



COMMUNITY GIVING FOUNDATION
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Emergency Medicine Legacy Continues with Gift to Bloomsburg EMS Training Institute

Bloomsburg, PA—Community Giving Foundation: Bloomsburg is honored to partner with Dr. Marilyn and Eugene Witherup to establish the **Bloomsburg EMS Training Institute (BETI) Fund**. Honoring their family's connection to and appreciation for the vital role of Emergency Medical Services in our communities, this generous and timely endowment arrives at a critical juncture for EMS as ambulance services are struggling and the availability of quality, hands-on education for providers is dwindling.

BETI hopes to change that narrative. While remaining dedicated to training the next generation of EMS providers, BETI's mission extends far beyond the ambulance. They provide essential education for all areas of healthcare and offer life-saving classes designed for everyone, from the general public to the most highly-trained physician. Programs include accredited courses from the American Heart Association, the National Association of EMTs, Stop the Bleed, VFIS Driver Training, and PA DOH certifications. BETI believes that comprehensive, quality education at every level is the key to creating safer communities, and the Witherup's generous fund is making even more possible.

"This endowment from the Witherup Family is a game-changer for BETI. It allows us to move beyond the current failing education models and invest in what truly matters—superior, hands-on training that ensures every student who leaves our doors is the best-prepared professional ready to take care of your loved ones in their time of need," explained Kurt McHugh, BETI Director.

Beyond the current need, this gift carries profound historical significance for the region, as Dr. Marilyn Witherup was a true pioneer in emergency medicine in the Bloomsburg area. When she was accepted into Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1966, hospitals at the time didn't have true emergency departments. While working on her MD degree, emergency medicine was formalized as a new specialty. Dr. Witherup remained an early participant and advocate for emergency services and training as she found helping people in emergency situations challenging, exciting, and rewarding. After relocating to Bloomsburg in 1973 to join a family practice, she approached the Bloomsburg Hospital with a proposal to set up its own emergency department. Dr. Witherup went on to establish and run emergency and paramedic services in Bloomsburg for decades, creating a legacy of life-saving care that continues to benefit our communities today.

McHugh noted, "Dr. Witherup's commitment to EMS excellence lives on through this generous gift. We are proud to note that her first hire to the Advanced Life Support service back in the 1990s, Frank J. Gilligan, is still employed today as our safety officer and educator—a testament to the enduring quality and dedication she fostered from the very beginning."

Through the Witherup's thoughtful generosity, BETI will strategically transform their education model, directly addressing the severe shortage of EMS personnel and ensuring graduates are prepared for the

complexities of modern patient care. Grants will support tuition assistance and access for aspiring EMS professionals, elevate instructional quality and technology to prepare students for real-world scenarios, and resupply the front line with top-tier providers ready to serve our communities.

“The Witherup Family’s legacy is more than just a financial contribution—it is a powerful and shared core belief that the education of EMS professionals is paramount,” McHugh added. “The challenges facing EMS are urgent, and this endowment allows BETI to lead the charge in rebuilding and strengthening the front line of emergency medicine. We are profoundly grateful to the Witherup Family for their generosity.”

To contribute to the impact of the BETI Fund, donate online at csgiving.org (click Donate and search “BETI”), or mail checks to the Community Giving Foundation, Attn: BETI Fund, 725 West Front Street, Berwick PA 18603. Learn more about partnering with the Foundation at csgiving.org.

Bloomsburg is an affiliate of the Community Giving Foundation, which manages over 385 charitable funds, helping donors maximize their community impact in the Central Susquehanna region both now and for future generations.

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Front, L to R: Eugene Witherup and Marilyn Witherup (donors). Back, L to R: Alyssa Meyers-Sanonu (Community Giving Foundation); Kara Seesholtz (Community Giving Foundation); Cheryl Kerlavage (BETI); Kurt McHugh (BETI); and Lee Rosato (BETI).