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'Proper Headquarters'

University of Dayton

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The award-winning University of Dayton Emergency Medical Services, an all-student volunteer rescue squad, is dedicating its new headquarters befitting the service it provides to campus.
"There are individuals who wouldn't be alive today if not for the presence of that rescue squad on our campus," said Maj. Randy Groesbeck, director of administration and security for the Department of Public Safety and the student organization's adviser. "Their calls range from minor illnesses to life-threatening events, and they've resuscitated a number of individuals who otherwise probably would not have made it."

Located at 214 Lawnview, where the old squad house had been located since 1994, the new living and working quarters is a large, 2,241 square-feet house with three bedrooms and bathrooms, including a decontamination area. The house also features office and study areas, and a walkway to the ambulance garage.

"The old two-story house, which students have described as cramped with steep steps not conducive for scurrying to a late night call, was small and old. It was far too small for what the rescue squad is doing. It was just time to replace it," Groesbeck said. "The new house is a proper headquarters for a service such as this."

The University will dedicate the new squad house at 9:45 a.m. Friday, Aug. 19.

"The new house is beyond what we could imagine and ask for. We are truly grateful for the University of Dayton faculty, staff, alumni and donors who made this house possible. 'Thanks' will never be enough to express our gratitude. Our appreciation for this house will be expressed through the way we seek to give back to a University that has given so much to us," said Jacob Busch, rescue squad leader. "This incredible home allows us to house all of the necessary crew members who are on shift at one time. Previously, we were only able to sleep three members in the house, typically leaving one member to sleep on the couch. With our new residence, we can now sleep five members comfortably in beds."

Unibilt Industries of Vandalia, Ohio, built the new house and committed $25,000 to the project. John M. Forte, a 1964 University of Dayton graduate, pledged to match donations toward the house up to $200,000. Several anonymous donors also contributed to the campaign.

Forte, president of Miami-based Forte Properties, visited the former squad house in May 2015. There, he discovered their working conditions were, as he said, "deplorable."

"These poor students had to live in these conditions while they're out trying to save lives and do their studies at the same time," Forte said. "I thought that they needed some help, so I tried to put something together to get them a new facility."

Established in 1992 and equipped with a state-certified basic life support ambulance, the squad provides free pre-hospital care and transport for all medical and trauma emergencies on campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the academic year. The squad averages more than 400 ambulance runs annually.

Sixty nationally certified EMT volunteers make up the squad each year. Squad members are required to volunteer for at least 24 hours each month. At least three are on each shift. Typically, students work several two- to four-hour shifts weekly and at least one overnight shift a month.

Many alumni have gone on to medical and health-related careers including aero medical evacuation officer, molecular genetic technician, epidemiologist and pediatric cardiologist, among others.
University of Dayton Emergency Medical Services is the 2016 State of Ohio Department of Emergency Medical Services’ EMS Agency of the Year. The National Collegiate Emergency Medical Services Foundation’s Striving for Excellence program has recognized the squad five times, and named the rescue squad Collegiate EMS Organization of the Year in 1999 and 2003 and Collegiate EMS Week Celebration of the Year in 2010, 2012 and 2013.

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