The 2017 Safetech Leadership Academy

- Aden Clark

The NDEMS recently hosted a Leadership Academy provided by Safetech Solutions. It was held differently this time then in the past.  It is a 4-level academy and in the past each level was held on a different weekend.  This time to get the academy in before the end of 2017 level 1 & 2 were held Oct 12-15 and Level 3 & 4 were held Dec 7-10.

The class had a mixture of full time, part time, volunteer, paid, city owned, county owned and privately-owned services.   There were Paramedics, Emts, Emr’s and CPR drivers from both Private and Volunteer services.  The one common factor is they were all in a position of Leadership within their service.

The first session was hosted by Aaron Reinert and Ben Wasmund.  The last session was hosted by Ben Wasmund with the founder of Safetech Solutions John Becknell joining him.  Many topics were discussed over the 2 sessions.  I would say the main item that surfaced was the need to work on our Culture in EMS in North Dakota. It is no surprise that every service in the State as well as the nation is struggling in one way or another.  I am unaware if the former academies were attended by such a well rounded group or not, however it was amazing to see and hear that the struggles the 10-30 calls a year services are having are no different than the services that run 10,000 plus calls a year.   The struggle in North Dakota is real and needs to be talked about and these leadership academies are a great way to get that communication out there.

“The conference was amazing.  I learned so much that will be beneficial to my squad.  I learned not only how to be a better leader, but I also learned about how to make the “culture” and “structure” of my squad better.”     Sarah Vaith, Paramedic, McVille Community Ambulance

“The Leadership academy was one of the most useful classes I have taken in 20 years of being in EMS.  The Leadership concepts taught and clarified in this course exceeded any expectation I had.”  Jeff Haugen Paramedic, Metro Ambulance

I, among many others, had the opportunity to attend the Leadership Academy in Bismarck, ND. As I may not be able to speak for everybody, I can speak for some. Many of us came into the academy with closed minds and the inability to make an impact in our daily lives of being leaders. Some have already been in leadership roles, some are just getting into them. No matter our positions, we graduated with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to make an impact in our services.

Tova Noreen, NRP

Jamestown Area Ambulance

“I’ve learned so much from the three men that taught our Leadership Conference and truly believe that EVERY person who has even a management potential be sent to this course.  I wish that I had taken the class a couple of years sooner, it would have changed my live massively!  The contacts that were made at class will further all of our careers, whether in ND EMS or the general day to day of our lives”  Valerie Zuver Oakleaf, NREMT, Killdeer Area Ambulance.

“By far the best LEADERSHIP training I have taken in my 30 plus years in the EMS field.  I would encourage everyone to attend as it also gives different perspectives of everyday life events.”  Tami Petersen Community Ambulance

Ben and John were very inspirational, they brought a lot of great ideas to the table. Not only were they helpful, but the group we had was very beneficial as well. I gained a lot by attending the Leadership Academy and my organization is making changes for the better. Myself what I got out of this class will help me in everything I do.  We talked about active listening which as a provider I believe we all need to be aware of.  We discussed ways I had been doing my job and found a great deal of relieve in knowing the ways I go about things are becoming the standard.  I try to spend time learning and growing in EMS and this provided me with even more tools to help me to that.  The vast amount of knowledge Aaron, Ben and John have is awesome.  The fact that they are willing to sit down with you and help you one on one with issues is something I don't think you see at just any academy.   If we want EMS in the future of ND I believe there has to be a culture and structure change.  I think there are some great leaders out there that can see  this and I look forward to working with them in the future.

Andy Undlin Mohall Ambulance

The best leaders are not always those who have all the answers but rather those who close their mouths and open their ears. To lead you must first listen. Matthew Fisher. Mohall Ambulance.

One of the items that came up was “Supervisors”  Safetech offers a Supervisor academy which with as many EMS supervisors as there are I would like to see that class picked up by the State as another option.  There is a new trend going on where we recognize our middle leaders as the fundamental players on our teams.  These people often get overlooked and rarely receive any formal training.  As EMS moves forward in ND and we talk about the importance of Leadership I think this would be beneficial to many services.  I hope we can give back to all the providers that are protecting the ones that we love.

Again I personally want to thank everyone involved with putting this academy on, and thank you to all of the people that attended this academy.  We truly grew together and have contacts we can always reach out to.

Aden Clark

NRP,  NW Director of NDEMSA