

Scholarship awarded to student pursuing paramedic career

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 11/16/2018

Leonardtwn Rotarians Sandy Currie, Ray Dodson, CSM Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Student Equity and Success and Rotarian Teresa Jones, CSM student Stephen Vallandingham, Leonardtown Rotarians Michael Blackwell, Barbara Thompson and CSM Foundation Lead Executive Assistant of Advancement Toni Kruszka celebrate the \$1,000 scholarship presentation by the Rotary.

LEONARDTOWN, Md. - The Leonardtown Rotary Club recently awarded its Paddle for Heroes Scholarship to College of Southern Maryland (CSM) student Stephen Vallandingham. A volunteer with the St. Mary's County Advanced Life Support, Seventh District Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) and Seventh District Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Vallandingham is currently pursuing his EMS Paramedic Certificate at CSM.

Established in 2017 by the Leonardtown Rotary Club, the Paddle for Heroes Scholarship is funded through the club's annual kayak and paddle race to support students who are first responders, or a dependent of a first responder, and who reside in St. Mary's County. Vallandingham, who is employed as a federal firefighter at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, received the \$1,000 scholarship to help with his tuition and books.

"This scholarship is invaluable to me," he said. "With my job, family, kids and volunteering, it can be overwhelming and this scholarship helps my family more than I can explain."

Vallandingham's wife Brittany is also enrolled at CSM as a nursing student. She is on track to graduate from CSM in spring 2019 and Stephen is on track to follow with his paramedic certificate in fall 2019.

"I can't say enough about the instructors at CSM," Vallandingham said. "People thank Brittany and me for being out in the community making a difference every day, but the fact is our CSM instructors are the reason we're both able to do what we do."

"We owe the Leonardtown Rotary Club and the CSM Foundation a great deal for helping us achieve our dreams and helping us give back to our communities," he added.

People's lives often depend on the quick reaction and competent care of Emergency Medical Technicians and paramedics. CSM's EMS Associate of Applied Science degree program prepares graduates to provide this critical emergency pre-hospital medical care to those who have sustained potentially life-threatening illnesses and injuries. Those who enter the field can expect the employment of EMTs and paramedics to grow by 33 percent from 2010 to 2020, much faster than the average for all occupations, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

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Completion of CSM's program qualifies graduates to take the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic (NREMT-P) examinations. Instruction includes classroom, laboratory, and clinical training in a variety of pre-hospital and hospital settings. This program follows the National Education Guidelines developed by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For more information on CSM's Health Sciences Division and the various areas of study offered by the division, including EMS, health information management, nursing, massage therapy, medical assisting, medical lab technology, pharmacy technician and pharmacy assistant, visit online at <https://www.csmd.edu/programs-courses/credit/academic-divisions/hea/>.

For information about the Leonardtown Rotary Club, visit <http://www.leonardtownrotaryclub.org/>.

For information about scholarships at CSM, visit www.csmd.edu/scholarships.

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