

STARS OF LIFE

AMERICAN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, DC NOVEMBER
& ACROSS THE USA ★ 3-5



LOCAL CELEBRATION GUIDE

Updated August 4, 2025

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About Stars of Life



The American Ambulance Association’s Stars of Life program celebrates the contributions of EMS professionals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to their communities and the mobile healthcare profession. Each year, Stars of Life honors these dedicated individuals—EMTs, Paramedics, dispatchers, and other ambulance professionals—who demonstrate unwavering compassion, professionalism, and excellence. Nominations for the 2025 class are now open and will close on **September 30, 2025**.

The 2025 Stars of Life event will take place **November 3–5, 2025**, at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. During the multi-day celebration, Stars and their guests, accompanied by their executive hosts, will be recognized through a series of memorable events and advocacy opportunities in our nation’s capital. Stars who are unable to travel to Washington, D.C. can still be honored locally—empowering communities to celebrate these extraordinary first responders close to home.

New for 2025—Local Medallion Presentations for All Stars



In previous years, Stars of Life medallions were presented to honorees during the national celebration in Washington, D.C. This year, the AAA will send medallions directly to nominating organizations. All Stars—whether traveling to Washington or not—will be honored in their hometowns

through personalized ceremonies organized by their host ambulance services. This new approach ensures that every Star receives meaningful, community-based recognition and national acknowledgment.

Goals:

- Create meaningful, locally driven recognition events.
- Involve team members, family, community stakeholders, local leaders, and media and news outlets.
- Generate local media coverage to raise awareness about the importance of EMS.
- Celebrate Stars either individually or as a group with other Stars.

Glass Awards



Stars attending the D.C. celebration will receive a commemorative glass award during the banquet on November 4. For Stars **not** traveling to the event, the AAA will mail glass awards to nominating organizations following the D.C. celebrations. These

can then be presented locally at a time and place determined by the host.

Presentation Options & Story Concepts

Below are a few concepts to consider when planning your Star's local medallion presentation. We encourage you to mix and match elements to create a meaningful and memorable event. Whether small and personal or large and public, the goal is to honor your Star's achievement while highlighting the vital role EMS professionals play in their communities.

1. Company-Hosted Ceremony



A company-hosted ceremony is a simple yet powerful way to honor a Star in front of colleagues, leadership, and community partners. The event can take place at your headquarters, station, or during a regularly scheduled staff meeting. Consider expanding it into an open house by inviting first-response partners (such as law enforcement and fire), elected/appointed officials, healthcare collaborators (like ED nurses), and community

members. During the event, have a company executive, supervisor, or respected peer present the medallion and share a few words highlighting the Star’s achievements and impact.

Location: Company Headquarters, Station, Annual Party, etc.

Format: Company leadership presents a medallion during a meeting or special event

Invitees: Team members, family, local news, local elected/appointed officials

Examples: Host organizations are welcome to create a dedicated event to honor their Star with the Stars of Life medallion. However, medallion presentations can also be meaningfully incorporated into existing company events—maximizing visibility and celebrating the honoree in front of colleagues, leadership, and community members. Find inspiration below in a variety of event types where a medallion presentation can easily be included:

- [Bell Ambulance](#)
- [Mohawk Ambulance](#)
- [Mecklenburg EMS](#)

2. Patient Reunion Presentation

(This is a great option if the Star's story includes a patient care component.)

Baldwin County reunion | Rescued patient surprises air ambulance heroes



An emotional reunion unfolded at a Baldwin County Commission meeting when Len Chappell met the air ambulance crew that saved his life.

Reuniting a Star with a patient they saved is a deeply emotional and media-worthy moment. If your Star had a particularly memorable or high-impact patient save—and the patient is willing—consider organizing a small reunion event. Invite media outlets to capture the heartfelt reunion, and have a supervisor or patient present the medal. This approach creates a human-interest story that

powerfully highlights the impact of EMS.

Location: Company HQ, Station, Community Center

Format: Medallion presented during a reunion between the Star and a patient they saved

Invitees: Team members, family, local news, elected or appointed officials, patient's family, any other providers that were involved (ie, local fire)

Examples: These are great examples of an event where the medallion could be presented by the patient, a supervisor, or another special guest—creating a powerful

and personal moment of recognition.

- [Acadian Ambulance](#)
- [Air Ambulance Crew](#)
- [Heart Attack Patient](#)
- [Toronto First Responder](#)

3. Elected or Appointed Official Presentation

Involving a local legislator, mayor, or government representative can elevate the presentation of the medallion. Contact your Star's state or local elected officials and request a brief meeting or small ceremony at their office or a public venue like city hall. They may also be willing to issue a proclamation or certificate to accompany the medal. This type of event can draw strong media interest and foster ongoing relationships between your organization and policymakers.

Rep. Luke Rankin Honors Six Local Heroes in Laurens County

Six Hickory Tavern responders honored for more than 160 years of combined service.



168 years of service to Laurens County!

Location: Local government office, town hall, or public safety event

Format: Medallion presented by state representative, mayor, city council member, or any elected/appointed official

Invitees: Team members, family, local news, elected or appointed officials

Examples: Events like these offer an ideal opportunity for an elected or appointed

official to take part in the celebration by presenting the medallion—bringing public recognition to the Star’s contributions and service.

- [Town Council](#)
- [State Assembly Member](#)
- [State Representative](#)

4. Community Event

Community gatherings like parades, fairs, fundraisers, and sporting events are a great way to engage the community and bring a spotlight to your Star’s achievement. These events already draw community members and media, making them an ideal platform to honor a Star. Reach out to the event coordinator to plan a moment in the program to present the medal, and consider inviting a local official, community leader, or the event emcee to do the honors. This setting showcases the Star’s achievement in front of the very community they serve.

Veterans Honored at Neshoba County Fair



Veterans Honored at Neshoba County Fair

Location: Local Community Event

Format: Presentation integrated into existing public event

Invitees: Team members, family, local news, elected or appointed officials, and the public

Examples: These

community-focused events offer great inspiration for incorporating a public medallion presentation—an opportunity to highlight your Star’s service in front of a wider audience and strengthen local recognition.

- [County Fair](#)
- [All-Star Baseball Game](#)
- [Film Festival](#)

Tips for Organizing a Successful Local Presentation

Logistics Checklist:

- **Confirm medallion delivery:** Ensure medallion has been delivered in advance of the event.
- **Set a date:** Coordinate a time when all key attendees can attend, including media, local officials, and family members.
- **Notify local media:** Prepare a press release and send it to local media in advance with details of the celebration. Pitch it to the morning news—they always have a lot of local segments to fill.
- **Engage state and local elected or appointed officials:** Invite local legislators or council members, or even your state EMS bureau chief, to attend or participate in the event.
- **Capture the moment:** Take high-quality photos and video to share on social media and internal communication.
- **Promote on social media:** Use the **#StarsofLife** and tag the American Ambulance Association.

Other Considerations

- When pitching the medallion ceremony to be presented at a county/city council or health board meeting, make sure to reach out at least 30 days in advance.
- Have components of the media story lined up to give it a larger presence. This

can include having the Star's family members/partner/leader/preceptor available to give an interview, visuals for the story (i.e., if there was a specific scene call, footage at the location), or schedule a media ride-along with the Star.

- Consider a Star tour where the Star and their supervisor visit local community meetings to share the important role of EMS and the remarkable story of the Star (i.e., rotary meetings, municipal council/board meetings, faith community gatherings, hometown football games, etc).

Sample Press Release Templates

Press Release Template 1—For Stars Unable to Attend the D.C. Event

Press Contact: [Insert Name]
[Insert Phone Number or Email]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Insert Header]

Example: [Star's Name] Receives Prestigious Stars of Life Honor from the American Ambulance Association

[City, State] —[Star's Full Name], a [title/role] with [Agency Name], has been awarded the American Ambulance Association's prestigious 2025 Stars of Life honor. This national recognition celebrates EMS professionals—Paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, and support staff—who demonstrate exemplary service, compassion, and dedication in their work. The AAA's Stars of Life program highlights those who go above and beyond the call of duty to care for and protect their communities.

[Insert 2–3 sentences highlighting why the Star was nominated—e.g., years of exemplary service, acts of bravery, innovations in patient care, community involvement, etc., or a quote from the Star, leadership, or community member on their achievement.]

In addition to national recognition, [Star's Last Name] will also be honored locally. A local medallion presentation [was held/will be held] on [insert date] at [insert location], allowing [Company Name] to honor their contributions within the community they serve.

Note: You may wish to include details about the presentation—such as a patient reunion, remarks by elected or appointed officials, or any other special elements that personalize the event.

#

About [Insert Company Name]

Insert a brief description of your company that provides key background information and the purpose of the organization. This is also known as a boilerplate.

Example:

About the American Ambulance Association

The American Ambulance Association safeguards the future of mobile healthcare through advocacy, thought leadership, and education. AAA advances sustainable EMS policy, empowering our members to serve their communities with high-quality on-demand healthcare. For more than 40 years, we have proudly represented those who care for people first.

Press Release Template 2—For Stars Attending the D.C. Event

Press Contact: [Insert Name]
[Insert Phone Number or Email]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Insert Header]

Example: [Star's Name] Among EMS Heroes to be Honored at the American Ambulance Association 2025 Stars of Life Celebration in D.C.

[City, State]—[Star's Full Name], a [title/role] with [Company Name], has been awarded the American Ambulance Association's prestigious 2025 Stars of Life honor, recognizing exemplary service and heroism in emergency medical services.

[Star's Last Name] will travel to Washington, D.C., from November 3–5, 2025, to participate in the Stars of Life celebration, where honorees will be recognized for their achievements in front of their peers, congressional leaders, and members of the EMS community.

[Insert 2–3 sentences highlighting why the Star was nominated—e.g., years of exemplary service, acts of bravery, innovations in patient care, community involvement, etc., or a quote from the Star, leadership, or community member on their achievement.]

Throughout the three-day event, the Stars will be formally recognized for their exemplary service and unwavering commitment to both EMS and their local communities. They will also have the opportunity to meet with members of Congress to share their frontline experiences and advocate for the future of emergency medical services.

In addition to the national recognition in Washington, [Star's Last Name] [was/will be] celebrated at a local medallion presentation [held/to be held] on [insert date] at [insert location], allowing [Company Name] to honor their contributions within the community

they serve.

Note: You may wish to include details about the presentation—such as a patient reunion, remarks by elected or appointed officials, or any other special elements that personalize the event.

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