

**TO MEDIA:**

**CONTACT PERSON: Robin Jennings,**

Marketing and Communications

Excelsa Health

724-689-0206 TEL

724-516-4483 CELL

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**EXCELA HEALTH CAREGIVERS SHOW THEIR “TOO BIG” HEARTS IN LIFE-SAVING RESCUE**

**LIGONIER, PA, May 23, 2012...** Cletus J. McConville II has too big a heart says his mother, Shawn. And so do more than a dozen people responsible for life-saving care the Ligonier Valley High School senior received six weeks ago. The family expressed their gratitude to all those first responders during a celebration May 22 hosted by the Ligonier Valley Ambulance Service (LVAS) marking National EMS Week.

While in utero, Cletus experienced twin to twin transfusion, a rare condition that occurs only in identical twins. His sibling died in the womb having “donated” too much blood to his brother before birth. The surviving twin, Cletus exhibited no adverse effects of this tragic circumstance and doctors indicated to his parents he would lead a normal life. Six years of football, a 100-mile hike on a New Mexico trail, and the requisite activities to be named a Life Scout supported that supposition.

Then came April 12, 2012, when the 18-year-old arrested in a roomful of classmates. School nurse Barb Bierbower and secretary Judie Shannon took action – calling 911, initiating CPR and deploying the school’s automated external defibrillator while awaiting EMTs and paramedics dispatched from LVAS by 911. Ligonier Township police officer Mike Matrunic and a second ambulance crew from LVAS joined the rescue effort. Attempts to control the teen’s seizures were unsuccessful at the scene and the LVAS team headed for Excelsa Latrobe Hospital, where the McConville family was waiting anxiously for their son.

Barely 30 minutes after the 911 call for help, Cletus was in the Emergency Department with a full complement of caregivers accessing his condition, administering medication and conducting testing to determine the cause of his seizures. When it was clear a higher level of care was needed, arrangements for transport via medical helicopter were made and Cletus was transferred to UPMC Presbyterian, where he remained for more than a week in intensive care. Based on this incident and the young man’s unusual congenital situation, he received an implantable cardiac device to help maintain a normal heart rhythm, and will now have regular checkups with a cardiologist.

Excelsa Health caregivers recognized by the McConvilles include paramedics Kevin Stout and Richard Campbell, EMTs Cynthia Lambert and Mark Blaszkowski, RNS Lori Cunnard, Donna Duda,

Dave Keefe and Susan Bradley, technical partner Michele Geiger, respiratory therapist Steve Geiger, case manager Gary French and physician Scott Harter, MD.

Cletus's father, director of development at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, offered the following comments regarding his son's care: "I can't say enough good things about the Latrobe ER on that day. Everyone, literally everyone, in the ER was engaged in Cletus's care in some way. Dr. Harter is a gem. He is a man of faith, character and skill. We are so blessed that he was there that day. Dr. Harter cared for my son and for us on 'every level.' Not to diminish the roles and contributions of everyone else, but my family will be eternally grateful for Dr. Harter. Although many people came together to provide the urgent care he needed, the positive attitude and strong work ethic is a reflection of great leadership."

Choking back tears, his mother added: "Thank you for giving us another prom, a graduation, a whole family. We will be forever grateful."

As for the star of the high school musical and Rams nose guard No.71, hugs all around to his rescuers, his girlfriend and the family friends and parish priest also in attendance this week. He's headed for UPG to study visual and performing arts with an education minor, and expects big things for his future.

Not a problem for a kid with a too big heart!