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School of Continuing Studies Launches New Degree Program for Emergency Medicine Professionals

Starting this fall, RWU to offer new program aimed to help expand career opportunities for students and professionals in the emergency medical services field



May 28, 2015 | Public Affairs Staff

PROVIDENCE, R.I., – To meet the demand for educational opportunities for both current and future emergency medicine professionals, the School of Continuing Studies at Roger Williams University has launched Rhode Island’s first bachelor’s degree program in emergency medical services, with classes slated to begin this fall.

The program is open to any student interested in joining the emergency care field and will serve as one of the state’s only professional development opportunities for paramedics, emergency medical technicians and first responders looking to advance clinical skills and training or pursue new career paths in areas such as healthcare administration, public health or hospital and emergency management.

“Until now, emergency healthcare professionals had access to few educational opportunities to grow their skill level and pursue advanced career opportunities,” says Jason Rhodes, chief of the division of emergency medical services at Rhode Island Department of Health. “Whether it’s an emergency medical technician looking to expand upon basic training or a veteran paramedic considering other career paths, it is critical that we invest in the next generation of leaders in this field so that we can continue to raise the bar on the quality and delivery of care we provide.”

The EMS program coursework combines general education and healthcare administration classes and allows students to select one of three tracks: EMS administration or public health, for EMT professionals or students interested in management or administrative careers; and paramedicine, for emergency response providers looking to gain advanced clinical education and skills. The curriculum also requires students to conduct fieldwork in a clinical setting with partner hospitals in the region.

“In Rhode Island, we’re seeing new career opportunities emerge in healthcare as a result of the growing elderly and diverse populations and the changing industry landscape, such as the increasing adoption of community health centers,” says Jamie E. Scurry, dean of the School of Continuing Studies. “We must keep pace with these changes and meet the educational needs of emergency healthcare professionals so that they can practice at advanced levels of skill or pursue new roles such as administrators, nurses or community health physicians.”

In addition, the University’s School of Continuing Studies has launched a new healthcare paralegal certificate program to start this fall. Like the EMS degree program, the ABA Approved healthcare paralegal certificate was created to allow healthcare professionals – including physician assistants, occupational therapists and pharmacy technicians – to build upon their medical expertise and enter a legal specialty field that requires knowledge in both healthcare and law. The 10-course certificate program requires students to take both law and healthcare management courses that introduce topics such as legal research, legal writing and analysis, medical malpractice, the civil litigation process, and healthcare administration.

Both programs begin this fall. Coursework is delivered in a blend of in-class and online instruction, starting on Aug. 26.