

Ella Montgomery

#7 Newspaper Feature Writing

Milford Jr/Sr High School

Answering the Call: MHS's First EMT

Out of 386 students at Milford Jr/Sr High School, Senior Cash Martin stands apart, earning his Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) license while still in high school, a distinction achieved by only a rare few. EMT certification requires hands-on medical training, hundreds of hours of coursework, and the ability to perform under intense pressure in real-life situations. These are demands most students do not face until adulthood. However, Cash Martin decided to take on the challenge.

Cash first became interested in healthcare when challenged to research a career for an eleventh-grade English assignment. This assignment included reaching out to a professional to job shadow. His connections led him to contact Lincoln Fire Fighter Captain Garth Montgomery, who agreed to let Cash shadow him for a day. On April 1, 2025, Cash visited Station 14 in Lincoln and learned firsthand how fun and rewarding firefighting can be. Through this experience, Captain Garth Montgomery helped Cash realize he had discovered a career he was truly interested in.

Through Captain Montgomery, Cash learned the requirements to become a firefighter. First, he needed a valid EMT certification, had to pass the Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT), and had to be 19 years old. To make this happen, Cash's first step was to obtain his EMT license. He applied for the EMT course knowing it would be a challenge, but he was ready to face the adversity of being a high school student and attending EMT class three days a week. Each EMT class ran three to four hours each evening. After completing the class and his two

10-hour clinical shifts, Cash had to take three final tests: a 200-question preparation test, a physical test, and lastly, the state registry test. On December 23, 2025, he nervously checked the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) website and learned he had passed all of his state exams on the first try.

“I was very caught off guard because I didn’t believe that I would be able to even get the opportunity to achieve something so amazing,” expressed Cash.

Although earning his EMT certification was a major accomplishment, the journey required perseverance and maturity well beyond his years. The first challenge Cash faced was entering a classroom full of people in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, each with a family of their own. Even with this diversity, he built valuable relationships and gained confidence. Because Cash was in high school, he had to learn how to balance his responsibilities, including limiting his hobbies and sticking to a strict schedule. Cash found a mentor in school nurse Rebekah Augustyn. He would ask her many questions, and she, in return, offered encouragement.

As Cash’s senior year comes to an end, he has a decision to make on how to fill his time until he turns 19 years old. Cash states, “I hope to become a wildland fire EMT for about a year to have a well-sustained and educated career before I return to Lincoln when I am 19 to apply for Lincoln Fire and Rescue (LFR).”

The joy of this process culminated on January 12, 2026, when Cash was celebrated by Milford High School (MHS) students and staff as he announced his plans. Cash expressed why this achievement of his matters not just to him but to MHS, and he said, “It shows MHS and other people in the world that anything is possible, no matter what or who you are. As long as you try your hardest and never give up, then you can be successful at anything you put your mind to.”

MHS School Counselor, Rose Kenney, finished with, “This achievement matters in the role model that Cash is for other students. His passion for becoming an EMT while in high school and his commitment to excelling throughout the coursework laid the foundation for other students to pursue their dreams. I am sure I’ll be referencing this achievement in years to come when students inquire about a challenging and daunting goal they want to pursue.”