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Regional One pair called best in the world

Chief flight nurse, paramedic receive international awards

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Mike Clumpner and Jim Mobley received prestigious awards in 2009, but they don't like having attention focused on them.

Mobley, Regional One's program director and chief flight nurse, and Clumpner, a flight paramedic, have each been named the best in their fields in the world. Clumpner received his recognition in spring 2009. Mobley received his award toward the end of the year. Both have been quiet about the awards.

"Jim and I are very undeserving of it, but it's awesome we got it," Clumpner said.

Mobley looks at the awards as recognition for Regional One's 20-person team.

"We're humble about it," Mobley said. "We don't feel like we're on a pedestal. We see it as an honor for everybody and not just ourselves."

Regional One is the first air medical program to have both an International Flight Paramedic of the Year award recipient and an International Flight Nurse of the Year recipient. The awards are given by the Air and Surface Transport Nurses Association and the International Association of Flight Paramedics.

Both said they don't know who nominated them for the awards. They just received a call saying they won the awards and were flown to award banquets. They could have been nominated by someone across the country or in another part of the world.

Clumpner and Mobley been writing for trade publications since 2004 and traveling to conferences to talk about procedures Regional One is following and

the best practices of the industry. They've spoke in Australia, Latin America and Europe.

Clumpner said some groups couldn't afford to fly them to their conferences to speak, so he and Mobley sometimes paid their own way.

Kelly Cleary, a Regional One flight paramedic, said she knows why they've been recognized.

"They have educated backgrounds and they're all-around nice guys," Cleary said.

Mobley has been with Regional One since its beginning in 2003, and he responded to the first call, which was in Cherokee County. Clumpner joined Regional One in 2004, a month after the Regional One crash.

Clumpner said they often teach other flight teams what they learned from the crash -- like the importance of flight teams in surrounding areas communicating with each other, especially if a call was turned down because of inclement weather. They also share information on continuing work after a crash.

"We are out there and will do it for free because we believe in it," Clumpner said.

Mobley said another common topic they discuss is therapeutic hypothermia, which involves cooling a person's body to lower their demands for energy following events such as cardiac arrest.

Both said it's humbling to do their jobs while receiving the trust of families to fly their ailing loved ones to hospitals around the Carolinas and Georgia.

"It's a phenomenal feeling to get to go to work versus having to go to work," Mobley said. "It's probably a stark contrast to how some people probably feel."

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