What’s New With BEMCo?

What Have We Been Up To?

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The 2014-2015 Executive Board

Director  Jeffrey Katz ‘15
Director of Operations  Jennifer Scontras ‘15
Administrative Officer  Ami Merker ‘15
Training Officer  Rose Solomon ‘15
Treasurer  Nicholas Levergood ‘16
Secretary  Betty Varghese ‘16

Editors:
Rebecca Siegel ‘16
Ami Merker ‘15
Betty Varghese ‘15

Contact us:
Phone: (781) 736 - 4263
Email: bemco@brandeis.edu
A Letter from This Year's Director, Jeffrey Katz

Dear BEMCo Alumni,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well. It is hard to believe that it has been almost two years since our 30th Anniversary Gala, but here we are and BEMCo has been thriving more than ever.

In the Fall 2014 semester alone, BEMCo responded to a record-breaking two-hundred and eighteen calls. Despite this large call volume, we are thankful to have received a new supervisor vehicle, which has allowed us to maintain the high quality of care expected of BEMCo. This new vehicle enables us to more efficiently respond to calls and to more effectively treat patients simultaneously. The new truck, a Ford Escape, has been altered to hold all of the necessary equipment to become BEMCo's second Class V ambulance.

Beyond BEMCo's primary responsibility of serving the Brandeis campus as first responders, our members have also been helping to educate the community about emergency preparedness. This past semester, BEMCo trained 138 people in CPR, AED, and First Aid and the numbers continue to grow. We are proud to be working towards making Brandeis a HeartSafe Campus and are excited to help teach people basic first aid and emergency response skills.

In addition to educating the wider Brandeis community, BEMCo has developed several programs for our own members to refine our skills. For instance, we held our first in-house refresher during which BEMCo members taught their peers 20 hours of refresher material over the course of one weekend. This weekend allowed members to attend lectures on specific topics necessary to maintain their statuses as Massachusetts EMTs.

Also starting in the Spring 2015 semester, BEMCo has teamed up with Cataldo Ambulance Company (who now serves the city of Waltham) to provide a third-rider program for our members. This program will give Secondaries the ability to work side-by-side with Cataldo BLS crews in treating patients in the Waltham community. This opportunity will allow them to get the off-campus experience necessary to apply for Primary.

Overall, this has been an exciting and prosperous year for BEMCo and we would love to hear from our esteemed alumni who have paved the path for BEMCo to become the well respected organization we are today.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Katz
Brandeis University Class of 2015
Candidate for B.S. in Biology and Health: Science, Society and Policy
Director, Clinical Supervisor
BEMCo #697, EMT, ECSI BLS Instructor

Overheard On Call...

“I don't know if you noticed the clothing she had on, but those clothes were not on when I got there.”
- Brandeis University Police Officer on scene

“Someone needs my help more than you right now.”
- Patient, heavily intoxicated, while on a backboard.

“I know I didn't have a seizure. When you have a seizure you don't remember it!”
- Postictal patient

“What's the zipcode of the hospital because I need to check the weather.”
- Patient while in ambulance

“It's Purim. Everyone gets so drunk that they don't know the difference between Haman and Lady Gaga.”
- Patient

“Do you think I'll need to have my foot amputated? Am I going to die? Can I still go drinking tonight?”
- Patient who had a splinter in the foot

“You know I thought about being an EMT and I'm pre-med so I know what's going on and I think he's fine.”
- Friend of a patient aka all of Brandeis

“Wow, I love you guys.”
- Patient

(When asked about taking medications): “No, I don't. But I smoke a lot of weed. My mom told me she can't smoke weed because she's allergic to it.”
- Patient

“You can't hold my hand, you're not my girlfriend! Stop trying to seduce me.”
- Patient

“You can leave me alone now. You should be out there fighting crime anyway.”
- Intoxicated patient

“Can I give you a hug?”
- Patient
Ops Corner

If you're tuning in for the first time in more than five years, we have had some big changes, only some of which I am going to highlight here. First, since 2011, we have added two new vehicles, the first to replace our older primary truck and then second to replace the supervisor car. The primary truck, a 2012 Ford Expedition has proven reliable, roomy, and robust. This was BEMCo’s very first Class V ambulance!

Even more recently, in October 2014, we replaced the 2007 Ford Taurus supervisor vehicle with BEMCo’s second Class V ambulance, a 2015 Ford Explorer. Despite the replacement being a somewhat long and arduous process, we are glad to be able to keep both vehicles in service throughout the school year whatever the weather (especially after having almost 100 inches of snow this winter).

As a result of the transition to being a certified ambulance, the truck is no longer able to transport patients to the hospital. Yet, through the dedicated support of Brandeis Police, we have been able to retain this function by offering certain patients facilitated transport in police cruisers.

In addition to our new transporting protocols, BEMCo recently began carrying Narcan (naloxone), an opioid antagonist. In fact, we started carrying nasal naloxone before it was adopted as a statewide BLS drug. Since then, our campus has been safe from opioid overdoses (although we’ve never had to use it).

And now, some quick highlights from this year so far: BEMCo responded to the scene of its first code! Waltham Fire and Cataldo arriving first, did most of the work and did it very well.

BEMCo participated in an Ebola drill with the University Health Center and Public Safety in order to determine what our acting capacity would be if we had a suspected Ebola patient on campus.

As of 2/6/15, BEMCo has had 255 calls, and is on track to set a new record!

Jennifer Scontras
Brandeis University Class of 2015
Candidate for B.S. Neuroscience and Biology
Director of Operations, Clinical Supervisor
# 756, EMT-B, ECSI BLS CPR Instructor

BEMStats: Call Statistics Over the Years

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Transported by:</th>
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<tr>
<td>8/24/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/29/2015</td>
<td>Total Call #: 330</td>
<td>Average Response Time: 0.002:18</td>
<td>Average Call Duration: 0:19:35.27</td>
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<td>5/18/2014</td>
<td>Total Call #: 312</td>
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<td>8/25/2013</td>
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<td>6/26/2012</td>
<td>Total Call #: 181</td>
<td>Average Response Time: 0:01:58.26</td>
<td>Average Call Duration: 0:21:09.91</td>
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</table>

Demographics:
- Total # Patients Treated:
  - Males: 147
  - Females: 178
  - Average Patient Age: 23

Transport:
- To UHC: 4
- NW Urgent Care: 19
- To Unknown: 1
- Transported to NWH: 177
- Refusals: 119
- Total Transports: 201

Transported by:
- Campus Police: 100
- Cataldo ALS: 88
- Cataldo BLS: 18

Nature Of Call

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<td>Head Injury</td>
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<td>Soft Tissue Injury</td>
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<td>Weakness</td>
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Training Talk

Abdominal Pain 25
Allergic Reaction 9
Behavioral Problem 2
Bleeding/Hemorrhage: 12
Bone/Joint Injury 44
Cardiac Arrest 1
Chest Pain 4
Diabetic Emergency 3
Dizziness: 14
Drug/Alcohol 74
Eye Injury 1
Head Injury 14
Illness 16
Insect Bite 1
MVA 1
Nausea/Vomiting 12
Pain 25
Respiratory Distress 1
Soft Tissue Injury 26
Spinal Injury 1
Syncope 9
Trauma 1
Weakness 6
 Meet the Executive Board 2014 - 2015

Director: Jeff Katz ‘15

Jeffrey Katz joined BEMCo during the first week of his freshman year after serving as a volunteer EMT in Greenwich, CT for two years. Upon joining BEMCo, Jeffrey fell in love not only with BEMCo’s mission to help fellow Brandeisians but also with the family that he found in the organization. Both the on-call and off-call bonding experiences between members of BEMCo truly create a tight knit community. The work he has done with BEMCo, including serving as Class Liaison, Training officer, Operations officer, Clinical Supervisor, and Director, has been one of the greatest learning experiences of his Brandeis career that he will apply to his future endeavors. His hope as Director is to bring the same feelings of excitement, joy, and community to current and future members that BEMCo has provided him will have a lasting effect on his future.

Director of Operations: Jennifer Scontras ‘15

Jennifer Scontras joined BEMCo in the spring of her Sophomore year after taking the EMT class arranged by BEMCo. Enticed by BEMCo’s charm, she advanced to Primary her Junior year and on to Clinical Supervisor and Director of Operations her Senior year. Operations is a position that one could typically describe as “reactive:” fixing damage, reviewing treatment, and dealing with problems. Late last year and early this year, however, one of her main tasks was planning and preparing for the introduction of the new supervisor truck, a Class V Ambulance, which BEMCo has since welcomed lovingly into service. In other news, BEMCo is on track to have a record number of calls to service this year. Though some may see this as extra burdensome QA/QI work, Jennifer likes to think that this is representative of the growing trust between BEMCo and the Brandeis community. Though Operations is an intensive and pretty nerdy job, Jennifer is constantly appreciative for this opportunity to be uniquely connected with the BEMCo and Brandeis communities.

Administrative Officer: Ami Merker ‘15

Ami Merker is a senior on EBoard and serves as the Administrator. She is majoring in Chemical Biology and minoring in Health: Science, Society and Policy. She joined BEMCo as a Sophomore and during that year directed “The BEMCo Office” for BEMCo’s 30th Anniversary Gala. She also served as Secretary to the EBoard in her junior year. Currently, her work as Administrator includes organizing all non-medical paperwork and member files, as well as creating and running social events throughout the year. She was excited to run events such as movie nights, hikes, and dinner parties throughout the year and will continue to encourage building relationships amongst BEMCo members. As she sees it, three couples have been engaged under her reign. Let’s keep the numbers coming!

Training Officer: Rose Solomon ‘15

Rose Solomon currently serves as BEMCo’s Training Officer. She is a senior Biochemistry and HSSP major with a Philosophy minor. As Training Officer, her responsibilities include facilitating the orientation of new members, providing continuing education for current members, and overseeing the campus CPR program as well as the on-campus EMT class. This year, changes to BEMCo’s training program include streamlining of mock calls, a new style of CE, and a self-contained refresher program (detailed in on page 7). Rose extends an invitation to any alumni interested in teaching for BEMCo to email bemcotraining@brandeis.edu. She looks forward to returning to teach future members of BEMCo as she progresses in her career in medicine.

Treasurer: Nicholas Levergood ‘16

Nick Levergood is the current Treasurer on BEMCo. As Treasurer, he oversees how BEMCo handles its budget and carries out purchases of items and services for the Corps. He also ensures that standby paperwork is submitted promptly and that the organizations BEMCo works with pay for standbys lickety split. Beyond BEMCo, he enjoys his work as an Organic Laboratory TA and a Roosevelt Fellow. When he is not engrossed in his textbooks, he enjoys reading, writing, playing squash, tennis and guitar, stock trading, and making handmade wooden pens and shaving razors. He is a junior this year, majoring in Chemical Biology and Anthropology, with a minor in Economics. His highlight last semester was discovering that “Chief” was actually Director of Public Safety Ed Callahan (who sends school-wide emails fairly regularly) by mentioning both “Chief” and “Ed Callahan” in a conversation without realizing they were the same person. More seriously, adjusting to how the Brandeis financial administration works was a big hurdle for him as Treasurer, but he hopes to continue to learn more everyday!

Secretary: Betty Varghese Fall ’15

Betty Varghese is the Secretary on EBoard this year. She is a junior majoring in Biology and Health: Science, Society and Policy, and minoring in Chemistry. She has been an EMT in the great state of New Jersey during August 2010 and joined BEMCo in the Fall semester of her Freshman year. She became a Primary in the Spring of her Sophomore year, during which time she also served as one of the EMT Class Liaisons. It has been her pleasure being Secretary on the 2014-2015 Executive Board. She has taken many minutes at many meetings, acted in an advisory capacity for the Executive Board, and organized BEMCo’s delightful Secret Santa gift exchange. Betty also enjoys hosting crew dinners and feeding the on-duty crew ridiculous amounts of food. She looks forward to filling her remaining time on BEMCo with even more memorable events. BEMCo has been such a formative part of her experiences at Brandeis and she looks forward to spreading the BEMLove!
BEMCo Takes Baltimore: NCEMSF 2015

Just this past February, BEMCo attended the National Collegiate Emergency Medical Services Foundation Conference for the 14th time since 2001. With twenty members in attendance, BEMCo took the trek down to Baltimore. The eight hour drive (which took fourteen hours on the way home due to the snow) was a small price to pay for the time we spent with fellow BEMCo members, BEMCo alumni, and other collegiate EMS members.

NCEMSF is a three-day long conference where representatives from schools across the nation gather together to continue their education as pre-hospital emergency responders. Physicians, paramedics, researchers, and many more are recruited by the NCEMSF staff to give lectures on a wide range of topics. With 12 sessions throughout the three days, attendees can learn a variety of topics, from liability as emergency responders, hands-on participation in the practice of delivering babies, and learning about cultural sensitivity and how it relates to our patients. Each session at the conference has between five and ten lectures to choose from and there is never a session attendee fails to learn something new and interesting. This year three BEMCo alumni gave a total of five lectures at the conference in Baltimore: Michael Guttenberg ('89), Yoni Litwok ('07), and Mariah Swiech Henderson ('12). These lectures included topics such as headaches, EKGs, and LGBTQ considerations in emergency response. Current BEMCo members are always so proud to attend lectures given by alumni and to learn from them as we carry on the hard work that they put into BEMCo during their undergraduate time at Brandeis. In the recent past, other alumni have also lectured and participated in skills testing throughout the conference. These alumni include Daniel Saxe, EMT-P ('12), Bradley Pinsky, JD ('91), and Jim Meisel, MD ('85), who gave the keynote address last year at the Boston Conference.

BEMCo is celebrating its thirty-second year and the impact we have had on college EMS becomes clear when we attend the NCEMSF conferences. As a small school, Brandeis always has some of the highest numbers in attendance and we always look forward to interacting with other schools and getting to know how their corps work. This year, BEMCo members sat in on a round table discussion with other Massachusetts universities to collaborate and learn about increasing member retention and improving communication between our schools. In fact, with the assistance of surrounding schools, the NCEMSF Massachusetts representative is organizing a conference in the Fall of 2015 to continue our pursuit of connecting college students through their work in EMS.

Attending the NCEMSF conference every year creates stronger connections among BEMCo’s members. It helps us to appreciate all of the hard work that past members have put into making such meaningful contributions to BEMCo and to the entire Brandeis community.

BEMCo at the Boston Marathon

Each year in April, Boston hosts one of the biggest, oldest, and most coveted marathons in the world. Thousands of people come to run in the Boston Marathon and for the most part, the 6-hour event runs smoothly. However, to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the runners, there are medical teams working all day throughout the race. There are EMTs, athletic trainers, paramedics, nurses, doctors, and even surgeons working throughout the race either on the race course or in the medical tents at the finish line and throughout the race.

BEMCo has been able to volunteer at the Boston Marathon for years, current Clinical Supervisor Yedidya Ben-Avie (’15) has been working with the Medical Sweep Team at the finish line since his first year at Brandeis. The “Sweep Team” aids in identifying runners who need medical attention and brings them to the medical tent to be seen by physicians. As EMTs, we have experience performing patient histories and assessments, but working on the sweep team brings us a little out of our comfort zone. As members of the team, BEMCo alongside other medical professionals, perform 20 second assessments on runners that seem to have what we call “the look.” There really is no extensive assessment; if a patient looks as if they might pass out or cannot hold themselves up, we start talking to them, congratulating them on finishing the run. As we do this, we explain to them that we are going to walk them to the medical tent (a wheelchair is provided if needed) to have them seen by a physician. It’s imperative that within these twenty second exams, we are able to make a quick decision as to whether the patient needs further medical assistance. If not, we just wish them well and continue to look for other runners who might need help.

Ben-Avie, who greatly enjoys volunteering at the world-famous event, says that working the marathon is his favorite part of being an EMT. He goes on to explain that the most rewarding part of volunteering at the marathon is “seeing the happy faces of the runners crossing the finish line. This is a huge accomplishment for them.” He also describes the atmosphere of the race in which there is “such a high in energy, it’s such a rush.” This year Ben-Avie and 15 other BEMCo members are going to volunteer at the Boston Marathon on April 20, 2015. Come out and support the runners and maybe you will see a couple of BEMCo members along the way!
A Stroll Through BEMHistory
Dearest BEMCo Alumni,

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter and fondly remember your time on the Brandeis Emergency Medical Corps. If you would like to make a donation, be featured in next year’s newsletter, or teach a continuing education class for current members, please email bemco@brandeis.edu. We thank you for your continued support and hope you keep breaking hearts and saving lives.

All the best,

Brandeis Emergency Medical Corps