



A Holiday Message

To Our Amazing First Responders,

Once again, another year is rapidly coming to a close. Like 2020, this year presented everyone in public safety and healthcare with significant challenges. And, once again, our EMS providers rose to the occasion with professionalism, endurance and compassion.

Not only are we still dealing with COVID 19 and the effects it continues to have on our patients, but we have also seen unprecedented numbers of non-Covid related patients in need of urgent and emergency care. Increased volume and staffing challenges in both the pre-hospital and hospital setting have added to our collective stress. I am hopeful that we will begin to see the light at the end of this very long tunnel soon!

I am grateful for you, the first responder who answers the call day in and day out. Not every call is the same. Not every patient truly appreciates what you do, but yet you respond. Regardless of your status - paid or volunteer, city or town - you make a difference in people's lives.

As the newly appointed CEO of Waterbury Hospital/HEALTH, I thank you for everything that you do. Waterbury Hospital is proud to work closely with our EMS partners from across the region. It is my hope that as we move into the holiday season, you have an opportunity to enjoy your family and friends, decompress and recharge your batteries. You deserve it!

While I know that the new year will present us with new challenges, I am confident that you will meet them with everything you've got. I promise you that Waterbury Hospital will always have your back!

With Gratitude

-Justin Lundbye, President and CEO

New EMS Coordinator Named



Jose Matias has recently accepted the position of Emergency Medical Services Coordinator for Waterbury Hospital / Waterbury HEALTH. "I am honored and privileged to have the opportunity to align with the mission of Waterbury Hospital to provide compassionate high quality health care services for the City of Waterbury and its surrounding communities".

Jose has achieved many accolades and peer acknowledgment of merit throughout his career, notwithstanding humbleness accordingly achieving "Paramedic of the Year" over several years running inclusive of Fire and EMS Systems. He successfully attained National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician Certification in 1984 and subsequently NREMT-Paramedic Status in 1986. He is a graduate of the first Paramedic Class of 1986 Associate of Science Degree in Emergency Care and Rescue from Mankato State University in Mankato, Minnesota. Thereafter

further earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Bridgeport in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He credits his mentor and friend, Mr. Paul Smith of the State of Connecticut Office of EMS for attaining Emergency Medical Services – Instructor Certification (EMS-I) in 1992. This afforded the opportunity as adjunct faculty for ten years at Naugatuck Valley Community College – Paramedic Program in Waterbury. He is currently affiliated as Staff Faculty with University of New Haven offering Connecticut's first Bachelor of Science Degree in Paramedicine/Fire Science in Partnership with Yale New Haven Sponsor Hospital – Center of Emergency Medical Services, teaching division of Yale New Haven Hospital. Also certified State of Connecticut Firefighter/Fire Instructor and retired as an Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter/Division Fire Captain after 20 years of ARFF services for Bradley International Airport Fire Department under Fire Chief/Chief of Emergency Services Pete Buonome and Airport Fire Chief John Duffy.

Jose's passion for EMS/Fire/Rescue also involved Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) Paramedic Training pursuing certification and instruction to instruct EMS/Fire/Police in field training.

Trauma Victim Survives Against Incredible Odds

In the early morning hours of August 29, a series of 911 calls began coming in at Northwest CMED reporting a wrong way driver on Route 8.

Shortly after those calls were transferred to State Police dispatch, Northwest Dispatcher Peter Fegley got the call he had feared would eventually come; A head on collision in the “S” turns on Route 8 in Beacon Falls. A caller had reported a full sized pickup had been travelling northbound in the southbound lane and struck a sedan. Soon after, more calls came in with reports of trapped and badly injured occupants. Northwest Dispatcher Josh Wendell dropped a tone for Beacon Hose Company fire and EMS units at 0330 for apparatus and both fire company ambulances to respond. A Naugatuck EMS BLS and ALS unit were also sent for mutual aid.

As crews assembled, Beacon Hose Chief Brian DeGeorge headed to the scene. Wendell updated assembling crews of the reported severity of at least one of possible three total patients. One vehicle occupant was reported trapped in the sedan and unresponsive. From that initial report, Waterbury Hospital was alerted of the potential for up to three trauma patients. “We had CMED let Waterbury (hospital) know what we were headed to after hearing reports from 911 callers”, DeGeorge said.

Within minutes of dispatch, both Beacon Hose ambulances and fire apparatus were responding to the scene. DeGeorge arrived and determined a female patient was trapped in her car. She was unconscious and had a nearly amputated leg that was hanging outside the car. There was another injured person in that same vehicle as well.



Arriving EMS crews began to control bleeding and ventilate the patient due to ineffective breathing while firefighters worked quickly to remove the dashboard off the patient. The five minute extrication freed the patient, a 28 year old female, and quickly moved her to an awaiting ambulance for transport. The other victim in the same vehicle was also placed in an awaiting ambulance and transported. Both patients (one full trauma and one modified trauma) went to Waterbury Hospital. A third patient with minor injuries went to Saint Mary’s via a Naugatuck mutual aid ambulance.

Within 32 minutes of the initial 911 calls, both Beacon Hose ambulances were pulling into Waterbury Hospital to the awaiting trauma and ED staff. The modified trauma patient was deemed stable. Meanwhile, the full trauma patient remained critical and near death. Within minutes of arriving in the trauma bay, the patient went into cardiac arrest. Surgeons performed an ED thoracotomy and opened her chest to observe for injuries. Doctors began to massage the patient’s heart by hand in order to sustain circulation in the absence of a pulse. After medications and several units of blood, her heart began to beat again on its own. This cycle of arrest and spontaneous heart activity persisted for about 90 minutes before she was stable enough to be transported to ICU. “The patient received manual heart massage by the trauma team for

more than 90 minutes”, said Waterbury’s Trauma Coordinator Dayna Failla.

The patient received more than 10 units of blood products before and during surgery. She eventually required a below the knee amputation and also sustained abdominal injuries/bleeding and a C-7 fracture. She went on to spend several days in the Waterbury ICU and then was able to be downgraded to a Med/Surg floor. Upon her discharge from Waterbury, the same Beacon Hose ambulance crew that brought her into the ED transferred her to Hospital for Special Care for physical rehabilitation.

“Statistically, this patient had less than a 1% chance of survival”, said Failla. “Every link in the pre-hospital and hospital chain played a part in her surviving those devastating injuries. She also had a strong will to survive”.

“This call was a great example of a system coming together for great patient outcomes”, said Chief DeGeorge. “CMED got us going and kept everyone in the loop. EMS treated the patient aggressively, Waterbury Hospital was alerted early and they were ready when we arrived with both patients. The extrication was flawless and everyone involved worked as a team”.

At the November meeting of Beacon Hose Company, the patient and her family visited the firehouse to thank those involved in saving her life. She is still recovering from her injuries, but her spirits are high. Firefighters and EMS personnel along with the surgeons involved with her care were in attendance. “I will be honest with you”, said firefighter Jim Trzaski to the patient while overcome with emotion, “I never expected to see you here in front of me”.