



# *Food and Ag Development Centers* **MENTAL RESILIENCE FOR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES** *SUCCESS STORY*

## **The Project**

Mental Resilience for Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (MRVEMS) is a Montana-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded by licensed counselors and rural EMS volunteers to combat the growing issue of responder burnout. Volunteer EMTs and firefighters in Fergus, Judith Basin, and Petroleum counties often respond to traumatic emergencies involving neighbors and friends, which can lead to lasting emotional impacts. Unlike paid personnel, volunteers typically lack access to employer-funded mental health support and must rely on limited state resources or pay out-of-pocket for care.

MRVEMS aims to bridge this gap by securing grant funding to provide trauma therapy—specifically EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)—to volunteer responders. With support from the local Food and Ag Development Center, MRVEMS recently received a Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grant. This funding offered free counseling to approximately 90 EMTs across 8 ambulance services and 260 firefighters at 18 stations.

By supporting the mental health of these volunteers, MRVEMS seeks to reduce burnout, improve personal well-being, and promote long-term service retention in the rural and agricultural region. A resilient volunteer emergency workforce is essential to ensuring reliable emergency response for all residents in the tri-county area.

## **For More Info:**

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