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From the "Ouachitonian": Noah Barker



By Rose Robinson

October 17, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Riding in ambulances, answering calls from patients in desperate need and starting his day off at the crack of dawn each morning describes a small part of Noah Barker's fast-paced job as an EMT.

Barker, a nursing major from Batesville, Ark., lives a bit of a double life as he tackles chemistry classes and three-hour labs in the midst of life as an EMT. A typical day for this ambitious Ouachita student involved kicking his shift off at 6 a.m. and then proceeding to participate in what he refers to as a "morning check." This included making sure all equipment and medications were ready to go for the long day ahead.

Barker made sure everything was intact and ready at all times. He stayed alert and answered calls as fast as they came in.

He learned to never miss a beat in the world of EMTs, where sleep almost ceases to exist. As Barker checked off all his daily boxes and completed his early morning to-do's, the calls would come piling in.

"The only call I had in my first day of ride experience was a patient who needed transportation to the hospital with shortness of breath," Barker said.

Barker suited up, and even got to see the patient experience firsthand as he rode in the back and witnessed the patient's every move. His first ride as an EMT was transported by a relatively small ambulance service that had only one ambulance available.

Barker saw this as an opportunity to work his way up in the EMT world, and he did just that, all while making Ouachita proud in the background. Barker decided to work for a different ambulance service where he gained more experience due to the number of ambulances. He even had the opportunity to pick and choose which calls he would go on.

"I really enjoyed this," Barker said, "because I could go on a trauma call if I wanted to, or even more routine calls."

EMT and paramedics would even offer Noah advice to suggest which calls to go on. This not only benefited Noah's growth as an EMT but will also help him in his new journey as a nursing student. As he juggled schoolwork, the pressure of nursing classes and everyday life as a busy college student, Barker was putting in 12-hour days in this speedy profession.

Barker answered many calls of hurting patients and people in need and jumped right to the task. He didn't hesitate to run straight where the problem was and learned the significance of being alert at all times. The 12-hour shifts and on-the-spot decisions will help Barker as he answers his next call: nursing school.

Photo by Levi Dade