



Rommie Duckworth

Position Sought: Northeast Region Director

Candidate Background Information

Educational and Professional Accomplishments

I have served in emergency services since 1989, beginning as a volunteer firefighter/EMT and progressing through clinical, instructional, company, and executive command roles across volunteer, career, hospital-based, and private EMS systems.

Education

- Master of Public Administration, Anna Maria College, 2022
- Bachelor of Science, Public Safety Administration, Charter Oak State College, 2016
- Executive Fire Officer Program, National Fire Academy, graduate, 2022

Credentials and Instructor Qualifications

- Nationally Registered Paramedic (NRP); Connecticut Licensed Paramedic
- Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and Chief EMS Officer (CEMSO) designations, Center for Public Safety Excellence
- Executive Fire Officer (EFO), National Fire Academy
- Fire Service Instructor III; Connecticut EMS Instructor
- American Heart Association instructor: ACLS for Experienced Providers, PALS, BLS; former AHA National Faculty for ACLS and Regional Faculty for BLS and PALS
- American Red Cross neonatal advanced life support instructor
- APCO public safety communications instructor

Professional Accomplishments

I serve as Fire Chief of the Ridgefield (CT) Fire Department, a combination fire/EMS system serving approximately 26,000 residents with more than 4,500 responses annually, directing 36 career firefighters and approximately 60 volunteers, ALS ambulance and paramedic-engine operations, and more than \$6 million in operating and capital resources. I progressed through the department from Firefighter/Paramedic (1998) to EMS Coordinator (2003), Lieutenant (2008), Captain/Shift Commander (2014), and Fire Chief (2025).

As Chief I filled eight inherited firefighter vacancies and restored paramedic staffing; designed and implemented the department's first assessment-center promotional process; restored a full officer complement and established continuous chief-officer coverage; built a credentialing and career-development pathway from recruit through officer preparation; established mission, vision and values, Just Culture principles, policy-acknowledgment and controlled-substance accountability systems; revised the municipal EMS plan; and advanced clinical initiatives involving blood products, point-of-care ultrasound, and cardiac arrest care while rebuilding regional mutual-aid coordination.

In earlier roles at Ridgefield I developed the department's in-house paramedic service and education infrastructure and built cardiac-resuscitation quality systems associated with a threefold improvement in survival and American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline recognition.

I am founder and director of the New England Center for Rescue and Emergency Medicine (2009–present), delivering fire, rescue, EMS, leadership, clinical, and instructor-development education nationally and internationally. I previously directed emergency services training for Danbury Hospital/Danbury Health Systems (education leadership approximately 1999–2009, clinical paramedic from approximately 1996), managing ACLS, EMT, and continuing education programs and serving as liaison between a regional trauma, stroke, and cardiac center and emergency services across western Connecticut. I served as a field paramedic and educator for American Medical Response (1995–2000) and progressed to Assistant Fire Chief with the New Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department/Squantz Engine Company, which also operated Squantz Ambulance.

I am an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy and the Connecticut Fire Academy, and have authored or contributed to chapters in NAEMT's Advanced Medical Life Support (3rd and 4th editions), the AAOS Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured (11th and 12th editions), AAOS Nancy Caroline's Emergency Care in the Streets (8th edition), IAFC Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills and Hazardous Materials Response (5th edition), and Mosby's Paramedic Textbook (4th edition), along with more than 100 published articles.

Documentation attached: diplomas and transcripts; NREMT and Connecticut paramedic licenses; EFO, CFO, and CEMSO certificates; instructor certifications.

Awards and Recognitions

- Ridgefield Fire Department Star of Life, Unit Citation, and Education awards, 2023
- NAEMT Presidential Leadership Award, for development of the Lighthouse Leadership Mentoring Program, 2021
- Western Connecticut Health Network Lifetime Achievement Award, 2019
- EMS 10 Innovators Award, for innovation in sepsis education, 2019
- Sepsis Alliance Sepsis Hero Award, 2015
- Christopher Blackwell Dedication to Service Award, 2014
- American Red Cross Hero Award for Professional Achievement, 2009
- State of Connecticut Public Leadership Citation, 2009
- Danbury Health Systems Regional Educator of the Year, 2003, 2005, 2011
- BSI EMS Special Service Award, for coordinating and leading response to September 11, 2001

Involvement in NAEMT and Other EMS Organizations

NAEMT

I have been an Active NAEMT member since 2017 and have served on the Board of Directors as Northeast Region Director since 2023, currently in the 2025–2026 term. My NAEMT service includes:

- Chair and founding leader, Lighthouse Leadership Program. I helped translate James O. Page's vision into a national, cohort-based, no-cost mentoring program of approximately 18 months in which each mentee produces a tangible leadership deliverable intended to advance EMS beyond a single agency. I lead program design, mentor recruitment and engagement, committee governance, monthly leadership forums, and the escalation structure supporting mentor/mentee pairs.
- NAEMT liaison and EMS representative, American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma. I participate in the ACS COT EMS Group and related collaborations addressing traumatic circulatory arrest, open-fracture care, prehospital quality, and trauma research, carrying EMS operational perspective into national trauma guidance and returning that guidance to the field.

- Education contributor. Contributing author and editor, NAEMT Advanced Medical Life Support, 4th edition; co-author of the Sepsis and Septic Shock chapter, 3rd edition.
- Advocacy. Repeated participation in EMS on the Hill Day, meeting directly with legislators and staff on compensation, workforce, and workplace safety.

Other EMS and Healthcare Organizations

- American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma, EMS Group (via NAEMT)
- National Association of EMS Educators: lead author, position paper on sepsis education
- National EMS Management Association: accreditation committee contributor
- Sepsis Alliance and The Sepsis Institute: advisory board; co-developer of nationally recognized adult and pediatric prehospital sepsis education, including work supported through BARDA DRIVE and the CDC
- Coalition for National Trauma Research; National EMS Quality Alliance; FISDAP education and research initiatives
- Northeast Cerebrovascular Consortium, EMS research committee, in partnership with the American Stroke Association
- Connecticut Office of EMS: education design contributor, EMS Instructor-Trainer program redesign
- American Heart Association: former National Faculty (ACLS) and Regional Faculty (BLS, PALS); New England Regional Emergency Cardiovascular Care Committee
- Editorial and conference leadership: JEMS editorial board, Fire Engineering contributing editor, FDIC International advisory and conference committees, EMS Today conference committee, Jones & Bartlett Learning Public Safety Group advisory board
- International Association of Fire Chiefs: officer development program contributor

Employment and Volunteer EMS Service

Ridgefield Fire Department

6 Catoonah Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 | (203) 431-2724

Position: Fire Chief (2025–present); continuous service since 1998

Prior and Concurrent EMS Service

- New England Center for Rescue and Emergency Medicine, LLC, Connecticut: founder and director, 2009–present
- Danbury Hospital/Danbury Health Systems, Danbury, Connecticut: clinical paramedic and emergency services training director, approximately 1996–2009
- American Medical Response, New Haven, Connecticut: field paramedic and educator, 1995–2000
- New Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department/Squantz Engine Company, New Fairfield, Connecticut: volunteer firefighter/EMT through Assistant Fire Chief

Other Relevant Information

Board Eligibility

I meet the qualifications in Section 5.2.1 of the NAEMT bylaws: Active membership for at least two consecutive years immediately preceding the election; current engagement as an EMS manager, EMS practitioner, and EMS instructor; and participation within the preceding two years in NAEMT programs and activities, including service on the Board of Directors, service as chair of the Lighthouse Leadership Program committee, and service as an NAEMT representative to another organization. I can commit

the expected 5 to 10 hours per month and attend at least three Board meetings per year, as I have done throughout my current service.

Research, Standards, and Advocacy

I co-authored updated national guidance for prehospital management of adults with traumatic out-of-hospital circulatory arrest and contributed to the 2024 joint position statement on prehospital antibiotic administration for suspected open fractures, developed among ACS COT, OTA, ACEP, NAEMSP, and NAEMT. I testified before the Connecticut legislature supporting regional stroke systems of care and standardized prehospital stroke assessment, and helped develop Connecticut's sepsis alert and systems-of-care protocols.

Major Incident Leadership

World Trade Center response, September 11–12, 2001, leading an emergency response team at Ground Zero through Danbury Health Systems in coordination with the New York State Office of Emergency Management; EMS Operations Section Chief for a multi-patient anthrax exposure, Danbury, 2007; Treatment Officer for a 111-patient school bus collision, New Fairfield, 1994; volunteer EMS response for Hurricane Andrew relief, 1990.

International Contribution

Advisor on United Kingdom regional fire service integration of EMS; education delivered for the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, Trauma Care UK, Australian paramedic audiences, and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs.