



□ *Editor's note: This is one of a series of stories concerning students utilizing the Imperial campus of Mid-Plains Community College to obtain a degree and further their education.*

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Two Chase County Schools students appreciate the fact that the school has not only allowed them the opportunity to become Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) but also to be able to answer calls during school hours.

Seniors Sabrina Hayes and Mason Holmes took an EMT class through Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) last year. The class, which runs from fall to spring, is worth eight college credits.

Although the two finished the course last May, they had to wait until they became 18 years old to take the test to become certified.

The test is difficult. Holmes took it twice before passing, while Hayes took it four times.

Hayes has EMT work in her blood. Her mother Billie has been an EMT for 30 years and an instructor for 18.

"I always liked helping people," Hayes said. "I grew up around it. It was a no brainer."

She laughed when she recalled that as a child she was the "patient" EMT candidates trained on.

Holmes said he was talked into taking the class by Hayes.

"I thought an EMT would be a good way to make money in college," he added. Once he got involved, however, he changed his career decision from lawyer to doctor.

He plans to major in pre-medicine at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, while Hayes will be in the pre-veterinary program at the University of Wyoming in Laramie.

Both plan to find jobs as EMTs during college. "It's good to continue in something I'm already licensed in," Holmes pointed out.

The EMT class was difficult but not extremely difficult, Hayes noted.

"I had a great teacher (her mother) who made it easy to understand," she said.

Holmes added that once he got a feel for how Billie Hayes taught, the course was fun. He also said he learned from the other people taking the class.

And both EMTs said they are doing better in advanced biology in high school because of what they've learned through the class.

The two went on ride-alongs during the 2011-12 school year, and learned a lot from those, Holmes said.

They each participated in 10 ride-alongs then. This school year they've each been called out of class several times for EMT duty, never at the same time.

They pay attention to attendance requirements, Hayes pointed out.

The Imperial EMS offers a scholarship to students for part of the class tuition in return for one year of service, which both students appreciated.

They will be working for the EMS during college breaks and the summer, Billie Hayes observed.

The instructor said the age of her students isn't an issue as an EMT. "When they had to do CPR the first time they handled it really well," she stated. "During the ride-alongs they decided if they have what it takes" to be an EMT.

Plus, their training kicks in when the emergency call is answered.

MPCC and Imperial Campus Coordinator Brenda Ledall were very helpful to both students during their EMT experience.

"She was great on payment options, making sure credits transferred and making sure we get the certificates to go on," Hayes said.

"I agree with Sabrina on working with Brenda and Mid-Plains on payments," Holmes added. "Any time I had a question she was there."

Ledall said, "I think it's important for our high school students to realize the impact they can make in our community while earning college credits and exploring a career path."