



# News Release

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Thomas DiBernardo, Fire Chief

## Sunrise Fire-Rescue Earns Multiple Honors at 19th Annual "First There First Care" EMS Conference

(SUNRISE, FL) - Sunrise Fire-Rescue received two awards at the 19th Annual "First There First Care" Conference: **First Place** in the 2015 Chief Mike Haygood Broward Invitational ALS (Advanced Life Support) Competition, besting the other 15 participating teams; and the Mike Murphy **Innovator of the Year Award**.

The "First There First Care" Conference was hosted by the Fire Chiefs' Association of Broward County Florida and the Broward Regional EMS Council on May 20 and 21 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. Billed as the largest EMS conference in South Florida, the event draws hundreds of healthcare professionals from within and around the tri-county area.

This year marks the third time that Sunrise Fire-Rescue won First Place in the ALS competition since the contest's inception in 1997. Lieutenants Joseph Friedemann, Christopher Russo, Ian German, and Daniel McNeil comprised the team.

During the competition, the teams were presented with a chaotic, high-pressure scenario involving multiple patients, complete with actors and props. The details of the scenario were kept secret from all of the competitors until their team's turn to perform. Upon encountering the mock scene, the team members had to thoroughly survey each component of the situation and apply critical thinking, as well as expert medical skills, in order to capture as many points as possible. Teams were then ranked in order of their total points, with Sunrise earning the highest score.

In addition to being a part of the winning ALS team, Sunrise Fire-Rescue Lieutenant Daniel McNeil was named Innovator of the Year in recognition of his seminal role as Sunrise's Resource Access Program Coordinator. Volunteering to develop a risk reduction and education program aimed at reducing the number of patients that called 911 repeatedly within a month (a number that comprised nearly 40% of the department's total call-volume at that time), Lt. McNeil formed the first community paramedic program of its kind in South Florida. Through his direct outreach to those recently transported and discharged patients willing to accept his intervention, Lt. McNeil was able to reduce their repeat transports by over 50%. Even more importantly, he was able to help them better manage their medical conditions, access available resources, and generally live a more independent lifestyle. In turn, the overall percentage of call-volume attributed to repeat calls was reduced by over 13%.

"We're honored to be recognized by the committee. These medics exemplify our department's passion and commitment in providing the best patient care possible," said **Sunrise Fire Chief Thomas DiBernardo**.