

# NCEMSFS NEWS

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***Congratulations to the following squads celebrating milestone anniversaries this spring:***

***The George Washington University (10)***

***Tufts University (20)***

***Tulane University (25)***  
***University of Delaware (30)***

***The Pennsylvania State University (50)***

## Message from the President

Dr. George J. Koenig, Jr., NCEMSFS President

On April 6, I had the opportunity to attend the inaugural event for University of Pennsylvania's Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT)<sup>1</sup>. This represented the culmination of the students' efforts and persistence to convince key administrators that it would be feasible and sustainable to have such a team. I still remember the original meeting two and a half years ago where the other NCEMSFS officers and I outlined for the students the necessary steps to start a campus-based response group. At that meeting, we discussed different models of campus-based response groups and the advantages and disadvantages of each model.

We explained that to have a successful organization that they would have to involve three departments: Public Safety, Student Life, and Health Services. We added that while it was not necessary for all three departments to take an active organizational role, that it was necessary to have their support. They proceeded with their intent and began to formulate a proposal. The proposal was only the beginning. The proposal unearthed questions concerning every aspect about forming a response group: identifying a need, liability, equipment, scheduling, training, and dispatch procedures. It seemed that for every question they answered, another question surfaced until finally there were no more questions to be asked.

In front of family, friends, and fellow students, the Vice Provost for Student Life, the Medical Director of the Campus Health Service, and the Vice President

for Public Safety announced the creation of MERT. After the ceremony, I spoke with several of the administrators present. I asked what was the turning point that changed their minds, originally dead set against the idea of a campus emergency response team, and led them to approve the formation of MERT. They each stated that the final turning point was when they were presented with the students' plan for sustainability. Each administrator acknowledged that the current group of students was capable of starting a campus response group, but they wanted assurance that the organization was going to be sustainable.

The concept of sustainability is the Achilles heel of every campus response group. A misstep in recruitment or the failure of members to progress through the training can take several years to correct. While we have become accustomed to this small margin of error, we must not forget that it exists. It is essential that every spring, we recognize the fragile balance of four-year organizations and start planning now for next year. The key to the sustainability of your organization is through the creation and implementation of an annual plan.

Have a great summer,



George J. Koenig Jr., DO, MS  
President, NCEMSFS

1 - See pictures on page 3.

## Understanding the Bigger Picture

Dr. Scott C. Savett, NCEMSF Vice President

How many times have you been enjoying a movie on the big screen when, at the most inopportune time, a cell phone somewhere in the audience ruins the moment? It doesn't matter that every movie is now prefaced with a public service announcement asking patrons to silence their phones.

In response to the public's inability to heed the request to turn their phones off, scientists have devised new technology intended to prevent cell phones from operating at movies, concerts, and religious services. The ingenious technology doesn't use active jamming since the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) doesn't allow that. Instead, by using special building materials theaters, concert halls, and places of worship can passively block the radio waves that allow cellular telephones to function. This sounds like a great way to regain silence in an indoor public place – until you begin thinking about the unintended effects that such building materials would have.

In many areas of the country cellular telephones operate on frequencies similar to those utilized by police, fire, and EMS. Unfortunately, these new building materials can't differentiate between a casual cell phone conversation and an EMT calling on a two-way radio for additional personnel to assist with a cardiac arrest. While technology such as an emergency radio repeater could overcome the signal attenuation, purchasing and maintaining such hardware would be difficult and expensive for business owners.

I do not fault the scientists who developed the building materials for being shortsighted. After all, there is certainly a need for radio silence in some environments. Such materials might have applications in non-public venues such as recording studios or scientific laboratories where external

radio interference can be undesirable or dangerous. While there's solid science behind the technology, if such an innovation is used without considering the broader implications (and liabilities), it's a simple case of not understanding the bigger picture.

You can appreciate how the aforementioned technology could have a direct impact on your ability to perform as an EMT or paramedic. What may not be apparent is how the failure to understand the bigger picture in any number of situations could also have a similar undesirable impact. And I'm not necessarily referring to life and death situations.

Consider this: could something as simple as wearing a particular item of clothing have a long-term detrimental impact on the perception of your campus EMS squad? Imagine you are getting off duty after a tough shift. You've treated two drunks and three athletic injuries in the last 24 hours. You decide it would be nice to unwind by grabbing a beer at the local pub before heading back to your residence hall. You don't even think about what you're wearing as you take a seat at the bar. As it turns out, a reporter from the campus newspaper is interviewing the musician who will take the stage later in the evening. The newspaper photographer snaps a picture of the musician sitting at the bar – with you in full uniform drinking your beer just a couple seats away.

You think nothing of the situation until the picture hits the paper the next day and you get a panicked call from your chief. "What were you doing drinking a beer while in your uniform?" he demands to know. "I've already gotten a call from the dean of student life requesting your immediate suspension."

Talk about being at the wrong place at the wrong time. No matter how

much positive publicity your campus EMS organization has garnered in the past, an incident such as this can be a major setback to its reputation. The detrimental effects from this situation were completely preventable by thinking about the implications BEFORE it happened.

In some cases it's possible to prevent situations like this from happening in the first place. For example, some campus EMS squads have strict rules about where and when a uniform may be worn. A good general rule that may seem overbearing (but will keep you out of trouble) is that squad-related clothing may not be worn in any establishment serving alcohol – except for a crew actively responding to a call at the bar or restaurant. Such policies should be codified in the squad's standard operating procedures (SOPs) or standard operating guidelines (SOGs).

Policies can't cover every situation and set of circumstances. When faced with uncharted territory, I implore you to take a step back and consider the bigger picture. Mentally remove yourself from the situation. Pretend you are an outsider and evaluate the possible impact of your actions from various standpoints. Only when you have a mental "green light" should you proceed. This is certainly not a failsafe method, but it should go a long way to keeping you out of trouble and avoiding unintended consequences.

Just as scientists need to stay one step ahead of technology by constantly evaluating its implications, campus EMS squad members need to be vigilant by evaluating their own actions and being aware of the big picture.



## Professor Squirrel

Serious Campus EMS Advice from a Nut

*Dear Professor Squirrel,*

*My campus wants to start a bike response service, what resources are available to help us get started?*

*Sincerely,  
Pedal Pusher*

Dear Pedaler,

There are many resources available, starting with the online searchable NCEMSF Comprehensive Database of Organizations. Do not reinvent the wheel, talk to those that already have bicycle programs established. Next contact the International Police Mountain Bike Association ([www.ipmba.org](http://www.ipmba.org)). IPMBA can provide additional guidance as well as necessary specialized training.

Good luck and be sure to yield to us squirrels!  
Professor Squirrel



Professor Squirrel has been hanging out on campus begging for food from students and keeping an eye on campus EMS for many years. Send your questions to the Professor at [professor@ncemsf.org](mailto:professor@ncemsf.org). The Professor will answer the best ones in the NCEMSF newsletter. Your name and school will be kept confidential.

## University of Pennsylvania Medical Emergency Response Team Officially Inaugurated April 6, 2006

MERT members are presented with one of their new emergency response bikes by University officials at a public ceremony held on College Green hours before going in service for the first time.



NCEMSF Executive Board Members Joshua Marks, George Koenig and Scott Savett pose with MERT Founders Evan Silverstein and Andrew Mener after the ceremony.

## Alumni in Our Past, Present, and Future

John Wenzel, NCEMSF Alumni Coordinator

With my first newsletter, allow me to introduce myself to all members and alumni. My name is John Wenzel, Villanova Class of 2005, and a four-year member of Villanova EMS (VEMS). It was great to see both current EMS members and alumni in Boston this year, and it is my hope that the 2007 conference will see even more alumni in attendance.

Many of you are seniors, and in a few short weeks will walk away from your college campuses with a wealth of knowledge and experience to take with you on your various paths. For me, one of the hardest parts of graduating was leaving behind VEMS, hoping us senior members had given all the "newbies" the tools to carry on our tradition. Those of us experienced in collegiate EMS know the challenges inherently faced year

by year with such a rapid turnover of members and leaders, and I hope you will all continue to stay involved with your organizations. Whether you live near or far, each alumnus/a can have a dramatic impact on the future of their collegiate organization. With NCEMSF, our alumni can collectively share ideas and contribute to the advancement of collegiate EMS.

Some of you may be older alumni, out of college and a few years detached. I urge you to get involved as well, both with your collegiate organization and NCEMSF as a whole. Over the next several months, it is my hope to reach out to alumni new and old, and encourage organizations to involve their own alumni in current events. I would like to see alumni presence soar at the 2007 conference, with several

objectives. The first is to share ideas and experience in EMS, network amongst each other, and offer networking, advice, and mentorship to our undergraduate counterparts. Running the day-to-day grind of collegiate EMS may only be a four year experience, but the support of collegiate EMS is an ongoing endeavor that we all share.

Having shared some of my opening ideas, congratulations and best wishes to all you soon to be graduates. Be sure to keep your contact information up to date with your respective squads and with NCEMSF. I invite you to share with me your ideas about alumni involvement, and look for updates about alumni happenings. Have a safe and happy summer everyone!



## Regional Roundup

News from Around the NCEMSF Regions

### From the National Coordinator

I trust that those who attended the 2006 Conference in Boston had a great time, learned a thing or two, and were able to network with each other to share ideas and solutions. I know that the campus leaders who attended the various Regional Roundtables were able to share their thoughts about campus-based EMS (CBEMS), and it was great to see some of the more established squads help out the newer squads. This fostering of communication is truly what NCEMSF is about, and those who were able to take advantage of the opportunity really benefited. I want to thank the Regional Coordinators who work so hard behind the scenes all year, for running these roundtables.

The Regional Coordinator Network exists to facilitate communication between NCEMSF and its greater than 200 constituents. It is through the regional coordinators that NCEMSF is best able to accomplish its mission of advocating and supporting campus based EMS. The regional coordinators are equipped to assist each squad with the day to day issues it faces and to help publicize squad achievements. There are few issues that the NCEMSF leadership has not seen before and for which it is not equipped to offer advice and guidance. If you are a CBEMS leader and have not met your regional coordinator, please e-mail [nc@ncemsf.org](mailto:nc@ncemsf.org) and I will gladly connect you.

With graduation approaching, a few of our coordinators will be departing and consequently a number of positions are available. To apply, please visit [www.ncemsf.org/about/leadership.ems](http://www.ncemsf.org/about/leadership.ems).

### Central

*Texas A&M Emergency Care Team* hosted its annual Mock Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This year the team planned a mock

terrorist attack with over 50 patients, 35 medics and multiple local EMS agencies. The day before, TAMECT ran an education fair where all medics were trained in START triage and other interesting medical topics. *Texas A&M EMS* also played a large role in the Mock MCI.

*Tulane EMS* is restocking and preparing for next hurricane season. The weekend of April 1<sup>st</sup> Tulane EMS celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an alumni reunion, tours of its new facilities, and a banquet.

### New York

*Harpur's Ferry Student Volunteer Ambulance Service* recently placed in service nitrous oxide on its ambulances for pain management. A 2005 John Deere Gator and 2006 Special Operations Trailer were also added to the service's fleet as well as two additional Life Pak 12's with capnography and NIBP.

### Northern New England

*Vermont Technical College* is currently working on purchasing a new pulse oximeter and was recently donated a new AED for campus use.

VTC is still working on expanding its membership and enhancing its relationship with local squads. VTC just marked its one year anniversary.

*Daniel Webster College* is working to expand its service area outside campus, including to be a part of the nearby airport's MCI response matrix. As a new organization, they are trying to grow as a club at the school and gain respect and acknowledgment from other rescue services and the community.

*University of Vermont* is in the process of purchasing a new 2006 ambulance that will hopefully be in service by January 2007. After a meeting with the president of the university, the squad is also looking towards expanding its bay and living quarters which might include adding to the current quarters or building a new station.

***Do you have news about your squad you'd like to share? Contact your regional coordinator and look for it in the next issue of NCEMSF News.***

## Regional Coordinator Network

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## Campus-Based EMS Provider Major and Career Choices

Michael T. Hilton, NCEMSF National Coordinator; Joshua A. Marks, NCEMSF Secretary

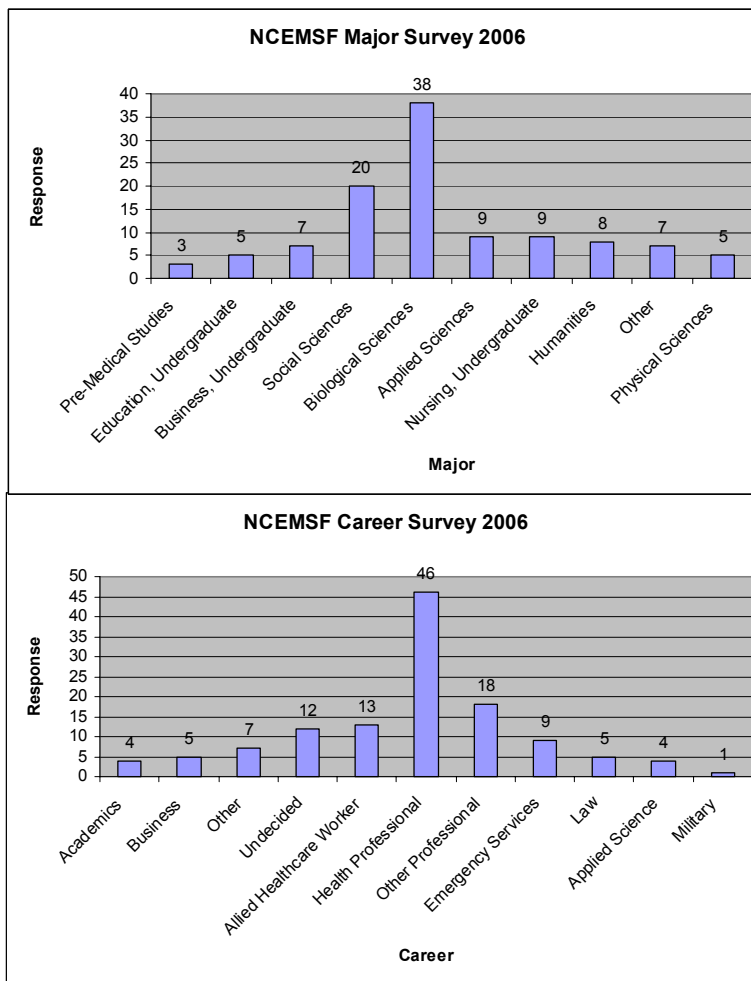
NCEMSF has long claimed that collegiate EMS providers are not all ambitious pre-medical students, but rather represent a diverse mix of students with various academic interests and career aspirations. At the 2006 Annual Conference in Boston, NCEMSF sought to prove its assertion. On the conference evaluation form, attendees were asked to provide their current major and anticipated career. Out of the 606 conference evaluations that were distributed to attendees, 135 (22%) were returned and 124 of those (20% of total, 92% of returned evaluations) responded to the Major and Career question. The top three majors were: Biological Sciences (34%), Social Sciences (18%), Undergraduate Nursing (8%) and Applied Sciences (8%). The top three career paths were: Health Professional (37%), Undecided (15%) and Allied Healthcare Worker (11%)

The survey results, however, may not reflect the overall composition of the NCEMSF membership nor portray a complete picture of the CBEMS provider as the sample size was small and only represented a

portion of the subset of the CBEMS population that attends NCEMSF conferences. According to the most recent published CBEMS data (Prehospital and Disaster Medicine, March-April 2006), CBEMS groups average 29 (95% CI, 25-34) members, translating to roughly 4,200 CBEMS providers nationwide, 14% of which attended the 2006 Conference, and only 3% of which responded to the survey questions. Another inherent problem with the

data was that in order to analyze it, we first needed to divide the free form answers into uniform categories and in so doing had to make some subjective assessments. For example, when a respondent listed multiple majors or careers, the response was tallied with the more common of the two responses, based upon the rest of the survey

Engineering and Physics; Social Sciences include Anthropology, Criminal Justice, History, International Affairs Political Science, Psychology and Sociology; Humanities include English, Music, and Philosophy; and Applied Sciences include Aeronautics, Computer Engineering, and Medical Informatics.



In terms of the Career question, note the following: Allied Healthcare Worker includes Athletic Trainer, Physical Therapist, Physician Assistant, and RN; Emergency Services include EMS Fire Service, and Law Enforcement; Health Professional includes DO, MD, and MPH; and Other Professional includes Journalist, Pilot, Teacher, and Veterinarian.

Of note was the large percentage of students with decided majors, but undecided career pathways. When looking at those planning to continue on to medical school, 29 (70%) were science majors, 10 (24%) were non-science majors and only 3 (7%) were pre-med majors. The national averages for medical school

data, assuming that the respondent would ultimately choose the more common preference.

In terms of the groupings for the Major question, note the following: Business, Undergraduate includes Accounting, Business, Communications and Economics; Biological Sciences include Biology, Biochemistry, and Biomedical Engineering; Physical Sciences include Chemistry, Chemical

applicants, using Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) data from 2005, were: 70% science majors and 27% non-science majors – meaning that the make-up of the NCEMSF medical school applicant pool reflects the current nation-wide medical school applicant pool.

Further research will provide a more complete picture of those that participate in CBEMS.



## Fun (Not Fear) Makes Your Squad Succeed

David I. Bacall, NCEMSF Startup Coordinator

There are two types of leaders in this world: those who get people to do what they want by fear of retaliation, and those who get people to do what they want by making them enjoy it.

When put in these simple terms, it's easy to see that intimidation is the dark horse, yet so many "bosses" use it as their leadership style. In EMS we see it everyday. Jim becomes "Captain Tin-Badge" and starts ordering people around. Jane is the president who "writes up" everyone for the smallest things.

On the other side, EMS and public safety in general, has a paramilitary structure for a reason. In crisis mode we must have a rank and file chain of command to prevent injuries and save lives. So which leadership style is better? That answer might take more room to write than this newsletter has pages, but I would like to offer one bit of advice to would-be leaders: Make it Fun!

On the college campus, students have a variety of extra curricular activities from which to choose and a limited time in which to do them. While some may have a personal affinity to helping others, they still have to be recruited and retained properly. In a recent column in *AM New York*, author and coach Karen

Salmansohn wrote that "employees are more inspired when they work in a fun environment rather than in a serious space that operates on fear and stressful competition." She referred to two studies done at Cornell University that support this theory. People who viewed a funny movie were afterward tested and shown more capable of creative flexibility and problem solving than those who viewed a dark, serious movie. In a second study doctors who were given a small, fun, gift before work were able to make more accurate diagnoses. The article refers to a book entitled *Good to Great* by Jim Collins that states that the leaders of the bigger, better companies were shown to be likeable individuals. Collins believes that this inspired employees to not only work better and make their bosses happy but also to open up and reveal personal difficulties they were having before they became a real problem at work.

In EMS we have the same problems, and on a college campus they are even more amplified. My volunteer squad in New Jersey is going through a tough time right now. They tell me morale is at an all-time low, the administration is on the prowl for people involved in an unauthorized online group, and open shifts are at an all-time high. People have requested a leave of absence just so

they don't end their day in a bad mood by getting attacked at their volunteer job. This past weekend I sat with other volunteers as we remembered "the good old times." We were trying to assess why people didn't "hang out" at the building any more or show up for more pager calls. The answer was simple. It was no longer fun. In the words of Stephen Covey, the corps was making too many withdrawals from the emotional bank accounts and not enough deposits.

I fondly remember my time at Ramapo College. In our campus squad we had movie nights, "must see TV" nights, and we went clubbing together. These things were done on purpose to create a fun working environment. This is not to say that we never had to pull rank, because we certainly did when it was required. We could do that because of the other investments we had made to keep the entire group as happy as we could. I would like to suggest to every group that you institute something new and fun this semester that bonds your members. See what impact it has over time and let me know. For advice or more ideas email [startup@ncemsf.org](mailto:startup@ncemsf.org).



## From the Membership Department

Karolina A. Schabses, NCEMSF Membership Coordinator

As this academic year comes to a close, we extend our thanks to all those who have supported NCEMSF throughout the year. While our members provide the motivation and incentive to strive for more in collegiate EMS, our members also provide the financial support needed for the performance of NCEMSF's core functions. Your membership dues support our annual conference, publish our quarterly newsletters and assist in the organization of National Collegiate EMS week. Dues also allow us to maintain our Web site and advocate for services throughout the country. NCEMSF memberships follow the academic calendar and

expire every May. Renew your membership this June to enjoy a full year of membership benefits, including discounts from Common Cents EMS Supply, EMSBooks, EMS Planner, and Skyscape. Life memberships are a great way to simultaneously show your life-long commitment to collegiate EMS and avoid the bother of annual renewals. Visit the membership section of our Web site for further details: <http://www.ncemsf.org/membership/>.

We would like to extend congratulations to all those receiving degrees this May. It will not be long before you start receiving

solicitations from your alma mater for alumni support and, likewise, remember that alumni support is also essential to collegiate EMS. We look forward to your continued involvement in collegiate EMS through our alumni programs.

Those of you not graduating but simply moving after classes end, please take the time to revisit your NCEMSF profile at: [http://www.ncemsf.org/membership/update\\_profile.ems](http://www.ncemsf.org/membership/update_profile.ems) and let us know how to best contact you next year.



**“...Many people go to school for eight years, but they are generally called doctors...”**

### **About This Publication**

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## **Academics, Community Service, and Leadership**

Joshua A. Marks, NCEMSF Secretary

We often tout that there are few activities other than collegiate EMS that more completely fulfill a university's mission of providing its student body with the tools to succeed in the world and educate future leaders. Collegiate EMS teaches, among many other life skills, self confidence, interpersonal skills, teamwork, leadership, organization skills, responsibility, decision making, and critical problem solving. But at what price does collegiate EMS teach these lessons?

When applying to postgraduate programs, as with applying to college, admissions officers are looking for the so called "well rounded applicant." A dean I know likes to think of applicants as three legged stools. In order for the stool to balance on its own each of the three legs must be present. In terms of applicants, he sees the three legs as 1) Academics, 2) Community service, and 3) Leadership. All three are present in the ideal applicant and should be balanced for the stool to remain level and the applicant appear most desirable.

Campus-based EMS certainly meets the community service requirement and offers plenty of leadership opportunities; however, all too often the balance is askew and it is the academics that tend to suffer. EMS is fun. We enjoy the adrenaline rush of responding to calls and struggling through problems as they arise. It does not compare to sitting in the library studying. Additionally, providing collegiate EMS is a team activity. The success of the overall organization depends on each individual's contribution. Grades are personal. If one does not study as much as he or she should, only he or she is affected, but the team remains strong, unless of course grades suffer drastically and repeatedly and failing out becomes a possibility - then both the individual and the greater team are worse off. Unfortunately the latter has been known to happen. Collegiate EMS has taken over the lives of many campus responders and no matter how significant a person's contributions to his or her EMS corps and community and how innate or great a leader he or she might be, no dean will

overlook completely one's academic performance or attempt to justify it on his or her own.

An applicant may learn all the life skills necessary to excel in any program or profession, but if the academic numbers are not comparable to one's other activities, the applicant may eliminate opportunities that otherwise would have been available. The key is in achieving personal balance and demonstrating self discipline to focus on what is ultimately really important. In an ideal world we might all have a 4.0 GPA and a list of activities with demonstrated significant quality leadership in each, but there are only so many hours in the day and so much that one person can realistically accomplish. Generally, something, somewhere must give. Life, unfortunately, requires making sacrifices and choosing between various desires and options. The trick I suppose is in trying to be in control of what it is that must give, not letting something truly important to you slip away or be taken away, and then being content with your decisions and actions.

Remember that while EMS may have been inherently non-academic, collegiate EMS has always been rooted in academia. An academic approach to the medical care we administer and the administrative and training problems we face is what distinguishes campus-based EMS from most local town and municipal services. Few of us entered four-year liberal arts colleges to graduate solely as technicians. Most of us will not continue onto careers as field EMS providers, and thus academic performance remains critical. Collegiate EMS represents an avenue for the acquisition of the life skills that will serve us well in achieving our ultimate ambitions, whatever they may be.

As the joke made popular in the 1995 comedy *Tommy Boy* goes, many people go to school for eight years, but they are generally called doctors. Be careful not to sacrifice one of your stool's three legs, even if to strengthen the other two.



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**Good luck with  
spring finals!**

**Congratulations to  
graduating seniors  
and newly elected  
campus EMS  
leadership!**

**Have a safe and  
relaxing summer!**

**National Collegiate EMS Foundation**  
**PO Box 93**  
**West Sand Lake, NY 12196-0093**

**Are you moving or graduating? Please visit the Membership section of the NCEMSF Web site to update your contact information.**

## 2006 Conference Notes

### CME Credits:

The CME Utility is available on the Conference 2006 Web site ([www.ncemsf.org/about/conf2006/](http://www.ncemsf.org/about/conf2006/)). Most of the lectures have also been posted along with all the conference publications. To print your personalized list of conference workshops attended to be submitted to your state's EMS regulatory agency follow the below directions:

1. Click on the "Continuing Medical Education" link.
2. Enter your email address and NCEMSF password and select the conference year.
3. Press "Missing" to select the sessions you attended. (Note: due to technical difficulties no session data was recorded for any attendee for the 2006 conference. This is on the honor system. We expect that you will only request credit for sessions that you actually attended).
4. After you have selected all the sessions that you attended, click "Continue" and the NCEMSF server will generate and display a personalized PDF file with the sessions you attended including lecture topic, speaker, duration, and instructions for obtaining abstracts and presenter biographies.
5. Print out the PDF document, sign, and submit it along with any other necessary identifiers to your state's EMS regulatory agency.

If you have not already done so, please also complete an evaluation form. You may either complete the evaluation electronically online or download a paper copy and mail it.

### Calling All Photographers:

NCEMSF still wants your pictures. Send digital pictures to [conf2006pics@ncemsf.org](mailto:conf2006pics@ncemsf.org) or burn them to a CD and mail to NCEMSF. No matter how you submit your pictures include a caption for each and your name so we can properly attribute and archive the photos.

### Conference 2007:

Mark your calendar. The 14th Annual National Conference will be held February 23-25, 2007. The location will be announced by mid May.