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Emergency Medical Technicians Find Their True Calling

Lance Mathews, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

After high school, Lance Mathews thought he wanted to be a diesel mechanic like his brother. For five years, he worked his way through the apprentice ranks at an Ardmore truck repair business while simultaneously volunteering as a firefighter with his hometown Thackerville Volunteer Fire Department.

One day a coworker asked Mathews what he saw for himself 10 years into the future. "I told him my heart lies with emergency services," Mathews recalled. "He said, 'Then stop talking about it and be about it.'"

Two weeks later, Mathews quit his day job in favor of night work at WinStar Casino and began training for licensure as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). After two years as a first aid attendant at the casino, Mathews, in 2018, joined Station 1 as a fulltime EMT on the ambulance. "It's even better than I expected," he said. "There's not a day I get up and don't want to come to work."

As to the future, Mathews said he plans to train as a paramedic, "but I want to be a great basic EMT first. I want to learn from repetition and from working around paramedics." He added, "I am very blessed and thankful to work here."



Tanner Kitchens, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

Tanner Kitchens brings a strong math and science background to his work as a licensed EMT. After three years as a first aid attendant, he transferred, in 2018, to the ambulance crew at Station 2, WinStar Casino.

Kitchens also is a tinkerer from his youth exploring in the family's shop and one of his current hobbies is building computers. Putting it all together, the North Central Texas College graduate envisions himself someday possibly inventing a new machine or device for the medical field.

For now Kitchens is fully dedicated to learning and growing in the human side of emergency response. "I like the experience of participating in helping people of all different lifestyles and circumstances in their emergency medical situation, and I like the camaraderie of the 48-hour shift with my colleagues at the station," Kitchens said. "All of them have helped me."

#62 on his high school football team (Gainesville, TX, Class of 2011), Kitchens played lineman and also played saxophone in the marching band.



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