DISPATCH

Quarterly Newsletter

SUMMER 2021

California EMS Awards

Brave. Dedicated. Willing. Reliable.

These words describe the approximated 86,000 licensed or certified EMS providers in California. They demonstrate these qualities every day by coming to the aid of others when they are most in need and working to ensure that the EMS system operates well. However, each year, due to circumstance or extraordinary effort, certain individuals shine the brightest.

On July 1, 2021, EMSA held a virtual awards ceremony to present thirty-eight (38) exceptional individuals with California EMS Awards for their contributions to the state's EMS system during the year 2020. Typically, the department holds a formal reception at the end of each year in San Francisco, at the Marines Memorial Club. EMSA elected to hold a virtual, online California EMS Awards ceremony – a first for this event – due to the impacts from COVID-19, and it was a resounding success.

Check out a recording of the 2020 California EMS Awards to hear some of the remarkable stories from this year's awardees: https://youtu.be/Ybsgl8q12Fo.

MRCs and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Volunteers Answer the Call

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of unpaid volunteers, organized locally to improve the health and safety of their communities. MRC units engage volunteers to strengthen public health, improve emergency response capabilities, and build community resiliency. MRC units prepare for and respond to natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, tornados, blizzards, and floods, as well as other emergencies affecting public health, such as disease outbreaks. They may be tasked by county officials to respond as a team or as individuals in support of a public health, emergency, or disaster response. In California, there are 35 MRC Unit and 33 are in the Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) System.

In 2020 and 2021, California's MRC Units have been integral to state disaster response efforts. More than 4,500individual MRC volunteers deployed for COVID-19 pandemic response and medical support of wildfires across the state. Of the 26 MRC Units that have activated for COVID-19, volunteers have remarkably provided approximately 153,000 hours of support.

EMSA recently had the opportunity to ask some of the MRC units and volunteers to reflect on their experiences serving and we are happy to share their stories with you. Please take a moment to view the hyperlinks below and check out all of the amazing work volunteers have done over the past 18 months.

[Alameda County MRC]

[CHMRC]

[Contra Costa County MRC]

[Long Beach MRC]

[Los Angeles MRC]

[Marin County MRC]

[Sacramento MRC]

[San Diego MRC]

[San Luis Obispo MRC]

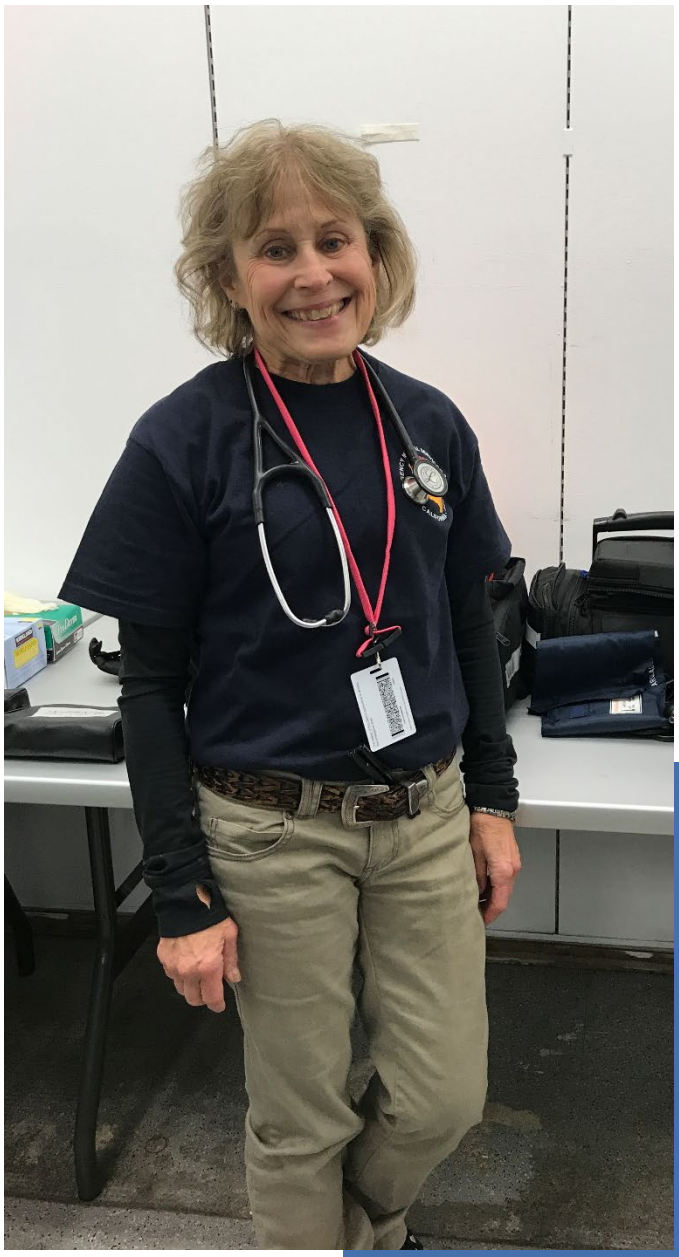
[Santa Cruz MRC]

[Solano HEART (MRC)]

[Stanislaus MRC]

Interview with Carol Lindsay RN, FNP, MSN

Carol Lindsay was identified by California Medical Assistance Teams (CAL-MAT) as a noteworthy contributor in EMSA's COVID-19 pandemic response. To highlight her remarkable contributions EMSA student assistant Veronika Skrotskaya recently interviewed Carol Lindsay about her CAL-MAT journey.



Q: What is your regular profession?

A: My regular profession is as a Family Nurse Practitioner. I began my nursing career in 1975 when I worked as a certified nurse's assistant in a long-term care facility on the night shift. That was when I realized I loved medicine, but I had to be more than a nurse's aide and get off the night shift. I got my RN license in 1980 after working on nights as a CNA and going to nursing school during the day. I worked in various emergency departments over the next 12 years, including as a flight nurse on an ALS helicopter and on an ALS ambulance. I loved it but realized I was going to "age" out one of these days. Between lifting heavy patients and working long busy hours, I needed something a little less intense!

Q: How did you hear about CAL-MAT?

A: I retired in 2018 at the age of 66, but I missed the mental stimulation, so I volunteered as a nurse with Red Cross and worked in a shelter during the Camp Fire, which is when I met Susan Urbs from CAL-MAT who suggested I apply as an NP. I finished the Camp Fire response working in a CAL-MAT urgent care tent outside the shelter at Silver Dollar Fairgrounds in Chico. I loved it!

Q: What were some of the things you did while deployed during the pandemic?

A: I was deployed to Southern California to an Alternative Care Site in Riverside County in March 2020. In April, I was called by DMS Chief Craig Johnson asking if I would deploy as a Liaison to the Sleep Train Arena Alternative Care Facility between the administrative staff hired by the State of California and state agencies. I represented EMSA and CDPH and worked to connect the administrative team with hospitals and agencies and to consult with them on field hospital protocols, including admissions criteria.

Q: What was most memorable about your experience?

A: My most memorable experience was at the Sleep Train Arena. We treated people who tested positive for COVID who otherwise would have had to stay in the hospital, at times in the Emergency department for days and depending on finances, sent home with a large bill. Some would have been sent home to isolate with family, some of which were vulnerable. The State did a huge service to its residents by offering free health care and treatments. The Monoclonal antibodies and Remdesivir were free thanks to the California Department of Public Health.

Q: What would you say to others who are interested in signing up?

A: I would say to anyone interested in signing up that it will be the most memorable experience of your life. It is challenging, exhausting, exciting, and the memories will be with you for a lifetime. You will help people in times of disaster, and austerity which can be chaotic, frustrating and heart rendering. The hours are long, you will be challenged to swallow your pride, work with others from all walks of life and you will make friends for a lifetime. You will be proud of what you will do and understand what it is like to be a true hero.

Join The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride

www.muddyangels.com

Enjoy scenic terrain along historic West Coast routes.

Challenge yourself! The ride is not a race, and all skill levels are welcome.

Support a great cause by riding to honor those who save lives everyday.

The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride, Inc. honors EMS personnel by organizing and implementing long distance cycling events that memorialize and celebrate the lives of those who serve every day, those who have become sick or injured while performing their duties, and those who have died in the line of duty.

2021 Route Schedule Information

Day 1 (Sep 20) - Reno, NV to South Lake Tahoe, CA
Day 2 (Sep 21) - Circumnavigate Lake Tahoe (S. Lake Tahoe start/end)
Day 3 (Sep 22) - South Lake Tahoe, CA to Rancho Cordova, CA
Day 4 (Sep 23) - Rancho Cordova, CA to Vacaville, CA
Day 5 (Sep 24) - Vacaville, CA to Petaluma, CA
Day 6 (Sep 25) - Petaluma, CA to San Francisco, CA

This year, the Day 4 ceremony will be held at the California State Capitol!
For more info, please email ExternalAffairs@emsa.ca.gov or visit **www.muddyangels.com**

EMSA IS HIRING

Learn more and apply today:
emsa.ca.gov/emsa-jobs

Step 1-Create an Account on CalCareers.ca.gov

- Go to *CalCareers.ca.gov* or *jobs.ca.gov* to start creating an account.
- Creating your account will set you up to complete steps 2 & 3.

Step 2-Take Exams

- For almost all State of California jobs, you will be required to take an exam.
- Exams might be an in-person written exercise or interview, but most commonly they are completed online. Review exam bulletins thoroughly.

Step 3-Apply for Open Job Vacancies

- After you've completed an exam, you are considered eligible to apply for that specific classification. Once you are eligible, you can start applying for vacant positions across the state.
- Start searching for vacancies in your eligible classification on *jobs.ca.gov*.

Step 4-Prepare for the Interview

If you are contacted for a hiring interview, prepare by reviewing the duties and responsibilities on the job opportunity notice.

For more information visit https://www.edd.ca.gov/about_edd/How_to_Get_a_State_Job.htm

Paramedic License Fee Increased

On Thursday, July 1, 2021, paramedic license application fees increased by $25.00. The following is a list of the new fees:

Initial In-State Paramedic License Application:	$300.00
Initial Out-of-State Paramedic License Application:	$350.00
Initial Challenge Paramedic License Application:	$350.00
Renewal Paramedic License Application:	$250.00
Reinstatement Paramedic License Application:	$300.00

Reminder: Paper applications (PDF Fillable) must be current at time of submission. All current PDF fillable applications are available on the EMSA website at https://emsa.ca.gov/Paramedic/ or initial and renewing applicants may use the online licensing portal. Questions? Contact paramedic@emsa.ca.gov.

Contact information:

Emergency Medical Services
Authority Paramedic Licensure Unit

10901 Gold Center Drive, Ste. 400
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Phone: (916) 323-9875

Fax: (916) 324-2875

E-mail: paramedic@emsa.ca.gov

Interview with Samantha Hernandez

Samantha Hernandez was identified by California Medical Assistance Teams (CAL-MAT) as a noteworthy contributor in EMSA's COVID-19 pandemic response. To highlight her remarkable contributions, EMSA student assistant Veronika Skrotskaya recently interviewed Samantha Hernandez about her CAL-MAT journey.

Q: What is your regular profession?

A: In the "real world," I am an ER travel nurse. I have been travelling for about four years now. Prior to deploying with CAL-MAT, I was working at Cedars Sinai ER in Marina del Rey, California.

Q: How did you hear about CAL-MAT?

A: I signed up for CAL-MAT because I heard from a friend of a friend that it was an interesting job to have. At the time he was deployed working on skilled nursing facility (SNF) missions.

Q: Where were you deployed?

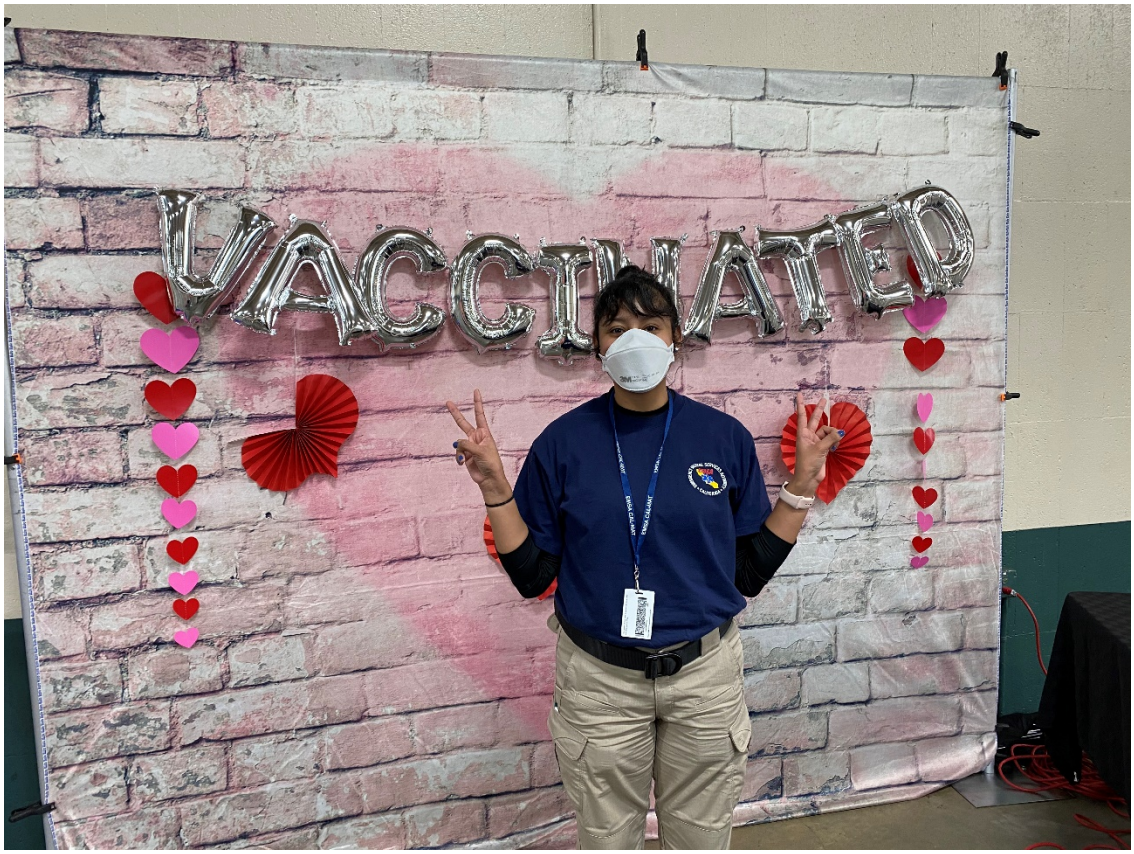
A: My first mission was in Imperial County at a drive-thru vaccination clinic. Since then, I have been to clinics in Amador, Nevada, Yuba, Sutter, Solano, Tuolumne, Glenn, and Lake Counties; and most recently Riverside County, where I am deployed as a Team Lead. My role here began with the task of setting up a model for EMSA's footprint in the Entry Without Inspection (EWI) hubs that would begin to open in Southern California. My team and I set up the site from scratch, drawing from all our previous experiences at different clinics. It was an interesting transition from participating in clinics as a vaccinator, learning the administrative roles throughout the clinics, and then setting up our own.

Q: What was most memorable about your experience?

A: The most memorable experience I've had with CAL-MAT was at a clinic in Solano County. I had a patient in my vaccination chair ready to receive her vaccine but I was still waiting for doses to be provided. I noticed she appeared very anxious and began to make conversation to try and calm her down. She told me that a few months prior, she went to a party where she contracted COVID-19. Her father then contracted it as well and soon passed away. She said her entire family had now been vaccinated and she was the last to receive her vaccine. Sometimes when working vaccine clinics, the process becomes very repetitive, almost mechanical. This moment of vulnerability on the patient's behalf made me stop and remember why we do what we do. No matter how small the task we are asked to do, no matter how repetitive, our actions make a difference in real people's lives. We are all contributing in our own ways to the greater cause, and it's important to not lose sight of that.

Q: What would you say to others who are interested in signing up?

A: To others who would consider deploying with CAL-MAT, I would say come in with an open mind and flexibility. Also, be ready to meet some of the best people you will ever work with, and don't be surprised if you make friends along the way.



The 2021 State of California Trauma Summit will take place virtually on October 6, 2021, from 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM. This educational forum offers clinical topics intended for health care professionals and EMS administrators who work with trauma patients or oversee trauma system components. Continuing Education credits (CEs may be available to registrants who attend the entire event. Admission is free and registration is open through September 27. If you are interested in attending, EMSA encourages you to register soon, as the event may reach capacity as it gets closer to October.

CA COVID-19 RENT RELIEF

Do you need help with rent or utilities?

You may be eligible for the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program.

Financial assistance is available from the State of California for income eligible renters and their landlords who have been impacted by COVID-19 and have past due rent or utilities, or who need help with upcoming rent or utilities.

Both renters and landlords are encouraged to apply.

Assistance is available for unpaid rent dating back to April 1, 2020, as well as for future rent.

Assistance is also available for unpaid utility payments dating back to April 1, 2020, or for future utility payments, which will both be compensated at 100% of cost, limited to a total of 12 months, and paid directly to the utility provider.

Assistance from the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program does not count as earned income and will not affect eligibility for any other state benefit assistance programs.

All applicant information is kept private and will not be shared.

Income eligible applicants may qualify regardless of immigration status and will not be required to show proof of citizenship.

How do I apply?

To check eligibility and apply, visit **HousingIsKey.com** or call **833-430-2122.**

For in-language assistance, to get help with eligibility requirements or filling out an application, schedule an appointment with a local organization near you by calling **833-687-0967.**

The CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program is an official State of California sponsored program.

CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Program: Easier to Apply

Applications for rent and utility assistance through the COVID-19 Rent Relief program have been simplified and financial help is available to income-eligible households.

Income-eligible renters and their landlords who have been impacted by COVID-19 and need help with unpaid or upcoming rent or utilities can verify eligibility and apply immediately by visiting HousingIsKey.com, or by calling 833-430-2122.

WHO CAN APPLY?
Renters: If you are an income-eligible renter, you can apply on your own and receive help for unpaid rent, dating back to April 1, 2020, even if your landlord doesn't participate. You can also receive financial assistance to pay future rent or utilities.

If you are an income-eligible renter whose landlord ***does*** participate in the program, you will need to complete the joint application to be approved for assistance. Once your landlord applies, you will be notified to submit information to complete the application process.

Landlords: If you are a landlord and participate in the COVID-19 Rent Relief program, you can get reimbursed directly for your eligible renters' unpaid rent dating back to April 1, 2020.

WHAT HELP CAN YOU GET?
Help with Rent: Assistance is available for unpaid rent dating back to April 1, 2020, as well as future rent payments.

Help with Utilities: Assistance is also available for past due utility payments dating back to April 1, 2020, or for future utility bills, both of which may be paid directly to the utility provider at 100% of cost but are limited to a total of 12 months.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD YOU KNOW?
We have simplified our application significantly. It now takes less time to complete, requires fewer documents to be uploaded, and offers helpful tips throughout the application.

Assistance from the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program does NOT count as earned income for renters and will NOT affect eligibility for any other state benefit assistance programs, such as CalFresh and CalWORKS.

All applicant information is kept private and will not be shared. Income-eligible applicants may qualify regardless of immigration status and will not be required to show proof of citizenship.

HOW TO APPLY
To check eligibility and apply, visit **HousingIsKey.com** or call **833-430-2122.** Once your application has been processed, you will be notified about the application status and next steps.

If you need assistance in another language or need help checking eligibility, filling out your application or uploading paperwork, schedule an appointment with a local organization near you by calling **833-687-0967**.