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Emergency Medical Services

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Her sentiment holds true for all volunteer groups no matter how small, and this concept of changing the world is founded on the idea of preserving life and maintaining peace world wide. The Emergency Response system throughout Pennsylvania is committed to this idea.

As an Emergency Medical Technician in Chester County, I work as a volunteer at the Berwyn Fire Company to help residents of Chester County when they need it the most. When our station bell rings and our pagers go off the men and women of The Berwyn Fire Company, whether paid staff or volunteers, drop what they are doing and respond to what frequently turns out to be a life threatening situation. For each person in need this group of no more than 150 volunteers and about 16 paid staff truly does change the world.

The ability to save someone else's life is an amazing gift, but you would never know it by walking into the Berwyn Fire house and talking to the people who do it everyday. Each member of the Berwyn Fire Company has gone through extensive training to be able to respond on ambulance or fire calls. The firefighters and EMTs become a family through the experiences and knowledge they share on every call. Although the calls we receive can be emotionally taxing, it is worth it to be there when a nitroglycerin tablet stops a heart attack, or a little glucose brings a disoriented diabetic's blood sugar levels back to normal.

By saving a life, or being there for a member of our community in a desperate situation, each member has the opportunity to change someone else's life permanently, and that is what being a volunteer EMT is all about.

However, this small group of volunteers who give up so much of their time to help their neighbors are often taken for granted. These people make all the difference. If there were not people willing to give up their free time to respond to someone else's cry for help, there would be no one to come when all other options have run out. The men and women who we all depend on are all too often never recognized or appreciated until we find ourselves faced with our most desperate hour, and then who do we call?

The members of the Berwyn Fire Company and volunteer emergency responders throughout the country embody Margaret Mead's sentiment. These small groups of volunteers are committed to changing the world, one emergency at a time.