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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mark Gunderman, Communications Specialist
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Desk: 715-831-7288
Cell: 715-210-4714
mgunderman1@cvtc.edu

Traumatic Events Inspire CVTC Paramedic Grads

Kali Junk of Black River Falls saved a child from drowning

Eau Claire, WI – Kali Junk wants to become a physician someday, and make saving lives part of her life. The 2012 Black River Falls High School graduate already knows the feeling, having saved a child from drowning when working as a lifeguard as a high school student.

Rachel Rogers did not save a life when she stopped to lend assistance at a just-occurred auto accident scene. But what the 2007 Menomonie High School graduate witnessed, especially the work of the paramedics who responded to the scene, left an impression on her.

Those incidents were instrumental in their decisions to enroll in the Paramedic Technician program at Chippewa Valley Technical College. On Tuesday, December 17, Junk and Rogers were among 325 graduates in 40 programs honored at the CVTC Fall Commencement held at UW-Eau Claire's Zorn Arena. They were among eight Paramedic Technician graduates to receive technical diplomas. The largest program represented at the ceremony was Nursing-Associate Degree with 77 graduates, followed by Business Management with 27. In addition, seven students were honored for the completion of their Certificate of General Education Development.

Junk said her interest in healthcare started when she took a First Aid class in high school. She learned skills that she called upon when a crisis struck while she was working as a lifeguard at Alma Center Lincoln High School.

"I saved an 8-year-old girl who was in third grade from drowning," Junk said. "They were doing swimming lessons and she fell off a kickboard in the middle of the pool and started to drown." Junk got her out of the water and made sure her lungs were cleared.

The incident inspired Junk. In 2013, she earned certification as a firefighter and EMT and joined a volunteer department in Merrillan as an EMT.

"I've been working as an EMT at the emergency rooms at Sacred Heart Hospital and Mayo (Clinic Health System) in Eau Claire," Junk added.

Junk hopes the next step in her journey will take her to the Southwest. She has applied for admission to the Biology pre-med program at Arizona State University.

After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, Rogers worked a variety of jobs but didn't find a good fit. Then one day, she came upon an accident scene on Fairfax Street in Eau Claire and saw no one stopping to check on the people involved.

"So I stopped to make sure they were OK. They weren't badly hurt, but there was an elderly person involved," Rogers said. "I stayed for a while until an officer said it was OK for me to go."

Rogers was there long enough to see the emergency medical responders care for the victims and found her calling. Rogers completed the Emergency Medical Technician technical diploma program, then enrolled in the Paramedic Technician program. She's been working as an EMT with the Altoona volunteer fire and ambulance service for a year and a half.

Rogers joined her Paramedic Technician program classmates at the commencement ceremony, but she doesn't plan to stop there. She'll be back at CVTC in the spring semester earning her Paramedic associate degree.

With over 155 programs offered both online and on-campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today's jobs, with 95 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$46,816.

Cutline:

Kali Junk of Black River Falls, left, and Rachel Rogers of Menomonie embrace before the CVTC fall commencement ceremony Dec. 17. Both are Paramedic Technician graduates who were inspired to enter the medical field after helping victims during traumatic incidents.

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