



## **EMT Training in the Alleghany Highlands**

A nationwide shortage of emergency service volunteers is threatening the ability of many rural rescue squads to adequately handle emergency calls, and communities like the Alleghany Highlands are taking action.

Through an initiative made possible by a three-year, \$70,000 grant awarded by The Alleghany Foundation, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College (DSLCC) has added Emergency Medical Services training to its offerings.

“Our board has been interested in making EMS training available locally for quite some time,” says Beth Webb, executive director of The Alleghany Foundation. “The foundation extensively researched emergency service needs in this area and, in May of 2005, it approached Dabney S. Lancaster Community College to discuss the possibility of launching a training program.” The timing couldn’t have been better.

“DSLCC shared The Alleghany Foundation’s concern that an adequate number of emergency service personnel be available to protect our community now and into the future,” says Dr. Richard Teaff, President. “And we were also in the process of investigating local training options. In an effort to maximize our respective resources, the College set a goal of making EMS training feasible for as many interested individuals in the area as possible, and The Alleghany Foundation stepped up to provide financial support.”

DSLCC has partnered with the Western Virginia Emergency Medical Services Council (WVEMSC) to offer a training program using state-of-the-art materials and equipment. Instructors and classroom space are provided by Dabney S. Lancaster Community College and WVEMSC. Equipment, materials, and tuition for students residing in Alleghany County and the City of Covington are paid for with funds provided by The Alleghany Foundation.

“The commitment a person has to make to complete any level of EMT training is substantial,” says Gary Keener, Vice President for Continuing Education and Workforce Services at DSLCC. “We feel strongly that if a person is willing to donate his or her time and talents to EMS training, then we want to make it as feasible as possible. The funding provided by The Alleghany Foundation has allowed us to remove as many obstacles as we can.”

Emergency Medical Technicians must be certified by the state, and training programs are strict and rigorous.

“EMTs are certified at progressive levels: EMT-Basic, EMT-Enhanced, EMT-Intermediate, and EMT- Paramedic,” explains Keener. “The Emergency Services Training at DSLCC prepares students for EMT-Basic and EMT-Enhanced certification.” Coursework emphasizes emergency skills such as managing trauma and cardiac or respiratory emergencies. Time in the classroom is combined with time in an ambulance or emergency room.

Forty-four individuals have been supported by The Alleghany Foundation grant since training began at DSLCC in the fall of 2006. Thirty-one individuals have completed the educational requirements for EMT-Basic certification and have completed, or are eligible to take, the state certification exam. Eleven students are enrolled in the EMT-Enhanced course currently underway. Keener expects the numbers will continue to grow.

“There are few areas more important to a community than emergency medical services,” says Keener. “The College is extremely grateful to The Alleghany Foundation for ensuring that appropriate, approved training remains available to these committed volunteers.”

“In rural areas like ours, volunteers are the backbone of our community,” says Beth Webb. “Prior to the development of this program, individuals interested in becoming an EMT had limited local opportunities and were forced to travel to Roanoke and other localities for training.”

“We are very excited about the interest that has already been shown in the EMS training program, and the positive impact it will have in the community,” adds Webb. “The Alleghany Foundation is pleased to invest in the long term health and safety of our citizens.”

The Alleghany Foundation has granted over \$24 million to the following organizations for the purpose of improving the quality of life in the Alleghany Highlands:

- Alleghany County
- Alleghany County Parks and Recreation
- Alleghany County Public Schools
- Alleghany County Sheriff's Office
- Alleghany County United Fire and Rescue Association
- Alleghany Health District
- Alleghany Highlands Arts & Crafts Center
- Alleghany Highlands Arts Council
- Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board
- Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Authority
- Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation
- Alleghany Highlands Free Clinic
- Alleghany Highlands Genealogical Society
- Alleghany Highlands YMCA
- Alleghany Historical Society
- Alleghany Humane Society
- Alleghany Mountain Radio
- American Diabetes Association
- American Red Cross
- Appalfolks of America
- Art Museum of Western Virginia
- Bath County
- Bath County Health Department
- Bath County Historical Society
- Blue Ridge Public Television
- Boiling Springs Elementary School
- Boiling Springs Fire Department
- C.O.P.E.
- Callaghan Elementary School PTO
- Charles P. Jones Memorial Library
- C & O Historical Society
- City of Covington
- Clifton Forge Little League

Clifton Forge Main Street  
Clifton Forge Nursery School  
Clifton Forge Public Library  
Clifton Forge Volunteer Fire Department  
Covington City Schools  
Covington Fire Department  
Covington Rescue Squad  
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College  
Diabetes Education Support Group  
Falling Spring Elementary School PTO  
Falling Spring Fire Department  
Falling Spring Rescue Squad  
Greater Alleghany Highlands School Health Consortium  
Jackson River Enterprises  
Jackson river Technical Center  
League of Older Americans  
Mill Mountain Theatre  
Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District  
Mountain View Elementary School PTO  
Rockbridge Area Community Services Board  
Safehome Systems  
Science Museum of Western Virginia  
Scott Hill Foundation, Inc.  
Sharon Elementary School PTO  
Sharon Volunteer Fire Department  
Shenandoah Autism Center  
Southwest Virginia AHEC  
Southwest Virginia Second Harvest Foodbank  
Special Olympics  
Total Action Against Poverty  
Town of Clifton Forge  
Town of Iron Gate  
Unified Human Services Transportation System (RADAR)  
West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine  
Western Virginia Emergency Medical Service Council