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## Dover resident to run state's first EMS training academy

Thu, 08/25/2022 - 3:26pm Mike Eldred



By Mike Eldred

NEWFANE- Rescue Inc. has tapped Dover resident Marc Schaubert to serve as executive director of the Vermont EMS Academy, the state's first emergency medical response training facility.

Schaubert, who also serves his community as a member of the school board and executive director of the Coalition for Vermont Student Equity, has a background in emergency medical services, and previously served as a New York City paramedic. Schaubert is also the founder and president of The Emergency Medical Services Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports volunteer ambulance services.

It was through his work with the EMS Fund that Schauber met Rescue Inc. Chief of Operations Drew Hazelton several years ago, and first discussed the idea of a regional training facility for emergency medical responders. “He threw this idea out to me a while back, and I told him from the outset it was something I was interested in and I wanted to run it,” Schauber says. “He thought I was joking. But when they bought the building and he was showing me around - and I told him again that I want to run it.”

Rescue Inc’s experience administering vaccines, testing, and providing monoclonal antibody infusions during the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the need and, ultimately, brought in the funding for VEMSA.

Rescue Inc.’s pandemic work took them to all corners of the state, and brought in what Schauber says was “a fair amount” of federal funding. Hazelton and Rescue Inc. sought to spend the money in a way that would benefit the community and help alleviate the EMS workforce shortage. “Health care and emergency services has a pretty severe shortage of available employees,” Schauber says. “It’s not a good situation when it comes to emergency response. Rescue Inc. saw the need over the course of the pandemic.”

Vermont has 13 EMS districts, and each one is responsible for providing education for their volunteer services. Some larger EMS services organize their own periodic training sessions, and invite other area volunteer services to send trainees. Other services are able to take advantage of EMS classes through private entities or through institutions such as the University of Vermont. Until the establishment of VEMSA, however, there has been no place where EMS recruits could find regularly scheduled training classes year-round for all of their training.

“This is going to increase the population of pre-hospital care providers in the region and in the state,” Schauber says. “This is going to help solve the need that exists today to train all of our students to high levels so they’re not just prepared for work, they’re excelling in it, and will have opportunities to move up in the world of pre-hospital care.”

With instructors from around the region, as well as from within Rescue Inc.’s ranks, VEMSA will provide training and continuing education at every level of emergency medical response, Schauber says, even providing sessions for physicians and nurses. The academy has already scheduled courses for the entry-level Vermont Emergency First Responder license, as well as EMT, Advanced EMT, and a critical care course for licensed paramedics. Other classes in the works include water rescue, swift boat rescue, and animal rescue.

Schauber says VEMSA is also considering adding a full paramedic course. “We want to not just train the entry level, but provide opportunities for people to move up, on a volunteer basis, in the profession.”

VEMSA will also offer CPR and first aid training for community groups, Schauber says, including educators in southern Vermont. “I’ll be sending out a letter to all the superintendents for a course aimed at local educators,” he said. “A beginning-of-the-academic-year option for educators, an introduction to who we are, and a way to give back to our community and get people into our schools who are trained and can handle those emergencies when they come up.”

Schauber says more Vermont emergency care personnel leave their services each year than there are new students trained. Some are lost to burnout, but some are lost to hospital jobs where they can be paid more for their skills. In southern Vermont, training can be difficult to schedule for volunteers who are also employed full time elsewhere. Schauber says Bennington Rescue has provided some training for volunteers in the region, as has Rescue Inc.

But VEMSA will be the first facility with regularly scheduled classes dedicated to training EMS workers. “We’re looking to stabilize the training so there is the ability for first response and ambulance services to be able to count on new trainees coming into the system on a regular basis.”

The tuition cost for EMS training can also be a barrier in Vermont - many services struggle financially and have little money in their budgets for training of new personnel. The state provides each service with about \$2,000 a year for training, Schauber says, or enough to train just one new member. Schauber says VEMSA will have someone focused on helping students find financial aid.

Schauber says VEMSA’s goal of providing a location and academic environment equal to what can be found in cities and university towns fits with his goals as president of the EMS Fund, and with his other passions. “One of our big goals was to bring quality of care available in big cities and towns to small, rural towns,” he said. “VEMSA is doing that for the education realm. For me, education and EMS are my two big passions in life.”

VEMSA’s facility is located at 1096 Route 30 in Newfane, just north of the village. For more information visit [www.vemsa.org](http://www.vemsa.org), or contact them at (802) 246-2352 or [hello@vemsa.org](mailto:hello@vemsa.org).