



Cadaver Lab Trains First Responders

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CHATTANOOGA, TN (WRCB) -

A simulated medical crisis is teaching paramedics to think on their feet.

For eight hours, paramedic instructors from across Tennessee are being treated like students. Their teachers - two life-like mannequins that breathe, talk, and even have a pulse.

"It's much more about doing it than it is seeing it," says Dr. Joe Holley, Tennessee EMS Medical Director.

It's called the "Classroom of the Future". For the first time, technology usually reserved for medical school students is available for first responders.

At \$60,000 a piece, the mannequins are one of the best teaching tools available, but today's lesson doesn't stop there.

Dressed for surgery, these students are working with human cadavers. It's a first for the majority of the paramedics Eyewitness News talked to.

"I don't just have a vision from an anatomy book," says Susan Earl, a paramedic and nurse practitioner from Memphis, "I know what is under a chest, I have felt it with my hands."

It's a human perspective that Ellen Geeslin says will change the way she trains paramedics right here in Chattanooga.

"I can use it to help my students understand what happens when they do a procedure," says Geeslin, who works as an instructor at Chattanooga State College.

This mobile lab is the first of it's kind. It's a testament to how far technology has come, but for the doctors behind it - it's all about saving lives by equipping the people who have your life in their hands.

"The person you save may be yourself," says Holley, "because that medic that trained on that body may be you next."

In total, 200 paramedics and instructors are receiving the training this week as a part of the Tennessee EMS Educators Conference.

The majority of paramedics across the state are gradually signing up for a waiting list.

Organizations hope to eventually expand the program to offer it to all paramedics, not just their instructors.