

**2015  
AWARD  
WINNER**

**EXCELLENCE IN ACTION**

**Health Science**

**CAREER CLUSTER**



## **BACKGROUND**

The **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** program of study at **Walters State Community College (WSCC)** in Morristown, Tennessee is a true partnership between the postsecondary institution and surrounding high schools. Students begin the program of study as early as ninth grade and then have an opportunity to transfer seamlessly into WSCC and immediately be on track to become certified emergency medical technicians or paramedics.

### **About Emergency Medical Services at Walters State Community College**

Number of <i>Secondary</i> Students Served	191
Male: Female Ratio	45% : 55%
Low-income Students	80%

## **CERTIFICATION AND DUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES**

Walters State Community College has signed **articulation agreements with 23 high schools** throughout their region, allowing high school students to earn **four college credits** within the EMS Pathway, after completing a three-course sequence, participating in a job shadow and taking the WSCC final exam. High school students also have access to general education and career technical courses for college credit through dual credit/enrollment. As a result of these early credit options, the college is seeing more students entering with credit and with greater retention. This in turn leads to higher degree or certificate attainment.

Students enrolled in the postsecondary component of the program of study have the opportunity earn up to **three certifications** including the Basic Emergency Medical Technician, Advanced Emergency Medical Technician and the Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic. In addition, students can earn an AAS degree in Emergency Medical Services.

## **HANDS-ON REAL WORLD TRAINING**

Students in the EMS program of study receive both classroom and practical instruction at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The Emergency Preparedness class is taught in conjunction with the Jefferson City and Dandridge Fire Departments, and the Emergency Medical Services course requires at least one eight-hour job shadowing experience on an ambulance. As students are starting to have more cross-disciplinary training experiences with fire science and criminal justice/law enforcement students, graduates are becoming highly-trained and ready to respond to disasters beyond the basic emergency responses.

*"Meaningful partnerships changed the numbers of student enrolled dramatically. Now we have the supply to the demand of the workforce. If we don't have professionals to supply the industry it hurts the community."*

**Catherine Woods, Executive Director,  
Division of Distance Education &  
Perkins IV Coordinator, Walters State  
Community College**

## PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to the partnerships with local high schools and other community colleges, such as Northeast State Community College and Roane State Community College that also offer EMS programs of study, WSCC has a strong community presence. They partner with local fire departments to conduct trainings for firefighters in updated EMT procedures and other areas as needed.



Partnerships with local hospitals are also the key to student success. Hospitals expose students to real-world situations like illnesses, trauma and a treating a variety of patients. Without those partnerships it would be difficult for students to truly understand what they will encounter in the field.

Public agencies are another source of partnerships for WSCC. The State of Tennessee EMS Office and the National Registry of EMTs set the direction for the programs of study and ensure program quality is consistent with certification standards for Tennessee. Consistency across certification standards leads to a high pass rate for student licensure and preparation of students for the workplace.

## STUDENT SUCCESS BY THE NUMBERS

So what does this all mean? As a true program of study spanning secondary and postsecondary education, it comes as no surprise that the EMS program leads to very positive student outcomes. Of the 28 secondary students participating in the program of study, every one graduated and nearly all earned articulated credit and/or a postsecondary credential. For those completing the postsecondary component, they enjoyed a very impressive post-program placement rate from WSCC of 96 percent.

