

Presentation to the Legislature

Hello, my name is Eleanor Johnson. I am from Barre, VT. I am currently attending the second year of the Emergency Services Program at the Central Vermont Career Center. During the first year of the program, I discovered my passion for EMS. I was able to make connections with local EMS services during ride time that I did through the program. I am now working with the two services I completed my ride time with in my first year, Barre Town EMS and Waterbury Ambulance Service. In my second year, I am working towards my paramedic license, something most people have to wait much longer to accomplish. EMS means a lot to me, and CVCC has provided me with the opportunity to get a headstart in the field. This program has given me invaluable experience to be able to advance my career in EMS at an early age.

I chose to attend CVCC for many reasons. Most of all, I was struggling in a traditional high school setting, and I knew I needed to change something to be able to succeed. The summer before I chose to attend CVCC, I attended a wilderness first aid course that sparked my interest in EMS. With that in mind, I made the decision to apply for the Emergency Services program. I am beyond grateful for that choice, as it has truly changed my life for the better.

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Hello, my name is Rue Souigny. I live in Roxbury VT. I am in the second year Emergency Services program at the Central Vermont Career Center. I started at CVCC last year in our Emergency Services One class and absolutely fell in love with both the class and the community at CVCC. I finished the EMS One program with the knowledge and education at the EMT level, but because of Vermont's laws around EMS, I am required to work as a Emergency Medical Responder, EMR, which is a lower level then both my education and my qualifications until I turn eighteen. In EMS Two we are training to become paramedics and are taking our knowledge in the field much farther. Along with having the opportunity to become a paramedic we also will graduate from the program, and high school, with 38 college credits.

I made the decision as a sophomore to leave my high school to attend the career center for many reasons, but the big deciding factor was the community and collaboration that takes place at the center. All of our programs work together in different ways to support and help each other's learning. Another reason I decided to come to CVCC is to pursue my childhood dreams of joining the healthcare system so I can give back to my community. I am currently working at Northfield Ambulance Station as an EMR. My future plan is to work as a flight paramedic. Because of the Central Vermont Career Center my dreams are coming true and I will be graduating from high school with the qualifications to be successful in a job I love and plan to pursue.

Thank you for your time.

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Hi, my name is Mackenzie. I live in Berlin. I am in the second year of the Emergency Services program at the Central Vermont Career Center. I have always struggled as a student in a typical classroom setting because there wasn't enough movement for me and it didn't always match my learning style. My school counselor suggested the CVCC EMS program because of my interest in medicine. Last year in the Emergency Services One program I was able to meet new people, expand my knowledge on topics I was passionate about, and start working as an EMR at 16 years old. This gave me a whole new sense of purpose and led me to the Emergency Services Two program which is allowing me to follow my passion and help others in the community.

Coming to CVCC was the best decision I ever made for my education and future. CTE learning is so beneficial to students like me who struggle sitting in the classroom all day because I get the chance to do hands-on learning and work in my field during school. I am always supported and have learned tremendous amounts about, not only the EMS field, but also about myself.

I have had the tremendous opportunity to work for the Waterbury Ambulance Service. Since I have been there, I've worked with some of the most dedicated people. I have watched them provide high quality care to our patients. I plan to work in the EMS field as my life long career. My plan is to finish the paramedic program, continue working and gain experience as a field provider so I can help as many people as possible while expanding my knowledge and skill performance.

A Day at CVCC

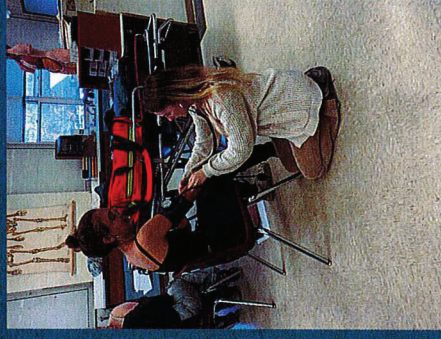
Includes both classroom/book time and shop/lab time

Time spent in classrooms

- Book work
- Research
- Reading
- Quizzes/Tests

Shop / lab

- Hands on experience
- Apply what you have learned in the classroom to the shop / lab



Emergency Services II

About EMS II

- Students are enrolled in VTSU Paramedicine Program AND CVCC
 - Attend CVCC 4 days, VTSU Williston 1 day
- Fall → 12 credits, Spring → 12 credits, Summer → 9 credits (continuation of program starts before school is over)
 - All covered by the Vermont AOE Fast Forward/Dual Enrollment Program
- Second Fall also enrolled at VTSU
 - Fall → clinical time, field internship capstone
- Students responsible for cost of second fall semester lab fee & graduation fee (total around \$500)

Eligible Applicants:

- Must have passed their National EMT Certification or working towards that exam
- *if a student has not passed their National EMT exam before the school year starts, they will not be eligible for the program



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CENTRAL VERMONT CAREER CENTER

“Education that works.”

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February 7, 2024

To: Senate Education Committee

From: Jody Emerson & Carl Matteson, Central Vermont Career Center

Good afternoon, my name is Jody Emerson and I am the Superintendent/Director of the Central Vermont Career Center School District (CVCCSD). I am the Vice President of the Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors (VACTED). Previously, I was the Associate Principal of U-32 for 8 years, and before that, a History teacher at Spaulding High School for 14 years, both sending schools to CVCC. Thank you for speaking with us today.

Hello, my name is Carl Matteson. I am currently the second year Emergency Services Instructor at Central Vermont Career Center. This is my fifth year teaching at CVCC and I have been teaching EMS courses for over 30 years at the EMS service, District, CTE, and Collegic level. I am currently a member of the Vermont EMS Advisory Committee's Education Council. I am also a licensed, practicing paramedic with Barre Town EMS and Fair Haven Rescue Squad. I have been involved in EMS for 35 years, starting at the age of 15 with Fair Haven Rescue. I have worked as a field provider throughout my career. Previously, I was the EMS Chief and Paramedic Supervisor of Ludlow Ambulance Service for 14 years and the Clinical Coordinator and a Critical Care Paramedic for Lefevre Ambulance Service for 8 years. I am passionate about educating the next generations of EMS providers that are the same age that I was entering the EMS field. In a time that the EMS workforce is struggling in Vermont and across the country, this is an extremely important and needed program. Thank you for your time and for listening to our students' personal stories.

The Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC), in collaboration with Vermont Technical College (VTC) last year developed a level 2 EMS program that allows students who have previously earned their EMT certification to work toward their Paramedic certification while attending CVCC and high school. We saw this opportunity as filling a need in the EMS field in Vermont. Since VTC has become a part of the Vermont State University (VTSU) system it has been difficult to determine how we might continue to grow this program in a way that is financially viable for both CVCC and VTSU.

Last Spring members of the Vermont State University Administration and myself, Jody Emerson, Superintendent/Director of the Central Vermont Career Center School District presented to the Vermont State Board of Education regarding two proposals being developed to support collaboration between Vermont State University (VTSU) and Vermont's Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers. At the time we were piloting an Emergency Services (EMS) 2/Paramedicine collaboration with two Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC) students. This occurred with those students participating in classes 4 days a week at CVCC and 1 day a week at VTC's Williston Campus in the Paramedic program. Our instructor would support the VTC component in the afternoons last year. We initially paid for the 2 students to participate at the Fast Forward rate - these funds were returned to CVCC once VTC's Perkins plan was approved as that provided the funds for the two students last year.

As part of the discussion last spring, we cited funding that remained from Act 80 of 2019 and amended by Act 83 of 2021, Section 66 which reads (c) Vermont State College System (VSCS) shall use funds remaining with Vermont Technical College provided in 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80 to continue to study a model for course delivery at Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers in Vermont and pilot up to two programs that offer these degree programs in up to two CTE centers. My understanding is that approximately \$165,000 dollars remains of this funding that could be used to support the Health Sciences Proposal drafted last year while we explore other funding opportunities.

This year, VTSU is not receiving Perkins funding directly, however, they are eligible for Fast Forward funding, at a rate of \$1000 for every 3 credits per course, not a per student basis. In this case that would be \$4000 per semester for all CVCC students. CVCC accepted 8 students and currently has enrolled 4 students in the EMS 2 program, those students are speaking with you today. We have been billed directly for 3 of the students at a reduced rate, which CVCC has paid. The fourth student, who is an adult, applied for and is enrolled in VTSU. That VTSU student is not being charged tuition at CVCC although they are participating fully in our program.

In addition, our instructor, Carl Matteson, is an adjunct faculty member at VTSU and has taught the Paramedicine course in the past. He and our students attend the program at the Williston campus every Thursday for its duration. Carl supports his own students and other students in the program both on site at Williston and online via the VTSU canvas course. VTSU only pays him for his time above and beyond his CVCC contracted hours of 7:30am - 3pm. VTSU still contends that this program is not financially viable and that in order to sustain it, we need to find a way that ensures VTSU and CVCC can afford the program. In discussions, we have been willing to look at other options, however, we would prefer for our students to earn the VTSU credits alongside their peers in the program rather than a certificate and we would like to collaborate to make this program viable.

Growing this program and getting Emergency Services programs in Vermont's 17 CTE Centers would be huge for the industry's workforce development. The younger we can get students involved, the longer that we are likely to keep them in the workforce and in Vermont. Vermont's Emergency Services workforce has declined over the last 30 years. Over that period of time, the requests for service have significantly increased (about 30% in the last decade). Also the average age of the Emergency Services responder is mid to late 40's, or even older in some areas of Vermont. Yet another reason to get younger students involved in the field. It would help the current workforce to decrease the age that EMTs can be licensed to 17 from 18. There have been several states that have been successful with this, most notably Connecticut.

The CTE Centers also play an integral role in Adult Education and would be great resources and facilities to host and hold Emergency Services courses to help increase the available workforce. There is a lot of opportunity to strengthen the Emergency Services system, education access, and workforce development within Vermont. Having all the major stakeholders involved is going to be key to success. If there were support from the Department of Health, the Department of Labor, the Agency of Education, the Vermont Ambulance Association, and the Vermont EMS Advisory Committee there could be great success in building up the system and not having it be so fragile like it is in Maine where the State is looking at infusing \$70 million annually into the system to prevent it from collapsing. Vermont's Emergency Services is not very different from Maine, as you can see by reviewing the two links below.

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Vermont-EMS-Regional-Coordination-Study.Final.pdf>

<https://www.mainepublic.org/health/2022-12-05/panel-says-more-funding-needed-for-maine-emergency-system-on-the-brink-of-crisis>

Graduates of our pilot last year are employed in the industry. There were 2 students in the pilot program, one is working at Clear Choice MD Urgent Care in Berlin, the other has joined the military as a Medic. Students in the program this year also volunteer and/or work for local emergency services as they hold their EMT certifications. We've been working most closely with Barre Town, Waterbury, and Northfield Ambulance Services and are working on a potential apprenticeship program opportunity as well.

Thank you for your time and interest in wanting to make Emergency Services education more accessible and wanting to help increase the workforce. If there is any other information that I can provide or questions that I can answer, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Jody L. Emerson
Superintendent/Director



Carl Matteson
EMS Instructor