

APPLICATION FOR 2003-2004 RALPH W. KETNER EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS

County: Iredell County Employee: Chris Gulledge Email: cgulledge@iredellems.com

County Department: Emergency Medical Services Employee Title: EMT-Paramedic

County Phone: (704) 878-3025 County Mailing Address: PO Box 788 – 400 S Meeting St. Statesville, NC 28687

Is this project being submitted on behalf of two or more employees? N X Yes

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If yes, please provide below a listing of all project employees. Employee & title as listed above should be for lead team member.

Fair Labors Standards Act Designation: In order for your project to be eligible, you MUST indicate one of the following. If you do not know, please contact your personnel director.

EXEMPT: NON-EXEMPT: X BOTH (if applicable to team):

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1. **Productivity Improvement** EMS System Clinical/Organizational Improvement - Computer System Development
Title:
 2. **Implementation Date (must be between January 1, 2003 and January 1, 2004):** September 2003
 3. **Please describe the productivity improvement. (Please limit response to these 2 pages.)** - The past two years has marked the time of most

aggressive growth and change in the NC EMS landscape since EMS was formed here in 1973. Our agency has worked hard to evolve with the changes to not just be compliant but to put us in a leadership stance as an agency. Mr. Gulledge is not in a leadership position in our agency but still created and implemented this project on his own. Mr. Gulledge is blessed with incredible computer skills as well as being a great paramedic. As new protocols were developed he formatted them into html for easy viewing. The protocols are dynamic in nature with live hyperlinks throughout. For example, if you were reading the chest pain protocol but was unsure of some drug information you can click on any of the medication names and you will immediately pull up a drug reference sheet for your review. The protocols are more user friendly than any set that I have seen in my 15 years in the profession. After this development Mr. Gulledge built a webpage for the EMS system. The protocols are included on the website so all of the hospitals, rescue squads, and other interested parties can use them on demand from any computer that has internet access. This project alone helps to tie all units of the EMS system together under one easily manageable system. Beyond the protocol issues the new website brings e-mail addresses to all county EMS personnel where no such system was in place before. The community now has easy access to a variety of information about our EMS system, billing procedures, outreach activities, explorer post, and training program. Mr. Gulledge also developed a secure software program that allows field training officers to enter data daily to track the clinical progression of student riders and new employees. The software also allows the system's training officer to not only track student and

employee progress but also look for trends among evaluators for the overall efficiency of our training program. The details of these innovative activities could fill stacks of pages but limited to these two pages this is the best description that I can give you. Mr. Gulledge has given of himself far beyond our expectations and developed these projects on his own time for our benefit. He is streamlining us for quality.

4. Please describe why this project was initiated or what problem it addressed: - With the transfer of authority to county governments to better self regulate EMS within their geographical boundaries as a system versus individual agencies came many communication dilemmas. communication would have to be bolstered for us to reach the level of achievement that we desire. Mechanisms had to be implemented to bring all EMS providers under one umbrella in a cost effective yet all encompassing manner. The website with interactive protocols allowed all agencies in the county (and any interested outsiders) to access everything needed immediately from anywhere in the world as long as internet access was available. With the technological savvy of the public these days an internet site packed full of data, links to communicate with the agency leaders, and other such information is essential for success at the level that we demand of ourselves. The site opened up many doors for the community as a whole. As far as the training software is concerned, traditionally records would be kept on paper based system with no trending mechanism in place to track student progress or evaluator effectiveness. Both now can be done easily. Mr. Gulledge's innovations have given our EMS system a huge boost in our effort for cost effective yet functional systems to drive quality and assure that our citizens get the best service possible without a tax increase to fund it!

5. Please quantify the improvement's results in terms of cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of services provided. (Please indicate what resources were used to achieve your results, and what was done with the time savings, if any accrued).

The higher levels of service are noted in questions above. The true service though will come long term through increases in the quality of our paramedics and the trainers that are developing them for future service. As far as cost avoidance is concerned Mr. Gulledge has provided a mass of free expertise and time for these efforts while off the clock and out of the goodness of his heart. Utilizing standard technician rates I will break down the cost savings. \$37,250 work of labor has been saved on the protocol project alone. The development of the website would have cost the county \$72,000 with an extra \$1,200 per year in webmaster activity. The training software required 320 hours of development and testing at an estimated cost of \$16,000. Overall these projects cost the county nothing whereas the cost would have been at least \$126,450 over the past year. Mr. Gulledge continues to maintain our website, modify our protocols as needed, and develop more badly needed projects with his special skills at no cost to the county. He does it because he loves this county and our EMS family. Our staff voted him as our employee of the year last year. Beyond my frequent thanks, the recognition of his peers, and his personal satisfaction he has yet to be rewarded.

6. Please provide any other descriptive information you would like to be considered by the review committee.

I will not mention them in detail because they are not yet implemented but other projects are in the works at the control of Mr. Gulledge. There is no telling what great things we will accomplish in the coming years due to his expertise and internal drive for success. As of May 22 our website has already had 20,849 visitors. Some visitors have been local (we have received e-mails from community members about issues). Many comments have been received by other county agencies with their compliments for a great site. We have even had visitors from as far away as Denmark view our information! In total we have had 170,880 hits to date and climbing every day. Mr. Gulledge is a career paramedic who enjoys running his computer business on the side. He is a family man with children and a grandchild but still finds time for these "little" projects.

Of all the employees that have ever worked for me, no one has ever deserved this award like Mr. Gullledge. Thank you for your consideration.

County **Joel Mashburn**
Manager: _____

Supervisor's
Name: _____

Lee Darnell, EMS Director

Return by **JUNE 1, 2004** via email **Rebecca.Troutman@ncacc.org**