



ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY MID-SOUTH

Lifeline EMS Donates Training Tools to ASU Mid-South

Paying it forward. That was the motivation of Andy Tacito, owner of LifeLine EMS in Crittenden County when he decided to donate a fully-functioning, 2011 ambulance and professional stretcher to Arkansas State University Mid-South to use in training students in its Emergency Medical Technician program.

“I wanted the EMT students to complete the program with more real job experience and hands-on knowledge of the workings of an ambulance and stretcher,” said Tacito who has owned LifeLine EMS for twenty-three years. “I see this is a benefit for all the citizens of Crittenden County, because these students, regardless of where they go to work upon graduation, will be more comfortable with the actual tools used by an emergency technician. Classroom training and studying through books is great, but the ASU Mid-South graduates won’t be stunned when they go to work on an ambulance. They’ll already know what caring for a patient while on the road feels like. They will know how the stretcher actually goes in and out of the ambulance.”



Born in Parkin, and a resident of West Memphis for more than 30 years, Tacito credits the College when he talks about being a self-made man. An alumni of then Mid-South Community College, Tacito attended in 1993 and earned his certification and training as an Emergency Medical Technician. “My training at MSCC really changed my life and gave me a successful future,” he offers, “and I just wanted to give something back for all that MSCC had done for me.”

At the time that Tacito was being trained at Mid-South, the college was so small, the Diesel program and the EMT program shared a classroom. “They would teach diesel mechanics during the day and EMT and night,” says Tacito. “I can’t forget the smell of diesel in that classroom.”

“One day I was at the college and saw the statue donated by Linda and Joe Jenkins called Self Made Man. I thought to myself, that’s what I will become – a self-made man.” After completing the EMT program at Mid-South, Tacito worked for four years as an EMT learning the business. Once he felt he had the right experience, he bought his own ambulance and opened LifeLine EMS, originally in Memphis, but for the last decade in West Memphis.

Glenn Faught, lead faculty for the EMT program at ASU Mid-South is proud of this donation by Tacito. A Paramedic and EMS Program Director with more than 40 years of Emergency Medical Service experience, Faught noted that some programs use ambulance simulators as a teaching aid. “But now, thanks to LifeLine EMS, we have the real thing and there is no comparison to this tool that can be used.” Faught says the donated ambulance and stretcher will give ASU Mid-South students a distinct advantage. “They will be more prepared for the job. Our students may not go to work on the same ambulance and with the same stretcher, but it will have the same features. They will go to work with a level of comfort and expertise that only direct experience can offer.”

The \$38,000 ambulance and stretcher donation was formally accepted by Chancellor Debra West, Faught and current ASU Mid-South EMT students during a ceremony held April 4th. “Andy Tacito’s story is a great example of Community College success”, offered Dr. West. Student success in community college goes beyond earning a degree or certificate or achieving a certification goal. It also means improved skills, better employment prospects, and economic growth for families, communities and our nation as a whole. Completing a community college degree or certificate is not an end in itself but the next step to something greater. We are so grateful that Mr. Tacito’s story begins and now continues here at Mid-South.”

For more information on EMT training at Arkansas State University Mid-South, visit asumidsouth.edu. LifeLine EMS is located at 510 East Jackson in West Memphis.