

# THE HallMark

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A photograph of two people standing in front of a textured, light-colored wall. On the left is a woman with blonde hair, wearing a bright blue blazer over a white top and a vibrant red skirt. She is smiling and has a small gold pin on her lapel. On the right is a man with white hair, wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a red tie with a blue and white pattern. He is also smiling and holding a large, clear, faceted glass award. The award has some text on it, including the name 'Mrs. Hall' and the words 'Vanguard Award'.

**AAA Honors Mrs. Hall  
with Vanguard Award**



Mrs. Hall reflecting on her extraordinary 40 year career in EMS after accepting the Vanguard Award at the American Ambulance Association's Annual Conference.

# Mrs. Hall Honored with Vanguard

## American Ambulance Association Program Recognizes Trailblazing Women in EMS

BY **MARK CORUM** | DIRECTOR OF MEDIA SERVICES

The American Ambulance Association (AAA) has named Lavonne C. Hall, chairman of the board and chief administrative officer of Hall Ambulance, as a recipient of the Vanguard Award. The distinction honors women with at least 35 years of service who have blazed the trail for fellow female emergency medical services (EMS) professionals.

The presentation occurred on April 23 in Nashville at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center during the President's Reception at the AAA's Annual Conference. "The Vanguard Awards pay tribute to the exceptional women who've torn down walls and laid the groundwork for those who follow," AAA President Randy Strozyk remarked. "We're honored

to recognize and celebrate their contributions."

Accompanying Mrs. Hall were President & CEO John Surface, Mark Corum, director of media services, and longtime friend and business vendor, Cindy Elbert, who submitted the nomination.

Mrs. Hall is one of 16 women from across the U.S. and the only one from California to be honored with

the award this year. To be considered for nomination, the individual must have contributed to their organization, state ambulance association, AAA, and/or the EMS profession in an extraordinary way beyond faithful completion of job duties.

“I am delighted and thankful to be receiving a Vanguard award,” a jubilant Hall remarked. “To be honored alongside women who have done incredible and inspiring work in EMS is humbling and a bit overwhelming. I have been lucky enough to have a career I love in an industry that still inspires me after 40 years. To be recognized for that career is icing on the cake.”

In reflection, Hall explains how she feels fortunate to have started her EMS career at a company that welcomed and valued the contributions of female employees. “I remember my first day at Hall Ambulance Service as a new EMT; I was assigned to ride along on a double paramedic ambulance; both paramedics were women,” said Hall. “I was so inspired by their professionalism and confidence. They made sure I felt welcome and needed as a woman in an industry that most positions had been held by men.”

Ever since, Hall has drawn from that feeling of inclusion. “Looking back, I realize what a luxury it was not to have to force myself into a space but to be welcomed into it. I have carried that feeling with me and tried to make everyone, but

especially women, feel that a space was already carved out for them, and they were welcome in it,” Hall explained.

Her first exposure to emergency medical services occurred at the age of five when the car she was riding in was struck by a train. After a hectic ride to the hospital in the back of an ambulance, she knew that was what she wanted to do when she grew up.

She got her EMT Certificate from Reedley College in 1983, moved to Bakersfield, California, and started what will be celebrated as a 40-year career this August (and counting) with Hall Ambulance.

Hall worked as an EMT until 1991, when she progressed in her career by becoming a paramedic. For the next eight years, she staffed an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance in a bustling 9-1-1 sys-



Archive photo of Harvey & Lavonne working a community health fair in the late 80s/early 90s.

tem, priding herself on delivering compassionate patient care.



Supervisor Couch making the public presentation to Mrs. Hall during the May 7 Board of Supervisors meeting.

## Kern County Board of Supervisors Extend Accolades

On May 7, at the County of Kern Board of Supervisors meeting, Chairman David Couch presented Mrs. Hall with a Certificate of Recognition for being honored by the American Ambulance Association with a Vanguard Award presented in collaboration with Women in Emergency Services (WIES).

In his remarks, Supervisor Couch said, “WIES is an organization dedicated to supporting and advancing women’s careers through empowerment, mentorship, and education. Lavonne pretty much embodies all those things in this particular industry.”

Chairman Couch continued, “Our emergency medical system in Kern County is really good compared to others throughout the state. It isn’t perfect—none of them are perfect—but where would we be without Hall Ambulance, which really is the anchor of that system? So, thank you to your company, and Lavonne, thank you.”

Mrs. Hall took a moment to address Chairman Couch and the Board, saying, “I always wanted a career in EMS, and I’ve been lucky to have that 40-year career in EMS here in Kern County. I am honored to have been able to serve the community. That five-year-old me had no clue what kind of adventure she would go on.” In closing her remarks, she said, “Through it all, with one exception, and that exception was pretty much exactly six years ago, learning the hard way about a horrible disease called Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, so with the exception of Harvey not being here with me today, I wouldn’t have changed a thing.” \*



Hall Ambulance Stars of Life on the steps of the state capitol are (l-r): EMT Shannon Agcaoili, Paramedic Field Supervisor Jason Achterberg, Paramedic Heather Lee, assistant manager of personnel scheduling, Paramedic Sarah Dresser, and EMT Anthony Pena.

# Stars of Life Honorees

## California Ambulance Association Honors State's Best of the Best

BY **MARK CORUM** | DIRECTOR OF MEDIA SERVICES

Three Hall Ambulance Paramedics and two Emergency Medical Technicians were recognized on March 20 in Sacramento as Stars of Life by the California Ambulance Association. Their actions are as varied as

their positions but demonstrate that they have stood out amongst their peers as the best of the best among California's 60,000 EMTs and 20,000 paramedics statewide.

The Hall Ambulance employees nominated for this recognition are among those who were honored earlier this year at the Company's Founder's Day Awards for their dedication to patient care and



Senator Shannon Grove welcomed the Stars and gave them a personal tour of the Senate Chamber, complete with special recognition on the marquee.

career accomplishments in 2023.

They are Paramedic Sarah Dresser, EMT Anthony Pena, Paramedic Field Supervisor Jason Achterberg, EMT Shannon Agcaoili, and Paramedic Heather Lee, assistant manager of personnel scheduling. After traveling to Sacramento, the Stars and their guests were treated to a fabulous dinner at Pampas Brazilian Steakhouse.

Early the following day, the festivities got started at the Sheraton Grand Hotel with a breakfast buffet, where they received their Stars of Life medals. They then proceeded to the capitol steps for a symbolic photo along with the 88 other honorees.

The paramedics, EMTs, and their hosts, including President & CEO John Surface, Myron Smith, vice president of operations, and Mark Corum, director of media services, along with family members, then met with the legislators

representing the cities and communities served by Hall Ambulance. Their first legislative meeting was with Senator Shannon Grove, who once again went the extra mile to make Hall Ambulance's Stars feel special.

The Senator presented each



Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Bains holding a cover story in the *Bakersfield Californian* highlighting the Stars of Life's visit to the state capitol.

with a State of California Senate Certificate of Recognition in honor of being named a Star of Life. Senator Grove then gave the group a personalized tour of the Capitol, including a visit

to the Senate Chamber, where the Senator had the marquee changed to acknowledge the Hall Ambulance first responders.

Next, the EMTs and paramedics visited Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Bains, who expressed how her experience as a physician gives her great understanding and appreciation of the tireless work EMS personnel perform as first responders.

After a lunchtime break, the group regathered for their scheduled appointment with Assemblymember Vince Fong. He welcomed them to his office engaging them in conversation about their EMS careers. Fong then led the VIPs to the floor of the Assembly for a group photo. The memorable day concluded with a reception and awards dinner, at which they received a legislative certificate recognizing their achievement. \*



Assemblymember Vince Fong expressed his appreciation for our EMS first responders, and led them on a tour of the Assembly floor.

# Vanguard Award

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Archive photo of Harvey & Lavonne Hall celebrating their company's 45th Anniversary in 2016.

From 1999 to 2011, she was responsible for paramedic administrative support for the Company, which included providing daily support to the EMTs and paramedics, creating the daily shift schedule, assisting dispatch, and responding to mass casualty incidents.

Her next challenge was taking over as Hall Commercial Vehicle Service (HCVS) as shop owner in 2011. In this capacity, Hall oversaw the daily operations of HCVS, including the procurement of materials, supplies, and other essentials needed to maintain the Hall Ambulance and external fleet accounts. She hired and trained managers, supervisors, and support staff ensuring that the preventative maintenance and repairs were completed at the desired level of expectation.

In 2018, her world turned upside down when suddenly, her husband was diagnosed with the sporadic form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD). As Mr. Hall's illness progressed, he expressed a desire for her to serve as president and CEO of Hall Ambulance. Just two weeks and seven hours following diagnosis, he lost his battle with CJD on May 19 of that year.

Mrs. Hall suddenly found herself trying to come to grips with her husband's sudden death, be there for her daughter and granddaughter, and take on the enormous task of leading a company with over 450 employees. Despite being enormous shoes to fill, she rose to the occasion, providing exemplary leadership and ensuring continuity in operations based on her husband's ideals of care, compas-

sion, and community. Working with the CFO, COO, and a dedicated leadership team, Hall led the Company through the opening of the Harvey L. Hall EMS Academy, Hall Ambulance's 50th Anniversary, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the acquisition of another service area, increasing Hall Ambulance's coverage area to 94% of the population in Kern County, California.

In the summer of 2023, Hall announced that while remaining the sole owner of Hall Ambulance, she would reduce her daily involvement with the Company. As chairman of the board and chief administrative officer, Mrs. Hall remains engaged in matters of significance and importance.

Following her husband's passing, she vowed to become an advocate to raise awareness and funds to support medical research on Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. She joined the board of the CJD Foundation, created the Harvey L. Hall Memorial Grant, and co-created Strides for CJD—Bakersfield, which has raised over \$451,000 to support medical research and programs of the CJD Foundation over the past six years. \*



Cindy Elbert, Mrs. Hall, and Mark Corum at the Vanguard Awards in Nashville.

# A PERSONNEL NOTE

BY **VICKY RODRIGUEZ** | HUMAN RESOURCES RECEPTIONIST, AND **KRYSTAL MASCARINAS** | HR ASSISTANT II

## Milestone Service Anniversaries

### 30 Years

Michael Hilliard, EMT

### 25 Years

Thomas Conlin, Paramedic

### 10 Years

Everett Sutton, EMT

James Tollison, EMT

### 5 Years

Jason Scott, Paramedic  
Coulton Goldade, Field Training & Continuing Education  
Coordinator  
Zachary Pittman, EMT

### 1 Year

Daniel Jackson, EMT  
Sandra Ramirez, EMT  
Cecilia Goodie, Senior HR Generalist/Recruiter  
Denise Sedano, EMT  
Natasha Williams, Dispatcher  
Virginia Rodriguez, HR Receptionist

## Happy Birthday

05/03 Jill Harlander  
05/04 April Warkentin  
05/05 Faith Velasco  
05/06 Christopher Cook  
05/06 Jeffrey Gleason  
05/06 Karisten Nevarez  
05/07 Denny Stout  
05/09 Cristyl Ascione  
05/09 Rafael Orozco  
05/11 John Miralles  
05/12 Sydnee Blackburn  
05/12 Jamell Williams  
05/14 Tracy Burnside  
05/14 Juan Cantu  
05/14 Peter Espinoza  
05/15 Jeremy Capps

05/15 Drew Rubado  
05/16 Greg Bicera  
05/16 John Murillo  
05/16 Miguel Rodriguez  
05/16 Naomie West  
05/17 Summer Shope  
05/18 Sergio Mercado Ramirez  
05/20 John Wiley  
05/21 Vladimir Fuentes  
05/21 Alicia Saenz  
05/25 Edward Kyles  
05/27 Isaiah Staples  
05/30 Marian Anson  
05/31 Adam Aase  
05/31 Mark Corum

06/01 Chase Neal  
06/02 Vicky Rodriguez  
06/03 Amy Salazar  
06/05 Roger Banke  
06/05 Daniel Jackson  
06/05 Edward Bronowicki  
06/05 Lori Webby  
06/06 Brandy King  
06/07 Chelsey Hepp  
06/08 Debbie Rogers  
06/09 Allen Alba Cruz  
06/09 Adam De La Garza  
06/09 Brandie Medley  
06/09 Natasha Williams  
06/10 Dewi Adams  
06/10 Ricardo Angulo-Lopez

06/13 Luis Garay  
06/13 Jennifer Lawrence  
06/18 Ramon Ortiz Herrera  
06/19 Kendell Chavez  
06/22 James Crane  
06/13 Katie Van Allen  
06/13 Josh Williams  
06/21 Jose Hernandez  
06/23 Kelly Bullard  
06/23 Pedro Contreras  
06/23 Zachary Hill  
06/25 Jennifer Att  
06/25 Nat Rodriguez  
06/27 Emilio Duran Morales  
06/27 Jorge Hernandez  
06/28 Isabell Mendez



## License Plate Winners!



Displaying your Hall Ambulance Care, Compassion & Community license plate frame can make you a winner! If your license plate number is shown, take your registration to the administrative receptionist to claim your prize—up to four winners per issue. Prize claims must be made by August 31, 2023.

# THE HallMark

Founder of Hall Ambulance Service

**Harvey L. Hall**

(1971-2018)

Chairman of the Board  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Lavonne C. Hall**

President & CEO  
**John Surface**

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*The HallMark* is published for the staff, friends, and family of Hall Ambulance Service, Inc. Comments, questions, or suggestions should be directed to Mark Corum, director of media services at: [corumm@hallamb.com](mailto:corumm@hallamb.com).

Established in 1971, Hall Ambulance Service is the 9-1-1 paramedic provider for 94% of Kern County, California's population. The Company serves the communities of Bakersfield, Arvin, Lamont, Frazier Park, Tehachapi, Rosamond, Mojave, California City, Boron, Taft, Shafter, Wasco, McFarland, and Delano, and surrounding areas.



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[hallamb.com](http://hallamb.com)

## Harvey L. Hall Lights & Sirens Memorial Invitational Breaks \$1 Million in Support to Local Burn Survivors



Kern County's EMS, public safety, and business community came together again to raise funds for local burn survivors and their families through the Harvey L. Hall Lights & Sirens Memorial Invitational.

The April 15 event at the Stockdale Country Club, was a resounding success on all fronts. The tournament was a complete sell-out, breaking \$100,000 in gross sponsorships and shattering one million dollars in support since 2009. Proceeds are split between the Bakersfield Firefighters Burn Foundation and the Kern County Firefighters Burn Survivor Trust.

Thanks to our golfers and sponsors who return each year to support those who suffered from a burn injury. \*

