

Illinois Department of Public Health celebrating National EMS Week

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National EMS Week May 15-21, 2016 – EMS Strong: “Called to Care”

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is celebrating National EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Week, May 15-21, 2016, and EMS Children’s Day, May 18, 2016, by recognizing the important contributions and dedication of EMS practitioners who provide day-to-day lifesaving services. Approximately two-thirds of all EMS providers in Illinois are volunteers, which reinforces this year’s *EMS Strong* theme, “*Called to Care.*”

“The men and women being honored during National EMS Week are true heroes who have acted selflessly to help people in need under distressing circumstances,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D. J.D. “Thousands of emergency workers in Illinois put their lives on the line every day, while others are Illinois residents who volunteer and have acted with courage to help fellow citizens avoid serious injury or even death. This week, the Illinois Department of Public Health honors these heroes and would like to say thank you for their courage, time, and dedication.”

Every year, firefighters, police officers, paramedics, and others throughout the state send their nominations to IDPH for the annual EMS Hero Awards. The nominations are just a few of the many heroic acts people dedicated to saving lives do on a regular basis.

Following are this year’s recipients.

**Brian Churchill, Lisa Churchill, and Lt. Bob Gotterman
Springfield, IL**

On May 16, 2015, Brian and Lisa Churchill were at the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport when they learned of a man unconscious and not breathing. Brian and Lisa started cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) while Transportation Security Administration Airport Police Lt. Bob Gotterman ran to get the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Brian and Lisa used the AED, which successfully restored the man’s heart rhythm. The fire department and ambulance arrived to take over care and transported the man to the hospital, where he recovered fully. Without the combined efforts of these individuals, the outcome may have been very different.

**Marcus Jackson
Waukegan, IL**

On October 12, 2015, the Waukegan Fire Department responded to a car accident where the driver was pinned in the car. After extricating the driver, Marcus Jackson, a firefighterparamedic, noticed air was not moving in the left side of the driver’s chest, which can indicate a collapsed lung. Jackson performed a needle decompression – inserting a needle into the driver’s chest to re-inflate the lung. Not only is the procedure difficult to perform, if the person’s lung is not truly collapsed, it could cause the lung to collapse. Jackson’s ability to recognize the collapsed lung and quickly perform the needle decompression helped save the driver’s life.

**Brendan Gould
Barrington, IL**

On February 6, 2016, 16-year-old Brendan Gould was home with his father and saw him collapse on the floor. Brendan immediately called 911 and was able to very calmly give the dispatcher information that emergency responders would need to respond to the call.

The dispatcher then gave Brendan instructions over the phone on how to perform CPR. Brendan immediately started CPR on his father and continued until the first police officer and fire personnel arrived. Brendan's quick action helped save his father's life.

In Illinois, there are 64 EMS resource hospitals, 66 trauma centers, 8,052 individuals licensed as first responder-defibrillators, 36,722 emergency medical technicians (EMTs – 20,668 basic, 610 intermediate, 15,444 paramedic), 4,746 emergency communications registered nurses, 2,819 trauma nurse specialists, 389 pre-hospital registered nurses, and 3,012 emergency medical dispatchers providing 24-hour service to the people of Illinois.

Illinois' EMS system also strives to integrate pediatric emergency care needs across a wide spectrum, recognizing that children have unique physiological responses to illness and injury. To honor those who work in adult and pediatric emergency care, Governor Bruce Rauner has proclaimed May 15-21, 2016 as EMS Week in Illinois and May 18, 2016 as EMS for Children Day in Illinois.