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**SCHOLARSHIP HONORING FALLEN U.S. ARMY MEDIC
SEEKS APPLICANTS**

Michael A. DiRaimondo Foundation offers \$10,000 to aspiring paramedics

CAMARILLO, Calif. (Dec. 20, 2011) — Spc. Michael DiRaimondo of Simi Valley enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2001, at age 19, to serve his country and receive the training he would need to achieve his goal of becoming a firefighter paramedic once his commitment ended. That dream ended on Jan. 8, 2004, when the medic helicopter he was riding in was shot out of the sky above Falloujah, Iraq, killing DiRaimondo and eight other U.S. troops.

To honor their son, his parents, Tony and Carol DiRaimondo, established an annual \$10,000 scholarship at the Ventura County Community Foundation to help others achieve their goal of becoming paramedics.

“We conceived the idea within a day of his death. I said to the family, ‘Let’s have donations for the Michael DiRaimondo Fund,’” said Tony DiRaimondo, Michael’s father. “We thought to establish a scholarship so a passion he loved would continue his legacy. We simply wanted to give to someone who held Michael’s passion.”

The DiRaimondo Family raised \$250,000 for the Michael A. DiRaimondo Foundation Scholarship. The DiRaimondos wanted the award to be large enough to assist an aspiring paramedic to the completion of training.

The awards started in 2004, but last year and thus far in the 2012-2013 scholarship application period, no applicants have emerged.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the need for paramedics will increase in the next five to 10 years. With this growing need, the DiRaimondos hope to continue to give financial assistance to those pursuing the paramedic profession.

“You don’t have to be the top of your class by any means,” Tony DiRaimondo said. “Just let us know who you are and why you want to be a paramedic. We’re looking for someone who embodies Michael’s passion for helping others as a paramedic.”

Applicants must show financial need, hold an EMT Certificate with plans to become a paramedic and currently live in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange or San Diego counties — with preference given to Ventura County residents.

To apply to the Michael A. DiRaimondo Foundation Scholarship, visit www.vccf.org/scholarship to read guidelines, register and apply. The scholarship application requires letters of recommendation so students are strongly urged to plan ahead. Online registration must be completed by 5 p.m. Jan. 4. Applicants have until 5 p.m. Jan. 6 to deliver their hard-copy application packets to VCCF offices, 1317 Del Norte Road, Suite 150, Camarillo, CA 93010.

For more information, contact LaToya Ford, program associate and grants manager, (805) 988-0196, Ext. 126, or email LFord@vccf.org.

ABOUT VCCF

VCCF invests the charitable capital that drives the philanthropic engines of Ventura County. Its portfolio performance ranks in the top 10 of all community foundations in the United States for long-term growth. With total assets of \$97.7 million, its mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, which it does through grantmaking, scholarships and training at its Center for Nonprofit Leadership. Visit vccf.org or call (805) 988-0196.



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