The Board of Directors of the Utah Chapter of The National Emergency Number Association, is proud to present the award for Director of the Year to Scott Ruf of the Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center during National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week 2021.

Scott moved from New Jersey and was appointed to SLVECC as their new Executive Director in January 2020 by their Board of Trustees. Facing many challenges and ready to take on the challenge of improving the center in many ways. Through perseverance and innovation, Scott was able to improve workplace quality and establish trust and efficacy within the center, thus increasing morale and retention.

When Scott joined SLVECC, the center was struggling financially, organizationally and operationally. Although immersed in extremely poor morale and high turnover due to various circumstances, the center was immediately placed on the road to recovery by Scott. The center had just consolidated with Unified Police Communications and therefore faced a challenge of CAD migration, staffing challenges and more. He was an integral part of moving all Fire/EMS agencies and 3 police agencies to the destination CAD system. With 3 more police agencies remaining, the project is anticipated to be completed Q4 2021, and it is projected this will decrease the call transfer rate to 0.46%, well below the 2% threshold required in SB130.

Upon his arrival, SLVECC was not able to perform to NENA Standards. Only 80% of 911 calls were being answered in 20 seconds or less (https://www.deseret.com/utah/2020/8/19/21374757/audit-highlights-lax-oversight-utah-911-dispatch-centers). Several positions were open and more people were leaving every week, which placed the entire center on mandatory overtime. This prompted the creation of overhauled supervisory teams, Platoon-style scheduling, and new policies, which eliminated the mandatory overtime without any additional hiring. The combination of a new staffing model and operational processes being changed, SLVECC has consistently been meeting the NENA standards, which had not happened in a single month over the last 5 years. By the end of 2020, the center achieved an impressive 90% of 911 calls being answered within 15 seconds, and transfer rates dropped over 68%.

Another decision Scott made for SLVECC was to move away from Priority Dispatch Protocols to APCO IntelliComm, which empowers call takers to utilize critical thinking rather than relying on a script to navigate through a call. This program has been a huge success and is liked by most in the center.

Scott created a new Training Division to deal with the massive amount of training that the center employees needed to complete to ensure the success of the CAD migration, new phone system, protocol updates, and more. He set up a panel of dispatchers and call takers to make sure all employees will be satisfied with what their new system is capable of.

In addition to all things operational, Scott was able to get a new pay scale implemented, better insurance options and made sure his staff’s mental health is being taken care of by creating a Peer Support team that has been needed for a long time. With his visionary qualities, a capital improvement project was also started to provide updates to the center which has gone over 20 years without.

Change is constant and there is much more to come. As Utah’s largest PSAP, it is imperative for SLVECC to be leading the way with changes in the field and consistently meeting industry standards. Director Scott Ruf has made that possible.

Thank You, Scott, for your dedication and consideration to your staff, as well as your model leadership.

Sincerely,

The Utah NENA Board of Directors