

Sumner EMS wins prestigious award for excellence

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Sumner County Emergency Medical Services, the county's ambulance agency, was recently awarded the 2011 Bob Thomas ALS Service of the Year Award by the Tennessee Ambulance Service Association.

"We are thrilled to have received this award," said Keith Douglas, director for Sumner County EMS said. "Over the past several years we have set goals to make Sumner County EMS the best service in the state, and we have accomplished those goals. This award, along with the accomplishments over the past several years, is a true testament to the dedication and hard work of all of our team members."

Douglas said the local EMS team includes paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, billing clerks, a medical director, shift captains and lieutenants, information technology personnel, training coordinators, and other support staff.

"Each member of our team has played an integral role in attaining our goals," Douglas said. "I feel blessed to work with such a dedicated group of professionals."

Douglas also said his agency's service excellence could not have been attained without the proper funding and support from county leaders.

"Our county executive and county commissioners have understood the critical needs of providing high quality pre-hospital care to the citizens and visitors of Sumner County," Douglas said. "This is a reflection of their continued commitment to emergency services."

County leaders say that since Douglas took over the direction of Sumner EMS in 2008, the department and its employees have improved.

"I am very proud of our EMS service for everything they do," said Anthony Holt, county executive. "Our director, Keith Douglas, has shown real leadership with his staff and in providing the kind of professional service we have come to expect in Sumner County that has saved so many lives. I look at public safety as the No. 1 priority in the county. If you can't keep residents safe, everything else is to no avail."

Holt said it's not uncommon for residents to acknowledge the quality of care they receive when dealing with the local ambulance service.

"I have received numerous letters from citizens thanking his department for the great job they have done," Holt said.

While being recognized as one of the top first response agencies in the state is humbling, Douglas said, he said it's the people in Sumner County that benefit from the services that make the biggest difference in their day to day jobs.

"We are truly honored to have received this award, but at the end of the day, the true award is knowing that the decisions and attained goals have made a difference in someone's life – and in a lot of cases, have actually saved a life," Douglas said.