To the NCEMSF Board of Directors:

You will find in the following pages Rice University Emergency Medical Services’ detailed proposal to host the 2002 NCEMSF Conference. While the membership and leadership of Rice University EMS truly understand and appreciate the hesitation to move the national conference outside of the northeastern United States, we feel very strongly that in order to fully benefit all collegiate EMS programs, both present and future, the conference should travel throughout the United States. Furthermore, we feel that we have an enormous amount to offer to all of the members of the NCEMSF. Additionally, many means of making attending a conference at Rice University more affordable exist.

Rice University EMS has little to gain as a service by hosting the conference in Houston. On the contrary, we recognize the enormous amount of work and planning involved in ensuring a successful and unique conference experience. The membership of Rice EMS is fully prepared and eager to face this challenge head-on. The sole reason for our interest in hosting the national conference is due to our belief that the attendees of a conference at Rice would have a truly amazing and memorable experience. As a matter of fact, individuals from numerous services approached our group in Rochester last month and encouraged us to again submit a proposal to host the national conference because of their desire to attend one at Rice. These comments provided considerable motivation for us to compete for selection as the host site of the 2002 NCEMSF Conference.

We sincerely appreciate your time in reviewing our proposal for hosting the next NCEMSF Conference, and we hope that you find it possible to select Rice University as the host site. The membership of Rice EMS personally assures you that a conference at Rice University will be incredible for all in attendance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Noah Jon Reiter
Director
Rice University EMS
Rice University EMS – Proposal for 2002 NCEMSF Conference Host Site
The Service

Rice University EMS (REMS) currently operates as a BLS quick response service on the campus of Rice University in Houston, TX. Rice University is a 285-acre campus located across the street from the Texas Medical Center, just south of downtown Houston. There are approximately 2700 undergraduate, 1500 post-graduate students, and 2000 full time employees. REMS currently has 34 volunteer members and answers approximately 500 calls per year. REMS relies on the Houston Fire Department for ambulance transportation.

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Conference Committee Composition (committee members to be appointed after selection of Rice University as 2002 host site):

1) Oversight:  Noah Reiter
2) Travel & Lodging Coordination: includes arranging for discount airfares and hotel rates.
3) Ground Transportation: includes transportation to and from local airports as well as throughout the conference.
4) Program Coordination: speaker and presenter invitation and scheduling of program.
5) Social Coordination: non-conference, social activities.
6) Catering
7) Publications: designing and printing conference pamphlets, brochures, and itineraries.
8) Outreach: contact and invite colleges and universities that currently do not have EMS
programs to the NCEMSF conference, in addition to those schools with programs that are less involved in NCEMSF and its past conferences.


Conference Format

Based upon the overwhelming response from many excellent prospective presenters last year, there is no doubt that the lineup of presenters at the 2002 NCEMSF Conference at Rice University will be amazing. Due to Rice University’s academic reputation as well as its proximity to the largest concentration of medical facilities in the world (the Texas Medical Center), it is always possible to attract countless highly qualified and distinguished lecturers.

A conference at Rice University will feature lectures on diverse topics such as EMS administration and leadership, EMS education, new developments in prehospital treatment, safety of responding EMS personnel, organ and tissue donation and procurement, and many other interesting and relevant topics.

We will also feature “open forums,” in which representatives from programs will be grouped according to characteristics such as location, service type, developmental stage, etc. During these sessions, programs will be grouped in such a way that they will be able to gain insight into the development and operation of other services, which should provide them with means of enhancing their own services. The forums will be kept relatively small, but will all include a representative sampling of the Nation’s collegiate EMS programs. These forums will also help to form lasting personal and working relationships among agencies that might not normally have the opportunity to converse in person.

In addition, one of our supervisors also proposed the idea of “interactive conference planning.” We would make it possible for other collegiate services and individuals to submit suggestions and ideas related to the conference format and offerings via the Internet. Through interactive conference planning, we can be certain that we are aware of the issues and topics that the conference attendees are interested in. We will use this information to ensure that we offer presentations that cover areas of interest.

We will also arrange for vendor exhibits, as well as employers and graduate school programs, neither of which was integrated into the 2001 Conference. Rice has very strong contacts in the job market, both in and out of Houston, and we could definitely tap into these resources for recruitment opportunities.

Conference attendees will have the opportunity to ride along with several different EMS agencies. These services include the Houston Fire Department, Harris County Emergency Services District #1, Montgomery County Hospital District EMS, and Cypress Creek EMS. Each of these services is very busy and has aggressive treatment
protocols. We will also explore the possibility of arranging tours for interested conference attendees of the emergency department of Memorial Hermann Hospital, which is one of two Level 1 Trauma centers in Houston. Hermann also operates the only EMS flight program in Harris and the surrounding counties. There is also the possibility of having a contest drawing for one or two conference attendees to ride along with Memorial Hermann Life Flight.

If attendees are able to travel to Houston prior to the official start of the conference, we will prepare an interesting and exciting pre-conference course schedule.

In terms of social activities, we will definitely have a meet and greet during everyone’s arrival. In addition to the annual banquet and awards ceremony, we are also interested in arranging a group outing to a local event such as the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo or a sporting event. Additionally, if the Rice baseball team is playing at home during the conference, we would be able to attend a game in our magnificent baseball stadium, Reckling Park. Rice’s baseball team is consistently ranked in the top ten in the country, and is currently ranked in the top five.

**Site Availability**

We would like to have all or a significant portion of the actual conference program on the Rice campus, not in an area hotel. We feel that this will provide for a more enjoyable atmosphere. It will also give the conference a more “collegiate” feel. Most importantly, however, is the fact that hosting the conference on campus will eliminate the cost of renting out conference rooms at a hotel. Rice University’s facilities are readily available almost any time during the weekend, including the second weekend in February.

Rice University’s facilities have state-of-the-art technology, such as multimedia podiums. These podiums incorporate overhead document projection, VHS, PC and Macintosh computers (which are Power Point ready), LCD projection, as well as excellent sound. This leads to their being an outstanding resource for the conference presentations.

**Transportation & Accommodations**

Once the dates are established for the conference, we will be able to formally request a discount airfare on both Continental Airlines and Southwest Airlines. Both airlines have already stated that they will provide us with at least a 10% discount; however, Continental has stated that it is very likely that they will be able to provide conference attendees with a larger discount. Additionally, Rice University has a newly established affiliation with and discounts through TWA. One airport (Hobby) is fifteen minutes from campus, and the other (Bush Intercontinental) is twenty-five minutes from campus. Bush Intercontinental Airport is Continental’s hub, which is why we anticipate a greater discount from them, in addition to their close affiliation with Rice.
Transportation from and to the two local airports will be covered in the cost of conference registration and will be provided by a charter service or rental vans. Groups arriving at odd hours will also have transportation provided for them. There are several hotels located within blocks of the Rice University campus. Each of these hotels routinely offers significant discounts for Rice University functions. It is also possible for a certain number of conference attendees to stay with host members of Rice EMS, which would further offset cost for hotel accommodations. Transportation between the hotel and the campus, if required, will be handled by the Rice University campus shuttle buses.

**Conference Cost & Funding**

Based upon this past year’s conference registration fee of $40 per attendee, we would expect a budget of a minimum of $10,000, if only 250 people were to attend. It is also possible that Rice University would provide additional funding, if selected as the host of the 2002 NCEMSF Conference. If this funding is provided by the University, then we would be able to even further reduce the cost per participant.

Another idea that we would like to implement is a conference and travel subsidy for individuals that are currently unaffiliated with a campus EMS organization. Since it is extremely important for these individuals to attend the national conference, we would like to have a contest or application, whereby students interested in starting a campus program could attend the conference for free or at very low cost.

**Marketing & Attendance**

We will promote the unique opportunities of a conference at Rice University through mailings and electronic media. The conference web page will be created extremely early and be updated frequently to reflect the latest conference information. When all plans for the conference are finalized, we will prepare a conference packet and brochure that will include information not only about the conference itself, but also about Rice University and Houston, Texas.

Colleges and universities with existing EMS programs that are located within five hours’ driving distance to Rice University are Texas A&M University (3 EMS programs) and Tulane University. Nearby colleges and universities that are actively researching and starting up EMS programs are the University of Houston, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of St. Thomas, the University of Texas at Corpus Christi, and Galveston College. Some nearby, major academic institutions that do not currently have known EMS programs are the University of North Texas, Baylor University, the University of Texas at San Antonio, Trinity University, the University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Christian University, Texas Southern University, Texas A&M-Prairie View, University of Texas at Galveston, Louisiana State University, and several others.
In addition to the institutions just mentioned, we plan to target states that have no known EMS programs, such as Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Alabama, and Nebraska. Each one of these states has a very large number of major colleges and universities. Several other non-Northeastern states appear to be grossly underrepresented in terms of collegiate emergency medical services. These states include California, Georgia, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, and Tennessee. It is our feeling that bringing the national, not a regional, conference to a more central location in the United States would be of enormous benefit to institutions of higher education outside of the Northeast.

While the number of attendees at the 2001 Conference in Rochester was impressive, less than one-third of collegiate EMS agencies were in attendance. With regards to programs located outside of the Northeast, less than 19% sent representatives to Rochester. If the mission of NCEMSF is truly to “…support, promote, and advocate Emergency Medical Services (EMS) on college and university campuses…” and NCEMSF wishes to consider itself the representative of National Collegiate EMS programs, then you should agree that it is more important to have representation from a greater number of institutions than it is to have high individual attendance numbers alone. While a conference outside of the Northeast may make it more difficult for some individuals to attend, it is incumbent upon NCEMSF to offer at least every other national conference in a location outside of the northeastern U.S.

Special Opportunities of a Conference at Rice University

There are countless opportunities that an NCEMSF Conference hosted by Rice University would provide its attendees. It is first important to realize the dedication of REMS to researching, planning, and carrying out such an event. Our decision to submit a proposal to host the conference came only after careful consideration of the entire membership of REMS. This consideration resulted in the membership’s commitment to working as a team towards planning and hosting the best NCEMSF conference yet.

REMS, in its few short years of service, has developed a wealth of outstanding contacts, both in the prehospital and clinical medical settings. Rice University is located directly across the street from the Texas Medical Center, which is the largest in the world. Rice’s proximity to the Texas Medical Center has greatly enhanced our relationship with some of the premier institutions and medical professionals in the country. While we have not yet formally contacted individuals to speak at the 2002 Conference, we are confident that we will attract some of the very best from Texas, and perhaps the country.

There are many possibilities for special programs associated with the conference. One such program would be in cooperation with the Houston Fire Department’s Heavy Rescue Team. Each year for our EMT-Basic course, HFD Heavy Rescue sends a company out to Rice to show our students through their apparatus and equipment, as well as demonstrate rescue techniques, such as vehicle extrication. If this might be of interest to conference attendees, it would be fairly simple to arrange for, since HFD considers this to be on-the-job training for its rescue technicians. It would also be fairly easy to arrange
for one of Memorial Hermann Life Flight’s helicopters to land on campus for a tour of the aircraft, and a visit with Life Flight personnel.

Rice University is also located within short walking distance of the Rice Village. The Rice Village is home to many retail shops, restaurants, and pubs.

**Special Opportunities of a Conference in Houston**

The benefits of hosting the NCEMSF Conference in Houston are not just limited to the resources of REMS, Rice University, the Texas Medical Center, and the opportunity to hold a conference in a more central national location. Houston, the Unites States’ fourth largest city, has a great deal to offer in the way of entertainment and cultural experiences.

The NCEMSF Conference typically is scheduled during Houston’s Livestock Show and Rodeo. This is the largest such show in the Nation. Conference attendees would have the opportunity to experience an event that they would not likely be able to experience elsewhere. Houston also has an NBA team (the Rockets), a MBL team (the Astros), and an IHL team (the Aeros). These would all provide attendees with excellent activities outside of the regular conference program. It would definitely be possible to schedule a group outing to one or several of these events.

In addition to all of the athletic venues Houston has to offer, it has a bustling nightlife. Houston is well known for its quality and diverse restaurants, as well as for its clubs and cultural opportunities. Rice is located approximately five minutes south of downtown, less than a mile from Houston’s Museum District, and across the street from the Texas Medical Center and Hermann Park/Golf Course/Zoo (see attached area map).

Houston’s weather, compared with that of the Northeast during the month of February, is also an attraction. While the Northeast is typically cold and sometimes buried in by snow during the time of the conference, Houston’s temperatures are generally in the 60’s. This would serve as a well-deserved break from foul winter weather for many conference attendees.

Above all, it is important for us to remember the support that each one of our organizations received from NCEMSF, especially during the startup process. As members of NCEMSF, we must not only ensure that we are accessible to our current member programs, but also to those individuals who find themselves where we were not too long ago. There are countless college students and administrators that have a desire and an aspiration to initiate their own campus-based EMS agency. We need to make sure that we are easily accessible to these people, not only via the Internet, but also by moving our annual conference throughout the country. It is likely that fewer collegiate services exist outside of the Northeast because NCEMSF has never held a conference anywhere else. REMS will actively seek out individuals from colleges and universities without EMS programs to attend a conference hosted by Rice.
Prior Conference Experience

Many of our members have been to the NCEMSF conference over the past several years, and many of our members have been to the Texas EMS conference, which is the largest EMS conference in the country. Additionally, REMS Director Noah Reiter was a conference presenter at the 2000 Texas EMS Conference. Chief William Taylor (Rice U. PD) has served as president for numerous law enforcement associations and is extremely well versed in the art of planning and conducting national conferences. Several of our anticipated presenters have also offered to help plan the conference and have much experience in doing so through participation in other large-scale conferences.

Conclusion

Based on this proposal on why NCEMSF should select Rice University EMS to host the 2002 NCEMSF Conference, the advantages of doing so should be apparent. The desire and dedication of REMS to provide a top-notch conference program should also be enticing. While we are aware of the arguments supporting hosting the conference in the Northeast, we feel confident that the rationale behind hosting a conference elsewhere is just and sound. We encourage you to carefully consider our proposal because we are sure that having a conference at Rice would be a truly amazing experience for everyone involved. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information, and we look forward to your announcement of the location of the 2002 NCEMSF Conference.