



The Journal of
COLLEGIATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

ISSN: 2576-3687 (Print) 2576-3695 (Online) **Journal Website:** <https://www.collegeems.com>

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EMS Director of Rice University EMS

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Keywords: award, collegiate-based emergency medical services, interview, leadership, management

Citation (AMA Style): Basgall L, Friedman NMG. Interview with Lisa Basgall: EMS Director of Rice University EMS. *J Coll Emerg Med Serv.* 2020; 3(1): 9-10. <https://doi.org/10.30542/JCEMS.2020.03.01.03>

Electronic Link: <https://doi.org/10.30542/JCEMS.2020.03.01.03>

Published Online: February 28, 2020

Published in Print: February 28, 2020 (Volume 3: Issue 1)



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Interview with Lisa Basgall

EMS Director of Rice University EMS

JCEMS offers an exclusive interview with Lisa Basgall, EMS Director of Rice University EMS – 2019 Collegiate EMS Organization of the Year.

Rice University EMS (REMS) is an advanced life support first responder agency. The agency includes 65 undergraduate volunteers, 25 part time staff (including people who work in EMS full time from around the Houston area, and REMS alumni who are in graduate/medical school and remain in the Houston area), and six physicians on the medical director team. REMS has been serving the Rice community since 1996, and responds to 650-700 calls annually. Additionally, REMS is an initial education agency, offering EMT and Advanced EMT classes, continuing education courses, and also managing the university's AED program.



Congratulations to you and the REMS team on receiving the 2019 Collegiate EMS Organization of the Year award. What makes REMS so unique and special?

The students that make up a part of REMS, the activities they're involved with, and the accomplishments the team achieves, is what makes REMS stand out. Many college students are involved in varied activities, and pursuing full times studies. Rice students are no exception! I'm always in awe at students that come in as interested volunteers who enroll in EMT class, and within two years they have put in so much time and dedication that they're able



Rice University EMS is composed of 65 undergraduate volunteers, 25 part time staff, and six physician medical directors (Houston, TX).

to competently serve as leaders of a collegiate EMS agency with a high-stakes mission. Challenges of volunteers regularly joining, creating high-quality simulation training, integrating new personalities into the group, etc, are ongoing. All of this occurs while we're on standby for the next emergency, getting ready for the next class, and preparing for the next community event. Many students dedicate their time to being REMS volunteers, and with the help of committed campus partners, and part time staff, the daily challenges are met with humor and competence!

REMS is fortunate to be supported by full time and part time staff. Tell us about your role.

I have been the EMS Director at Rice for 10 years, and have been a paramedic and EMS educator for 20 years. Before coming to Rice, I had been a paramedic in the

Philadelphia area for ten years. I taught high school before doing EMS full time, and I maintain my teaching license. As I got more active in EMS, I also worked as a clinical coordinator for the squad where I started in EMS as a volunteer. I became an EMS educator, teaching EMS certification on all levels, and running a continuing education program. I served as an EMS administrator, gaining experience with licensure, billing, and grant writing. All of this varied experience served me well when I took the position at Rice. I am currently the only FTE at Rice EMS. I am a full time staff person, and I also have a faculty appointment as a lecturer.

REMS is an extremely active organization. What recent initiatives are you most proud of?

With the start of this academic year, REMS leadership saw a very full staff roster. There are only so many emergency calls, equipment bags, radios, and golf carts! REMS leadership worked to make a plan to update volunteer applications and training to make the process more selective. Having motivated and interested volunteers is

“Collegiate EMS is an amazing niche of EMS... Teamwork is valued, flexibility is a constant, and serving the community keeps everyone focused.”

always excellent. Professionals from Rice’s Human Resources department helped with a workshop on conducting better interviews, and updating application procedures. This project was time-consuming but so help-

ful in developing a new practice to help REMS move forward for the future. The student leadership team, as well as the duty crew members, with input from alumni and the human resources team, worked together to meet the needs of the organization. It’s been amazing to see!

What advice do you have for leaders of collegiate EMS organizations?

Every year it’s a little different in where I focus my time and energy as the student leadership changes, but I really enjoy the variety and the different challenges each year brings. Collegiate EMS is an amazing niche of EMS to work in, as new volunteers are constantly bringing new ideas and energy to the service! Teamwork is valued, flexibility is a constant, and serving the community keeps everyone focused.

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Conflicts of Interest/Funding Sources: By the JCEMS Submission Declaration Form, all authors are required to disclose all potential conflicts of interest and funding sources. N.M.G.F. serves in an uncompensated editorial role for JCEMS. All authors declared that they have no others conflicts of interest. All authors declared that they did not receive funding to conduct the research and/or writing associated with this work.

Submission History: This interview was solicited by the JCEMS Editorial Board. Interview responses received January 6, 2020; accepted for publication January 6, 2020.

Published Online: February 28, 2020

Published in Print: February 28, 2020 (Volume 3: Issue 1)

Reviewer Information: In accordance with JCEMS editorial policy, interview responses are reviewed by the JCEMS Editorial Board. Interviews are published as submitted – save for copy-editing.

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Electronic Link: <https://doi.org/10.30542/JCEMS.2020.03.01.03>