

MESHA'S ROAD TO MEDICINE

Getting My EMT Certification

Overview

This summer, I had the pleasure of learning at the National Center for Outdoor and Adventure Education in their 21-Day Hybrid "Intensive" Emergency Medical Technician Program. This experience took place in Wilmington, providing me with the opportunity to live away from home outside of a college or university setting. This experience taught me a lot about time management and studying, as the days were long and filled with a large amount of content. I had some time for self-reflection and introspection while spending time at the beach in Wilmington. Although this experience was stressful and rigorous, it also brought me a great deal of calm and contentment.



July 19, 2025



July 29, 2025



Hybrid and In-Person Class Sessions

The sheer amount of information that I had to digest in these classes in such a short amount of time was enormous. Each day of learning lasted between 8 and 10 hours. We spent time examining various aspects of emergency medicine, including cardiovascular and respiratory emergencies, traffic incident management, and mass casualty events. Although this can be pretty overwhelming at times, it has prepared me for certain aspects of my future. I know that in medical school, you are bombarded with information every single day, in every single class, so getting a taste of that experience now (even if it is on a lesser scale) will be beneficial for me in the long run. In class, we learned how to take manual blood pressure readings, prick fingers for blood glucose testing, perform CPR, manage airways, and administer various medications, among other skills. I thoroughly enjoyed participating in various medical scenarios and learning how to manage different medical emergencies. My fondest memories include being carried on a long backboard and placing a traction splint on a classmate's leg.

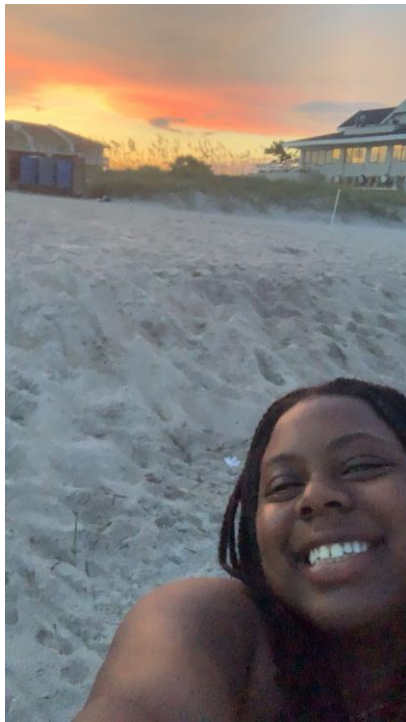


Clinical Days

My clinical days taught me many things, not only about emergency medicine, but also about how to work effectively with others. I thoroughly enjoyed my clinicals, as the majority of my preceptors were very kind and helped me apply what I had been learning in class. I found out things about the culture of EMS, like what "white clouds" and "black clouds" are, never to say "quiet" or "slow" while on duty, and to eat whenever you get a free moment. I was able to carry out patient assessments on the truck, make the call to the hospital, and provide the transfer of care report to the nurse, all essential skills for an EMT. I also had the opportunity to work in a hospital setting, specifically in the emergency department. As an EMT in the ED, I performed numerous tasks, including obtaining vital signs, placing EKG leads, and providing patients with essential items (such as water, food, and blankets). Although I enjoyed working on the truck more than I liked working in the ED, I am still thankful for the experience because in the hospital, I learned more about long-term care and related topics.

Leisure

I was fortunate enough during this experience to have the chance to visit Wrightsville Beach several times. Of course, going to the beach, reading in the sand, and playing in the water is fun, but I also got the chance to do some self-reflection while at the beach. I was able to reflect on where I am in life, what I have accomplished, and what I have yet to accomplish. Being at the beach has always filled me with an overwhelming sense of calm and tranquility, so it was nice to have that to go to after a long and stressful day of learning.



Final Thoughts

After graduation, I moved back home to Wilson, NC, and then began studying for my exams. To be a credentialed EMT in North Carolina, you must take the NC EMT exam, but to be recognized as an EMT nationally, you must take the NREMT exam. So naturally, a week after finishing the program, I took both the NC and NREMT exams. I was blessed enough to pass both exams on the first try, and I am now a certified EMT, both state-wide and nationally. Although I am currently unable to work as an EMT, I still plan to utilize my certification as intake and triage personnel at the Open Door Clinic in Raleigh, NC. I am deeply grateful to the Caldwell Fellows Program and the NCOAE Staff for this experience, which is one that I will cherish for a lifetime.



