful member of the Hall Ambulance family.

In 2015, Paramedic Kinsella completed the first ever Hall Ambulance Field Supervisor Academy, followed by a 240-hour Paramedic Supervisor Internship. Paramedic Kinsella was awarded the Paramedic of the Year Award for his dedication to Hall Ambulance and the communities served by the Company. Each Paramedic was evaluated based on patient satisfaction, response times, hospital off load times, total calls completed, attendance, quality assurance ratings, and willingness to grow. Paramedic Kinsella ranked at or near the top in all statistical categories earning him the Paramedic of the Year for 2015 and a nomination as a California Ambulance Association Star of Life. ✨

Stars of Life



Brandon Klug
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Brandon Klug
Integrated Health Manager

Brandon Klug grew up in a small town in Minnesota before his Air Force career brought him to Solano County. He desired to transition from serving his Country to serving his community. In this pursuit, Brandon was part way through nursing school when he was at a community pool with his wife and children and a mom began screaming for help from the middle of the pool while holding her flaccid toddler. Brandon was the first to aid the drowned toddler and he and his wife, Katie, administered CPR until ROSC was obtained. This event solidified his calling to work in medicine as well as question his decision to become an RN vs EMS professional. He completed his RN from American River College and was hired for a position as an ALS RN for Medic Ambulance Service. He was empowered by the meshing of EMS's focus on rescuing with RN's focus on maintaining. When the duties of managing the Community Paramedicine Program were presented, he jumped at the opportunity to use his experiences to rescue and maintain those in the community that have fallen through the gaps in the healthcare system. Brandon handled many managerial roles during his time with the Air Force and knew an integrated healthcare role would be a perfect fit. Brandon is being recognized for his involvement in Medic Ambulance's Community Paramedic Program. Community Paramedicine is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Brandon has served as Medic's Integrated Healthcare Manager. Solano County is one of only 12 sites working under a ground breaking pilot program sponsored by the California EMS Authority and the California Healthcare Foundation. ✨

Stars of Life



Juliet Latreille-Favre

**King-American
Ambulance**

San Francisco

Juliet Latreille-Favre

Paramedic

Juliet started working at King American Ambulance as an EMT in 2007. She was promoted to paramedic in 2010. Juliet worked alongside the Wren Initiative to bring training and education in sex trafficking and exploitation recognition to the company. Juliet has been a big advocate for continuing education and training and has always been willing to take on new employees and mentor them. She is one of King American Ambulance's skills testing coordinators. In her personal time, she is raising her family. Juliet has a young son, Oliver, who is 15 months old. Her hobbies include walking her dogs on Ocean Beach and cycling in Golden Gate Park. Juliet is an instrumental part of the King American Ambulance team and a leader by example. ✨

Stars of Life



Michael Lee

**City Ambulance of
Eureka, Inc.**

Eureka

Michael Lee

Paramedic

Michael Lee and Paramedic Brandon Harlander responded in separate ambulances for multiple gunshot victims in a remote portion of Humboldt County.

Paramedic Lee arrived at the staging area for the call, and was waiting for law enforcement to clear the scene when a vehicle came racing down the road towards him, his partner, and the other units in the staging area. Everyone in the staging area took cover not knowing if the occupants of the vehicle were armed. After it was determined that the occupants of the vehicle were not armed, Lee found that the driver of the vehicle was shot multiple times and the passenger of the vehicle had a single gunshot to the head.

Lee loaded both patients into his ambulance, began treating the critical injuries, and started transporting both patients towards the closest hospital, which was over 45 minutes away. Paramedic Brandon Harlander, still enroute to assist Paramedic Lee, coordinated a rendezvous with a life flight helicopter at a rural airport for one of the patients. Harlander and Lee met up, and one of the critical patients was transferred to Paramedic Harlander's ambulance and then to the helicopter rendezvous point. Lee continued to the hospital with the other patient.

Both of the patients survived their critical injuries due to the quick thinking, teamwork, and coordination on a very complicated call. ✨

Stars of Life



Rick Libed

**Schaefer
Ambulance
Service**

Hacienda Heights

Rick Libed

Lead Paramedic, FTO, E-PCR Specialist, Skills Preceptor & QI/QA team member

Mr. Libed is being recognized for his continuous contributions to patient care and the company. Rick has been working with Schaefer Ambulance for a little over 15 years and during that time he has filled many different roles. He has served as a field paramedic, FTO, E-PCR Specialist and just recently has taken two new roles as EMT Skills Preceptor and a member of the QA/QI team.

When Schaefer Ambulance provides service to special events, such as NHRA drag races or the Los Angeles County Fair, they can always count on Rick to lend a hand as a lead paramedic and patient coordinator.

What is amazing about him is his willingness to take on any new challenge that comes his way. Rick's life experiences bring a lot of technical expertise to the operation. He is always willing to offer suggestions in an effort to increase productivity and proficiency. Rick's leadership skills, innovative ideas and dedication along with his teamwork are an asset to the company.

We are extremely grateful for Rick's continued dedication to the community and this organization. ✨

Stars of Life



Nikki Maples

**King-American
Ambulance**

San Francisco

Nikki Maples

Dispatch Supervisor

Nikki started dispatching for King American Ambulance in 2007 until her son was born in 2008. She returned to King American for the second go around in 2012. Nikki was promoted to Dispatch Supervisor in 2013 and since then has worked hard to bring training and education to a higher level of standard in the Dispatch Center using a positive reinforcement approach and keeping an open line of communication with each individual call-taker. Nikki has been a huge advocate for continuing education and coordinating training. Nikki has a team playing attitude and is always willing to come in and help the company with open shifts or extra coverage, staying many late nights covering special events.

In her personal life she is a mother to her eight-year-old son, Austin. Nikki always has some sort of craft project in the works. She enjoys restoring furniture, interior design, kayaking, hiking and RED wine! Nikki is a great team leader that would be absolutely impossible to replace. ✨

Stars of Life



Elisa Martinez
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Elisa Martinez
Paramedic Supervisor

Elisa lives in Santa Rosa, California and has been employed with Medic Ambulance Service since 1999. Elisa has served in many roles at Medic Ambulance from EMT to her current position of Field Supervisor. Elisa is loved by all and receives the highest of remarks from her co-workers, subordinates and most of all, the patients she interacts with. Elisa is a dedicated EMS professional who always puts others first. She loves spending time with her family and her son Jackson. Elisa's pride and joy is watching her San Francisco Giants and going to Las Vegas to spend time with her family. Elisa is being recognized as one of Medic Ambulance's Community Paramedics. Community Paramedicine is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Elisa is one of only 77 community paramedics in the state. Elisa dedicated many hours to mandated didactic and clinical training as part of the program, all while still performing her normal job duties as a Paramedic Supervisor. Solano County is one of only 12 sites working under a ground breaking pilot program sponsored by the California EMS Authority and the California Healthcare Foundation. Great Job Elisa! ✨

Stars of Life



Brian Meader
*Medic Ambulance
Service, Inc.*
Solano

Brian Meader
Operations Manager

Brian Meader is a native of Concord, CA. A graduate of Concord High School, he worked as a Computer Network Technician after high school. Tired of sitting in front of a computer all day, Brian decided to take an EMT class. He was instantly drawn to the EMS field and enrolled in Medic School at the National College of Technical Instruction. He has been with Medic Ambulance for 11 years serving as an EMT, paramedic, Field Training Officer, Paramedic Supervisor, QA Manager and for the last 2 years, Operations Manager. Never one to shy away from hard work, he enjoys the variety of experiences he has gained working at Medic. Brian was honored for his outstanding service as a Paramedic as Medic Ambulance's Paramedic of the Year, Solano Division in 2010. In 2013, Medic Ambulance was selected as a pilot site by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) for the Community Paramedic Pilot Project. Brian is being recognized for not only his work as a one of the community paramedics but as the lead site educator for Medic Ambulance community paramedic pilot. Brian was recognized by the State of California EMS Agency as an EMS Innovator for his role in the pilot. Community Paramedicine is a new and innovative model in providing healthcare and Brian is one of only 77 community paramedics in California. Solano County is one of only 12 sites working under a ground breaking pilot program sponsored by the California EMS Authority and the California Healthcare Foundation. Brian also will be recognized as a National 'Star of Life' in April at the American Ambulance Association Stars of Life program in Washington, D.C! Great Job Brian! ✨

Stars of Life



**Mark
Mendenhall**

*ProTransport-1
West Sacramento*

Mark Mendenhall
Paramedic

Mark and his partner were dispatched Code 3 to a patient at a skilled nursing facility exhibiting an altered level of consciousness. Their assessment showed the unresponsive, hot-to-the-touch patient was critical. She was hypotensive, with blood pressure at 60/40, and tachycardic, with a heart rate of 140. After safely moving the patient to their ambulance, the crew got IV access and quickly began to initiate a fluid bolus before getting a blood sugar reading of 400. They decided DKA was also a concern for the patient due to breathing patterns in conjunction with the blood sugar reading, and headed to the closest ER. Upon arrival, the duo transferred care and gave a report to the receiving nurse and physician, who thanked them for their thorough assessments and performance of interventions. Teamwork was evident throughout their essential response, and each rests assured knowing their decisive interventions and detailed, focused assessments helped bring their patient closer to the definitive care she required. ✨

Stars of Life



**Jennifer
Meneley**

*Riggs Ambulance
Service
Merced*

Jennifer Meneley
Medical Dispatcher

Jennifer Meneley is a Riggs Ambulance Service Star of Life. Jennifer was nominated by her peers in the Communications Center for her outstanding professionalism and customer service to callers and fellow co-workers. Jennifer is always willing to assist anyone in need. She has demonstrated her commitment to EMS by stepping up to cover shifts when needed, assisting the Communications Center with scheduling in the absence of the Communications Manager and she does all of this with the most upbeat and positive attitude.

Jennifer has a very charismatic personality that contributes to a lighthearted workday and fun for her peers while they provide high quality service to the residents of Merced County. She is an exemplary leader who encourages and supports everyone she has contact with. Riggs is proud to honor her as a Star of Life. ✨

Stars of Life



Hector Meza

**Gold Cross
Ambulance
Service**

Borrego Springs

Hector Meza

Paramedic, FTO & Preceptor

Imperial County is mostly a rural area. Off-road enthusiasts know Imperial County for the amazing sand dunes. Individuals who like to travel like to come to Imperial for the climate as well as the mineral hot springs near by. With that being said Gold Cross responds to its fair share of trauma and medical related calls.

Mr. Meza has been working for Gold Cross for a little over 3 years and during his time with the company he has become a leader for others to follow. Mr. Meza, time and again, has demonstrated an outstanding ability to work under extreme pressure. Hector possesses the rare ability to efficiently and effectively manage MCI's while acting as the Incident Commander.

He also shares his pre-hospital knowledge with new employees as an FTO. When he is not busy doing that he fills a position as a paramedic preceptor for several paramedic programs in the area. Hector always has a good approachable quality and professional demeanor about him.

Hector is a dedicated patient care advocate who enjoys working with the communities within Imperial County. We at Gold Cross are very fortunate and proud to have Hector Meza working with us.✱

Stars of Life



Joe Mila

**West Side
Community
Ambulance**

Newman

Joe Mila

Paramedic

Joe Mila was nominated by his peers for the consistency in his delivery of high quality patient care through compassion, knowledge, and strength as a paramedic. Joe has dedicated his career to West Side Community Ambulance for 23 years, currently making him the longest full time employee. As an outstanding member of the West Side Community Ambulance family, his years of service and his attentiveness towards patient care have earned him respectful admiration from his peers.

As West Side's longest running full time employee, Joe is an ideal representation of what all of us as emergency medical service providers can hope and strive for in this field. Joe's excellent patient care can be seen in all calls no matter what the situation he has faced is and his level of patient care is seen by his peers as an example of what to strive for. He has an intense work ethic and unmatched level of professionalism which makes him a leader in the field.

Besides being a paramedic Joe is the father of three children and a grandfather of six grandchildren. He has been married for 30 years to his lovely wife Kim. He enjoys camping, fishing, boating, and brewing his own beer. ✱

Stars of Life



Adrianna Neal
*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield*

Adrianna Neal
EMT

EMT Adrianna Neal has worked for Hall Ambulance for just one year. She is currently assigned to the Bakersfield 911 system.

On Saturday, January 16, San Juana Bayar was at the Bakersfield Eagles Club celebrating her retirement from county service with friends and family. She had complained of not feeling well earlier in the evening. Just before 8:00 pm she suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. When Paramedic Achterberg and his partners, EMT Adrianna Neal, and EMT trainee Enrique Puente arrived, they found Bakersfield firefighters on scene performing CPR. The AED had shocked twice with no change. CPR continued while the crew deployed their equipment. Paramedic Achterberg defibrillated the patient, completed a successful intubation and started an IV and administered medications. During transport to the emergency department, an organized rhythm returned with pulses and the patient started to breathe on her own. Paramedic Achterberg, EMT Neal, and EMT Puente were awarded the Hall Ambulance Star of Life and now a California Ambulance Association Star of Life for their efforts, which saved a life. ❁

Stars of Life



Nick Onorato
*Gold Cross
Ambulance
Service
San Diego*

Nick Onorato
Paramedic, FTO, and Preceptor

Nick, like some of his fellow Star recipients serves in Imperial County. During his tenure with the company, Nick has been exposed to the same type of call experiences that have been previously mentioned. Mr. Onorato's commitment and dedication to patient care is what he is being recognized for. Mr. Onorato is a dependable, hard working individual, who has the trust, admiration and respect of his peers and supervisors. Nick is one of Gold Cross Ambulance Service's go to guys, he is always willing to jump in and help out. When Nick is engaged in training, he enjoys sharing his knowledge of patient care with new employees. He is conscientious about his training regiment with new hires and he wants to make sure they're well informed and prepared to utilize those skills in the field.

Nick also precepts for several local paramedic training schools. At the completion of training, his trainees express a great deal of gratitude for his patience and instruction. At times, being a preceptor can become a bit overwhelming and with that in mind Mr. Onorato also understands the importance of helping students with their course requirements. His hard work and dedication to the community and organization is an asset.

We are honored to have Nick as a member of our team, the company is a better place with him and his fellow stars in it. ❁

Stars of Life



Taylor Panus

*ProTransport-1
Concord*

Taylor Panus
EMT

Taylor and her partner were transporting a patient westbound on Highway 4 when they approached an overturned vehicle. Once stopped, Taylor rushed to provide assistance to the two individuals involved in the motor vehicle accident while her partner initially stayed with their stable patient. The driver had extricated herself and a bystander helped her toward the ambulance where she received care from Taylor's partner.

Taylor rushed to help the passenger, who was attempting to extricate from his seat through a car window and was bleeding from the head. Taylor placed a cervical collar on the man once he was out of the vehicle, and performed a head-to-toe assessment, taking vitals and monitoring ABC until the fire department arrived to assume care. The duo had seized the opportunity to ensure the safety and well-being through expert emergency care. *

Stars of Life



**Christopher
Parks**

*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield*

Christopher Parks
Paramedic

Paramedic Christopher Parks started his second tenure with Hall Ambulance in September 2014. He is currently assigned to the Wasco station.

On January 18, 2016, Paramedic Parks was at a local hospital offloading a patient. While obtaining patient information, he was approached by the mother of the patient in the next room. She told Chris her baby was not breathing. Chris quickly moved to the patient and found a pulseless, apneic, cyanotic baby. He immediately picked up the baby and started chest compressions while alerting hospital staff of the emergency. He delivered the patient to a resuscitation room where hospital staff assisted with CPR. The child regained pulses, was discharged a few days later and should make a full recovery.

Chris Parks was awarded the Hall Ambulance Star of Life and now a California Ambulance Association Star of Life for his quick reaction that saved a life. *



Enrique Puente

*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*

Bakersfield

Enrique Puente

EMT

EMT Enrique Puente is new to EMS and Hall Ambulance. He was hired in December of 2015 and currently staffs a basic life support ambulance in the Bakersfield 911 system.

On Saturday, January 16, San Juana Bayar was at the Bakersfield Eagles Club celebrating her retirement from county service with friends and family. She had complained of not feeling well earlier in the evening. Just before 8:00 pm she suffered a sudden cardiac arrest.

When Paramedic Achterberg and his partners, EMT Adrianna Neal, and EMT trainee Enrique Puente arrived, they found Bakersfield firefighters on scene performing CPR. The AED had shocked twice with no change. CPR continued while the crew deployed their equipment. Paramedic Achterberg defibrillated the patient, completed a successful intubation and started an IV and administered medications.

During transport to the emergency department, an organized rhythm returned with pulses and the patient started to breathe on her own.

Paramedic Achterberg, EMT Neal, and EMT Puente were awarded the Hall Ambulance Star of Life and now a California Ambulance Association Star of Life for their efforts, which saved a life. ❁



Steve Shepp

*Sierra Medical
Services Alliance
Lassen*

Steve Shepp **Operations Supervisor**

Steve Shepp has been involved in emergency medical and rescue response for much of his adult life, beginning at age 14 as a lifeguard, and continuing on to his current position as a Mobile Intensive Care Paramedic and Operations Supervisor with SEMSA in Lassen county. He has been involved in many aspects of EMS and rescue.

After lifeguarding for many years and attending San Diego State University as a Geological Sciences major, Steve received his California state EMT certificate in 1999 and maintained it for nine years. During this time, he worked as a professional ski patroller and avalanche mitigation route leader at the Squaw Valley ski area. He maintains that position currently in a part-time position. He has taught the Outdoor Emergency Care program through the National Ski Patrol to the ski patrol at Squaw Valley for the past eight years. Additionally, he is a member of the Squaw Dogs avalanche rescue team which is part of Placer County Search and Rescue, and coordinates with CHP, regional sheriffs, and the Care Flight medical helicopter service.

He obtained his Paramedic license in 2008, attending the REMSA Paramedic program in Reno, and graduating at the top of his class. After working as a paramedic for REMSA in Reno for approximately one year, he obtained his California Paramedic license, and his Mobile Intensive Care Paramedic certification through NorCal EMS, and began to work as a MICP for SEMSA in Lassen county. In 2012, he began working as an Operations Supervisor in the field for SEMSA in Lassen County, and continues to work in that position today.

He holds certifications and licenses in Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation for the Professional Rescuer, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, International Trauma Life Support, Outdoor Emergency Care Instructor, California Paramedic, NorCal EMS Mobile Intensive Care Paramedic, and Incident Command System 100, 200, and 300. In 2013, he graduated from the Ambulance Service Manager program by Fitch and Associates. This multi-week program covers extensive ambulance service management material, ranging from personnel management techniques, to financial management, to supply techniques, and technology. In May 2012 he received the Susanville Memorial Fund Excellence In Service Award, and an associated certificate of recognition from Senator Ted Gaines for work in Lassen county for SEMSA. ❁

Stars of Life



Krystian Socha
ProTransport-1
Pleasant Hill

Krystian Socha
EMT

Krystian and his partner were transporting a patient westbound on Highway 4 when they approached an overturned vehicle. Once stopped, Krystian stayed with his patient as his partner rendered care to the two individuals involved in the motor vehicle accident. Since his patient was stable, Krystian opened the side doors to the ambulance and put a stair chair near in order to monitor the patient as well as render care to an individual involved in the wreck who needed help. With the assistance of two bystanders, Krystian performed a three-man sit pick onto the stair chair so he could assess a woman involved in the accident. He conducted a rapid head-to-toe assessment, put on a cervical collar, and proceeded with assessments, reassuring the woman she would be okay. Her A&O status began improving and then the fire department arrived at the scene to take control of patient care. The duo had seized the opportunity to ensure the safety and well-being through expert emergency care. *

Stars of Life



Mike Swenson
Riggs Ambulance
Service
Merced

Mike Swenson
EMT

Mike Swenson is a Riggs Ambulance Service Star of Life. Mike was nominated by his peers for being a very dependable and trustworthy partner in Emergency Medical Services. Recently he was praised for his assistance in the welfare of a patient whose life was in danger on a highway. He was able to safely calm down the patient who displayed erratic behavior and prevented the theft of a CHP vehicle on scene. Mike is a humble individual who is committed to serving the residents of Merced County in any way he can. He does an exceptional job on a daily basis and displays great patience with his co-workers and patients. Mike is an extraordinary EMT and Riggs is proud to honor him as a Star of Life. *



**Allen
Swerdfeger**

*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.
Bakersfield*

Allen Swerdfeger

EMT

EMT Allen Swerdfeger enrolled in the Hall Ambulance EMT Academy in 2008. After working in the Bakersfield 911 system for several years, he transferred to the Hall Critical Care Transport team. In 2015, he returned to Ambulance operations and currently serves in the mountain community of Tehachapi.

On September 9, 2015 at 1756, Paramedic Gonzcar, and EMT Swerdfeger were dispatched in Tehachapi for choking. The crew arrived on scene at 1759. The crew entered the home to find a 75-year-old female choking, cyanotic, with agonal respirations and a weak pulse.

The Heimlich Maneuver was attempted without success. An attempt to visualize the obstruction was not successful. Cyanosis worsened and the patient lost pulses. CPR was initiated. Another attempt was made to visualize the obstruction. This time, Paramedic Gonzcar was able to clear the airway. CPR continued during transport to the hospital. During the transport, skin signs improved and the patient started to bite down on the oral airway. Shortly after arrival at the Emergency Department, the patient was sitting up in bed able to share her story with the crew.

Paramedic Gonzcar and EMT Swerdfeger were awarded the Hall Ambulance Start of Life and now the California Ambulance Association Star of Life for their quick response and actions, which led to a life being saved. ✨



Sean Tinnish

*Hall Ambulance
Service, Inc.*

Bakersfield

Sean Tinnish

EMT

2015 Hall Ambulance Emergency Medical Technician of the Year
EMT Tinnish is relatively new to Hall Ambulance, starting his career in September 2014. He currently serves on an advanced life support ambulance in the Bakersfield 911 system.

EMT Tinnish was awarded the 2015 Hall Ambulance EMT of the Year Award in recognition of his outstanding efforts to meet or exceed operational benchmarks. Each EMT was evaluated based on patient satisfaction, response times, hospital off load times, total calls completed, attendance, quality assurance ratings, and willingness to grow.

EMT Tinnish distinguished himself by being at the top or near the top of all statistical categories. His EMT of the Year award includes a nomination as a California Ambulance Association Star of Life. ✨



Tina VanHouten

*Escalon
Community
Ambulance
Escalon*

Tina VanHouten
Lead Paramedic

Tina Van Houten began her EMS Career as a volunteer with Escalon Community Ambulance in 1985. Tina volunteered for twelve hour shifts several times a week. In 1987 the ECA Board of Directors asked Tina if she would volunteer to enroll in the Paramedic program hosted in San Joaquin County. Tina took a year out her life to go to school, while being a wife and mother to two young sons and continued to fill her shifts for ECA. In 1989 she was hired as the second “full time” employee. Unlike larger institutions, ECA is a small rural service and all staff wear many hats. Tina is the point of contact for ECA’s membership program, organizing and managing its day to day operations, as well as multiple other office related duties and community CPR instruction. Tina has a talent for organization, and when tasked with any project, completes it (without fail). Tina juggles all her responsibilities and responds to daily emergencies during her seventy-two hour a week schedule. Tina is a respected, seasoned paramedic who can switch gears many times a day, leave her office, manage catastrophic situations, return, and do it all without a single change in demeanor or a hair out of place! She strives for excellent clinical care and demonstrates a deep concern for her patients. EMS providers make many sacrifices for their chosen work, and we must not forget that their families do also. That is why we have invited them to celebrate this recognition with Tina. Tina is known around the station as Mama T. She provides a steady hand to her EMS colleagues, and has always stood for strong principles, bringing great credit to the profession of EMS. ✨



Michael Wright

ProTransport-1

Cameron Park

Michael Wright
Paramedic

Michael and his partner were dispatched Code 3 to a patient at a skilled nursing facility exhibiting an altered level of consciousness. Their assessment showed the unresponsive, hot-to-the-touch patient was critical. She was hypotensive, with blood pressure at 60/40, and tachycardic, with a heart rate of 140. After safely moving the patient to their ambulance, the crew got IV access and quickly began to initiate a fluid bolus before getting a blood sugar reading of 400. They decided DKA was also a concern for the patient due to breathing patterns in conjunction with the blood sugar reading, and headed to the closest ER. Upon arrival, the duo transferred care and gave a report to the receiving nurse and physician, who thanked them for their thorough assessments and performance of interventions. Teamwork was evident throughout their essential response, and each rests assured knowing their decisive interventions and detailed, focused assessments helped bring their patient closer to the definitive care she required. *

Stars of Life



Joel Ybarra

*Schaefer
Ambulance
Service
Ontario*

Joel Ybarra EMT, FTO

Mr. Ybarra is one of the newest Stars in our organization. Joel works in the Eastern part of Los Angeles County, specifically the City of Pomona and surrounding cities. Pomona has a history of being a violent town where stabbings, shootings and motor vehicle accidents are a daily occurrence. Joel has shown his ability to critically think and respond appropriately when confronted with difficult situations.

Joel is being recognized for his commitment to the community he serves as well as his dedication to Cole-Schaefer. Mr. Ybarra has been with the company for a little over 2 years and has taken on additional responsibilities as an FTO. While training, Joel incorporates training tactics he received as a US Army reservist. Those tools add to the training experience for the new employees. Joel takes great pride in his work and shares that with his trainees as well as his peers. His dedication, hard work and enthusiasm are characteristics that are a valuable contribution to the industry and community.

We are proud to have Mr. Ybarra working with us and we are confident he will continue to make great contributions to the communities he serves. ✨

Stars of Life



Rick Zavala

*American
Ambulance
Fresno*

Rick Zavala Paramedic

Rick Zavala was selected by his peers as Paramedic of the Year in 2015 for Fresno County Operations.

Rick started working in the restaurant industry as a dishwasher and busboy before managing the busboys and lastly becoming a bartender. The customer service skills he learned were very useful in his new profession, EMS. Rick started his career at American Ambulance in 1995 as a Support Services Technician, inventorying and cleaning ambulances. Rick became an EMT in 1996 and a Paramedic in 2000. Rick is also a Paramedic Preceptor and oversees the development of new Paramedic Students during their internship.

Rick loves his job. He loves working with people and solving their problems. These are skills he learned as a bartender. He is also described by his peers as a people-person.

Rick loves golf which he describes as “very therapeutic.” He is an active member of his church and enjoys helping with social events including their food drives, clothing drives, summer bible school and working at their “adopted” city park in a challenged neighborhood. Rick has been married to his wife Jennifer for 13 years and has a daughter, Riley, who is nine years old. ✨

THE CALIFORNIA
AMBULANCE
ASSOCIATION
CONGRATULATES
THE 2016
Stars of Life!



2520 Venture Oaks Way, Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: 877-276-1410
Fax: 916-924-7323
www.the-caa.org