



August 1, 2021

## Thank you for submitting a nomination for Shelia Wise.

### Overview

Thank you for your 2021 Community Star Nomination. Here is a copy of the nomination for your records. If you have any questions, please reach out to NRHD Community Star Project Coordinator, Brea Corsaro at [bcorsaro@powerofrural.org](mailto:bcorsaro@powerofrural.org).

### Your Information

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### Community Star Nominee: (Individual)

**Shelia Wise**

*Paramedic and Training Major / National Registered Emergency Technician*

*Paramedic*

Estill County Emergency Medical Services

Irvine, Kentucky

**Have Questions? Contact:**

[powerofrural.org](http://powerofrural.org) | [nosorh.org](http://nosorh.org) | [bcorsaro@powerofrural.org](mailto:bcorsaro@powerofrural.org)



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Which best describes the organization your nominee is associated with?

Rural EMS

Please describe your connection to the individual or organization you are nominating.

Shelia Wise and I have been colleagues for over twenty-five years. Our relationship began when I served as CEO for a Critical Access Hospital and Sheila was a Paramedic and the Training Major at Estill County EMS.

As CEO I realized that our hospital needed to have a strong working relationship with the EMS service. This was an easy task to accomplish as the EMS also understood that teamwork between the two organizations provides the patients and our rural communities with the best possible care and outcomes. Together as a team we achieved many accomplishments, one included becoming the first hospital in Kentucky to be certified as a Level 4 Trauma Center. The success of this project was a result of teamwork, the hospital and EMS had a strong working relationship and became a cohesive team. As Training Major Shelia had a vital role in facilitating the process for certification. Sheila led the educational component. As an educator she ensured that all our staff and physicians had been trained in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Pediatric Advance Life Support (PALS), Rural Trauma Development Team Course (RTDTC) and Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS) which has now transitioned to Prehospital Trauma Life Support. Achieving Trauma certification was the beginning of our partnership, and our

relationship continued to grow stronger throughout the years. Shelia supported the hospital as we worked towards becoming Certified as a Chest Pain Center. Throughout this process we learned taking a team approach resulted in providing patients in our community with the highest quality of care.

Please explain the individual's or organization's connection to or interaction with their State Office of Rural Health.

Shelia has a strong working relationship with the Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH), in fact, the KORH selected Shelia and her husband Jimmie Wise, Director of EMS as Rural Champions for an article that was included in the KORH "The Bridge" (Spring 2019).

Shelia understands that a team approach is a must in rural communities if we want to ensure access to quality care. The Kentucky Office of Rural Health has always been consider a part of our rural healthcare team. Examples of their teamwork includes serving together on boards for two H of our HRSA Outreach/Network grants: Project Home Board and Project Help Board. Shelia was also an active partner with the hospital and KORH to accomplish the goals of the hospital, supporting SHIP funding initiatives.

KORH has been active in collaborating with the EMS. They have provided financial support for Shelia and other members of the leadership team to attend leadership/ educational programs. The opportunity to attend these programs would not have been possible without their support.

The Community Star Recognition Program is designed to honor those whose contributions are making a difference in rural through collaboration, education, innovation, and communication. What do you believe to be your nominee's "star" qualities? Provide examples of how your nominee demonstrates these qualities in their work and service.



It is difficult to identify which area that Shelia would be considered a “Star” as all categories seem to be integrated, especially when working in a rural setting. If I had to highlight an area, I believe that

Shelia’s passion lies in being an educator. Shelia knows as an educator, when teaching others and holding them accountable to meet her high standards, that this will ultimately have the greatest impact on providing high quality of care to our rural community members.

The details below highlight the successes/certifications Shelia has attained.

- Registered Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic.
- Instructor for Kentucky and National Registry for First Responder, EMT, EMT and Paramedic. Evaluator. These credentials allow her to evaluate or teach any Medical Care students.
- Adjunct faculty member for Eastern Kentucky University Paramedic program, Department of Emergency Care. Serves on Advisory board for Paramedic Program
- Instructor for Advance Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Pediatric Advance Life Support (PALS), Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PTLS) and advanced EKG instructor.
- Instructor for Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) Emergency Casualty Care. Tactical Emergency Casualty Care exists to develop and accelerate evidenced and best practiced-based guidance for medical response and medical treatment of the injured during high risk and atypical civilian operational scenarios.
- Instructor for Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) Tactical Combat Casualty Care, TCCC is developed by the U.S. Department of Defense Health



Agency (DHA) Joint Trauma System to teach evidence-based, life-saving techniques and strategies for providing the best trauma care on the battlefield.

- Certified Ambulance Documentation Specialist (CADS) by National Academy of Ambulance Compliance (Gold Standard of excellence for ambulance compliance ethics and integrity).
- Certified Handtevy instructor. Handtevy is a pediatric resuscitation system that focuses on medication dosing during a crisis for pediatric patient.
- Obtained Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Computer Science from University of Kentucky.

Having an educator with her range of certifications and experience makes a significant difference in the healthcare provided to the rural communities she serves. Shelia doesn't limit teaching to her place of employment, she collaborates and actively reaches out to provide education to other community partners. These partners include hospitals, healthcare providers, other EMS providers, health departments, schools, churches, and the list goes on. Additionally, the variety and level of education that Shelia provides ensures all healthcare providers have adequate training which results in better quality outcomes for the patients we serve. Quality outcomes helps the patients to have confidence and trust in the care they receive from their rural providers.

Our community is fortunate to have someone of her caliber, someone who is dedicated to excellence.



The 2021 Community Star Selection Committee will review and evaluate nominations, making recommendations for which stories to include in this year's book and other NRHD activities based on the following merits. Please review these and select all that apply to your nominee.

Cultivates a vital, innovative rural health landscape and infrastructure. ,  
 Develops leadership capacity to grow rural population health and health equity. , Builds capacity for rural data-driven program planning and decision making. , Contributes to rural health innovation, education, collaboration, and communication.

Describe in as much detail as possible, examples of your nominee's work and accomplishments that correspond with your selections to the question above.

Shelia has been dedicated healthcare professional serving our rural community for over 25 years. Listed are some of her activities that demonstrates her commitment to improving the lives of our rural community members.

- Each year Shelia, ECEMS's leadership team, Board Chair, Medical Directors and Emergency Department Medical Director attends the "Gathering of the Eagles" conference. The Eagles are a coalition of physician leaders who serve as the jurisdictional EMS medical directors from the most of the largest US municipalities and many of their counterparts in Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and several Pacific Rim metropolitan cities. This highly esteemed group is collectively responsible for emergency medical services protocols and training. Each year through the meeting there is an exchange of creative concepts, new ideas, and cutting-edge care. The event has been made as an open-door event for EMS practitioners at large.

**Have Questions? Contact:**

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As a result of attending this event Shelia is able to share what she has learned with other healthcare providers within our region. Shelia has made significant changes in protocols of care within EMS services, that reflect the cutting-edge care presented in the conference. Two examples include implementing the Handtevy Pediatric System and Elegard, Elevated CPR. Both programs are evidence-based quality improvement initiatives.

#### Handtevy-

Treating the emergent pediatric patient is difficult, especially in rural settings where the volumes of emergent pediatric is low and the emotions are high, which creates an environment for medication errors. To reduce this, the Handtevy Pediatric System is a system designed to give clinical teams rapid access to lifesaving dosing, equipment and drip information while documenting every critical action care. Customized dosing and equipment information is pushed to a mobile platform. The Handtevy system ensures that pediatric patients are receiving the correct dose of medication and greatly reduces the chances of medication error or overdose. After implementing Handtevy within the EMS, Shelia partnered with the hospital ED as they too implemented a part of the Handtevy system. The end result, reduction of errors and better-quality outcomes.

#### Elegard Elevated CPR



Heart disease is prevalent in our rural communities and cardiac arrests are common. The Elegard is an evidence-based technique for performing device assisted head up CPR. The Elevated CPR method is a technologically advanced technique for performing device-assisted head up CPR that incorporates raising the head, heart, and thorax in a multi-level elevation, in a timed sequence, in conjunction with best practice resuscitation protocols. The Elevated CPR may potentially offer a significant opportunity to improve the chances for neurologically intact survival of cardiac arrest when implemented with the proper bundle of devices. ECEMS is the only Kentucky EMS service that has incorporated the Elegard system into their protocols.

There were many barriers to implementation of these two cutting edge initiatives, but as a result of Shelia's passion for quality, she overcame the barriers that were presented. She received the education to be an instructor for initiatives, but most importantly obtained the necessary funding by working with her EMS Board and other public agencies to obtain support for the purchase of the equipment.

-American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline program.

According to the American Heart Association "The Mission: Lifeline EMS recognition is a program designed to showcase Emergency Medical Service organizations across the nation for excellent STEMI care. Prehospital personnel are the first providers of care to patients suffering from cardiac emergencies. The role of EMS in the system-of-care for these patients is crucial and often sets the course for the patient's outcome. Mission: Lifeline connects EMS providers, referring (non-PCI) hospitals and receiving (PCI-capable) centers in a coordinated system of care. The program also





assists EMS agencies in getting the feedback needed to understand how the system of care is working and provides evidence-based metrics to measure the system's performance".

Under Shelia's leadership, the ECEMS has received first the bronze level of recognition, and now achieved the Silver Level of the Mission: Lifeline EMS Quality Achievement Award. Achieving Silver Status indicate that the EMS had aggregated annual compliance ( $\geq 75\%$ ) on applicable Mission: Lifeline EMS Measures. As a rural EMS, the highest level that can be achieved is Silver status. In 2018, only 497 prehospital agencies in the US, including 15 in Kentucky received the Mission: Lifeline EMS Quality Achievement Award. This was a great achievement for our rural EMS as there are 240 EMS services in Kentucky.

#### - Overdose (OD) Task Force

Drug overdose is a significant problem in our community. According to a 2019 report produced by the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Branch, Estill County had the highest overdose death rate in Kentucky (based on the population adjusted per 100,000 inhabitants) with 13 deaths that were attributed to illicit or prescription drugs, and the trend continues for 2021. To help understand and then reduce the number of occurrences, our community organized an OD task force which includes OD mapping. This is a collaborative effort which involves a committee of community members to include key hospital staff, EMS, Sheriff, Justice Department, County Judge Executive, Behavioral health, and County Attorney.



One goal of the committee is to implement OD mapping, a national data tool to track overdoses. "ODMAP provides near real-time suspected overdose surveillance data across jurisdictions to support public safety and public health efforts to mobilize an immediate response to a sudden increase, or spike in overdose events. It links first responders and relevant record management systems to a mapping tool to track overdoses to stimulate real-time response and strategic analysis across jurisdictions".

With real time data the community responders can implement strategic interventions for prevention of drug overdose and mitigate deaths when data indicates a trend of upcoming overdoses, tracks flow of drugs and overdoses.

Shelia is a member of the OD task force and is the person responsible for gathering and entering our community data related to OD deaths into the OD: mapping system.

Shelia also serves as Medical Liaison Estill County Coroner Office and Opioid Crisis for First Responders. Shelia obtained grant funding to help support the purchase of Narcan for the local EMS services. She is active in providing community education to anyone interested in learning about Narcan.

-School Violence-Active Shooter

Shelia was particularly concerned with the number of incidences of school violence occurring in our nation and specifically, in Kentucky. Nationally, there are school violence events occurring on daily basis, and in Kentucky, there has been three occurrences which resulted in deaths of teachers and students.



To help address this, Shelia partnered with Eastern Kentucky University Department of Criminal Justice. As a result, Shelia received grant funding to provide Active Shooter Training to the EMS, hospital, and school system. This grant involved significant collaboration with multiple agencies including local sheriff and police, State Police, school administration, teachers, students, hospital and volunteers. It required Shelia to commit to training and she became Instructor for Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) Emergency Casualty Care. TECC exists to develop and accelerate evidenced and practiced-based guidance for medical response and medical treatment of the injured during high risk and atypical civilian operational scenarios. She also obtained training to be an Instructor for Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC).

Through her commitment to this issue, Shelia became a valuable resource to schools and our hospital when safety is of concern and served on the School Safety and Community Preparedness committee.

I believe this appropriately demonstrates that Shelia meets all the criteria defined to be a Community Star. Besides what has been highlighted, Shelia is actively involved in improving care at the local, state, and national level. She serves as a member of the Kentucky Child Fatality Team, serves on Elder Abuse Council where she served in a leadership role, she also is a member of Kentucky Agency for Substance Abuse Policy (ASAP). Her work and dedication have been recognized at the local and State level, she is an official "Kentucky Colonel" and received a Certificate of Excellence for her outstanding achievement and accomplishment in the Estill County School District.



To conclude, I believe that the KORH Bridge article titled "Their hearts are in EMS, husband and wife devoted in Emergency Care in Estill County" describes who she is and what she does best.

Shelia and her husband are committed to the people of our rural community, ensuring each person receives the highest level of care with the best possible outcomes, as they are family and friends caring for family and friends.

I can confirm that the individual or organization is making a difference in rural through collaboration, education, innovation, and communication, and is located, working, or volunteering in a designated rural area.

Yes

I can confirm that I have notified the nominee of their nomination, and the nomination will be accepted.

Yes

How did you learn about the 2021 Community Star Recognition Program?

State Office of Rural Health

KORH weekly newsletter