



Recipients of the 2021 Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Awards Announced

NWCG announces the recipients of the 2021 Wildland Fire EMS Awards. The NWCG Emergency Medical Committee (EMC) annually recognizes individuals and groups who have demonstrated outstanding actions or accomplishments that are above and beyond the expectation of one's normal mission or job duties. The 2021 awards honor twelve individuals and three crews:

Danielle Goodson, Squad leader of the Lolo Interagency Hotshot Crew

Award of Excellence in Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Services/Rescue

On the afternoon of July 22, 2021, Ms. Goodson exemplified what a leader and medical provider should strive to be in a high stress, mass casualty incident on the Devil's Creek Fire in Montana. Her expertise, organization, planning, and leadership resulted in the best possible response to an extremely trying incident and she facilitated the best patient care that could be provided in that situation. All individuals received necessary emergency care and survived this incident in part due to the excellent professional and timely response of Danielle Goodson.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources Helitack Crew: Joe Stewart, Callan Wilkins, Ben Ware, Mike Wilson, and Brad Gotte

Award of Excellence in Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Services/Rescue

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources Helitack Crew, including an emergency medical technician, departed the helibase arriving on scene to a heat-related injury (HRI) medical incident. The firefighter reported increasing symptoms, including hyperventilation, vision issues, numbness of the tongue, and overheating. Upon arrival the crew found the firefighter conscious and alert. The emergency medical technician began a patient assessment. Vitals were normal and the crew assisted the firefighter into the helicopter. The helicopter departed Bonaparte Mountain for the nearby airport where the helicopter manager coordinated with the waiting ambulance. The firefighter was able to move from the helicopter to the ambulance with the assistance of the crew. The transfer of the patient to the ambulance was completed in one hour, following his initial call for assistance. The rapid response, assessment, and transport of the patient in the first hour after the occurrence of a traumatic injury is known as the "golden hour" and is considered the most critical for successful emergency treatment. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources Helitack Crew were able to respond to this incident within an incident emergency and subsequently provided care and transport to an interagency firefighter within the critical treatment period.

Wasatch Helitack Crew: Ryan Witter, Chris Edwards, and Conner O'Malley

Outstanding Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Services Squad/Crew/Team of the Year

The Wasatch Helitack Crew were called to transport a heat-related patient from the fireline to the base camp. The plan was to have a medical helicopter meet them at the camp. The Wasatch Helitack Crew then met the line paramedic and the patient at the medevac site. During the triage it was determined that the firefighter was in critical condition, and they could not wait for the medical helicopter that was over an hour away. The line paramedic and the Wasatch Helitack Crew flew the patient to the hospital which was over an hour and half away. The firefighter was close to death numerous times and the Wasatch Helitack Crew continued to treat him the entire trip. This was far and above the normal medivac that helitack crews perform. Due to the coordination between the

helicopter manager, helicopter crew members, and the emergency medical technicians, the firefighter was successfully transported to a local hospital. The firefighter was then treated to higher level of care at the hospital and stabilized. The Wasatch Helitack Crew actions clearly went above and beyond the norm and were able to save this firefighter's life. The Wasatch Helitack Program is located on the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Northern Utah.

Stephanie McGovern, Forest Safety and Occupational Health Manager

Outstanding Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Services Distinguished Service Award

Over the past three years Stephanie McGovern has provided leadership and direction to the USDA Forest Service Region 3 Emergency Medical Services Program in the Southwest. Ms. McGovern transitioned this program from a regional level program to a National Emergency Medical Services Program. The transition has been smooth while bringing together emergency medical services programs from two different states with differing levels of care at the basic life support level. During the transition, Ms. McGovern has brought on multiple doctors as medical advisors to provide on-line medical direction for the field-going emergency medical responders and emergency medical technicians. As her crowning achievement, in November 2021, Ms. McGowan coordinated the inaugural Southwest medical training week. This training brought 40 USDA Forest Service emergency medical technicians together for a week's worth of training in New Mexico.

Tyler Richwein, Engine Operator

Outstanding Wildland Fire Emergency Medical Services Individual of the Year

Beyond being a dedicated emergency medical technician and forest training coordinator, Mr. Richwein established an amazingly successful regional emergency medical services training week. He assisted and lead in the planning from the training's inception and worked tirelessly to ensure that participants were provided hands-on skills from a diverse cadre of instructors. He coordinated with the regional staff and five area emergency physicians to build a first of its kind medical training. Mr. Richwein built the schedule, coordinated lesson assignments, researched and purchased training materials and supplies for the program, and ensured quality educational training materials reached emergency medical technicians and training coordinators. During the training he coordinated hands-on scenarios including mock injuries of patients. This left participants with vivid experiences of patient care.

Congratulations to all the awardees. Through leadership and initiative, they made significant contributions to the safety of the wildland fire community. These awards are well deserved.

More information about the awards program and a link to the nomination form can be found on the NWCG EMC webpage, <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/emergency-medical-committee>.