

Emergency Consultants Ready for Next Level

By Tammy Daniels - September 19, 2007

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NORTH ADAMS - Two local men are parlaying their first-responder experience to fill a much-needed niche in the post-Sept. 11 world.

Amalio "A.J." Jusino III and John Meaney Jr., president and vice president respectively of Emergency Response Consulting LLC, have been quietly building up a clientele that ranges from schools to health care systems to businesses over the last two years.

With a combined 50 years of experience, the two offer consulting, grant writing and management, education and equipment in the health and safety fields.

We're a one-stop total solution," said Jusino. "We don't just write a grant and we're out of there."

"We follow through from beginning to end," said Meaney, who is also manager of the North Adams Ambulance Service.

Jusino, who's been a firefighter, emergency medical technician and, now, a campus police officer at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, said schools and colleges have been among the most frequent of their clients.

That's partly driven by state and federal laws mandating safety plans in response to tragedies like the Columbine High School shootings and a greater federal focus on disaster planning in general after the 2001 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina.

Locally, the company has provided staff training and automatic external defibrillators to Buxton School in Williamstown. They also have been giving cardiopulmonary resuscitation training to the operating room technician program at McCann Technical School. Drury and Mount Greylock Regional high schools have purchased AEDs through them and they've been approached by colleges and schools in Michigan and Florida.

"It's really not to focus on changing anything unless it's a mandated change," Jusino said of working with schools. "What we want to do is work with them to enhance their programs."

Their training programs cover a wide range of health issues - fire safety, wilderness first aid, the baby-sitter's course, animal CPR and disaster planning.

"We do everything from blood-borne pathogens to ALS," said Meaney, along with upper level courses for health care providers.

It's not just health care. Many businesses are implementing safety plans to protect customers and employees, to comply with laws and to avoid liability issues and Jusino and Meaney can help in those areas, too.

One of the more popular courses is the choke-saver class the company provides to area restaurants, said Meaney, including Friendly's, the Hot Dog Ranch and Moulton's Pizza. Eateries sitting a certain number of people must have personnel trained in how to save a choking victim. They also provide Training for Intervention Procedures, better known as TIPS, which helps servers and sellers of alcohol comply with state laws.

They sell medical equipment ranging from first aid kits to AEDs, including items from Medtronic and Zoll. The company is a registered training center with the American Safety and Health Institute, a national association of safety and health educators.

And no job is too small, or too large. They'll provide training to individuals, do safety compliance

checks for home day-cares and do planning and onsite training for corporations. Jusino is currently writing an equipment grant for the New Britain, Conn., Emergency Medical Services, one of the largest services in that state, and they've supplied equipment to United Health Services, a major New York health care system.

Jusino had operated a fire safety education business some years ago and the concept of a more comprehensive company started percolating in his mind about three years ago. He decided to ask Meaney to join him, "literally out of the blue."

"I knew he was an honest and loyal friend and person. What better person to go into business with," Jusino said. "I just called him and asked him. ... Well, actually I called his mom first."

Meaney was willing to sign on. So with some help from Greylock Federal Credit Union in setting up business accounts and cards, the company was launched in May 2005. Their first big customer - Dr. Gene Messenger.

"Messenger and his staff needed a CPR class," said Jusino. They gave the class at his office and the dentist then ordered an AED from them. "We were impressed by his staff and impressed by his commitment to his clients."

Among their most gratifying work was winning an Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the North Adams Ambulance. It was enough to outfit all the personnel with protective gear and purchase a \$10,000 automated mannequin.

After two years of mailings, word-of-mouth advertising and working off a laptop at Jusino's home, the two men are hoping to launch the business to a new level. They'd like to get a trailer for all their equipment and open an office on Main Street, where they could hold classes with a tabletop model of the city to assist with incident command training and disaster preparation for local officials and agencies, and to have a small medical equipment supply store. And offer more through their under-construction Web site, www.911rc.com <<http://www.911rc.com>>

While they'd appreciate some investment, Jusino and Meaney see their role as more than just a profit-making entity. More safety equipment and more people trained to use them are good for the community, they said. Jusino sees his business as an important link in stitching together myriad public and private entities into a comprehensive safety net should disaster ever strike.

Institutions and schools are busy making disaster plans but those aren't always shared with municipalities or health care providers. "We want to work with others, we want to enhance what's out there," Jusino said.

"We have a wealth of knowledge and we're a resource," said Meaney. "If we don't have the answer then we know someone else who does."

Beyond Main Street, the two have a bigger vision, which they talked about when they started the business. That would be to occupy the former Sprague Electric building in the Hardman Industrial Park on Curran highway and transform it into a national training center for first responders - police, fire, tactical and EMS.

They both shrugged: "It's possible."

There's a man who started a fire arms training facility with even less, said Jusino. "He started with three guns and \$500 credit card, now he's got one of the biggest training facilities in the West."

Emergency Response Consulting, in cooperation with the North Adams Ambulance Service, will hold a TIPS class on Sept. 26 at the ambulance station. For more information on the class or ERC, call 413-664-8513 or e-mail amalio.jusino@911rc.com <<mailto:amalio.jusino@911rc.com>>