



**Class:**  
**June 2016**

**Hometown:**  
**Millville, MA**

**“It’s an intense, accelerated program that challenges your ability to think critically under pressure during every class, which I think is an irreplaceable experience. It prepares us to perform in real-life situations at our absolute best.”**

## Student Spotlight

### Background

I grew up in the small town of Millville, MA. I became an EMT and studied Nursing at Rhode Island College in Providence. However, I decided to transfer to the University of Massachusetts in Lowell to study Criminal Justice to hopefully become a police officer and firefighter. However, I was diagnosed with a cardiac condition that made those dreams impossible. Instead, I decided to become a paramedic in order to better understand my own condition and to help people like me. I truly love emergency medicine.

### Why train as an EMT at Pro Center For MEDICS?

I did a lot of research and was looking for a school with an excellent reputation – Pro EMS Center for MEDICS was that and more. I was thrilled to be accepted to such a prestigious program. The accelerated training is intense, but I’m challenged to think critically under pressure in each and every class. The instructors are amazing. They are attentive and knowledgeable, and truly want us to succeed and become the best we can be.

The hands-on training at Pro EMS is outstanding. We have an amazing simulation cadaver labs where we experience situations as close to reality as possible. Ride time is early and plentiful, and our clinical placements are in some of the best medical facilities in the country. I know that I am prepared to make a difference in the lives of my patients. This is truly one of the best places to train for a career as a paramedic.

### Looking Toward the Future

I am excited to complete my paramedic training at Pro EMS Center for MEDICS. I am not really sure where my future will take me, but I hope to have a long career in medicine. My overall goal is to become the best medical provider I can be. This may mean becoming a Registered Nurse or Physician’s Assistant, or training future generations of paramedics. Regardless of my path, Pro EMS Center for MEDICS has given me an excellent base from which to grow.

## About Pro EMS Center for MEDICS

As the first nationally accredited paramedic program in the state of Massachusetts, Pro EMS Center for MEDICS offers a rigorous paramedic program, as well as a variety of specialty courses that are designed to allow EMS service providers to achieve the highest standards in the industry.

The Center works with all members of the EMS community – from EMTs and Paramedics to Firefighters, Police Officers, Military Personnel, Physicians, and Nurses. It is the first EMS educational facility in Massachusetts to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon the recommendation of the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP). The Center is also accredited by Massachusetts Department of Public Health as a Training Institution.

**For more information about Pro EMS Center for MEDICS, please visit [www.centerformedics.com](http://www.centerformedics.com) or call (617) 682-1811.**

# Student Profile

## Erika Baker Attends Pro EMS Center for MEDICS

“I honestly feel like I didn't choose this career, it chose me,” said Erika Baker, a student at Pro EMS Center for MEDICS. Growing up in the small town of Millville, Ma, Erika became an EMT at the recommendation of a friend. She studied Nursing at Rhode Island College in Providence, RI but decided to transfer to the University of Massachusetts in Lowell to major in Criminal Justice. She thought being an EMT would prepare her well to become a police officer or firefighter.

However, at 21 and as a practicing EMT, she was diagnosed with a condition that put her at a high risk for sudden cardiac arrest. “I value the doctors, nurses, and other men and women that hold the knowledge to help me,” said Erika. “I decided to become a paramedic to build a greater knowledge base from which to understand my own condition and to help people like me.”

After the diagnosis, she realized that policing and firefighting were no longer options. Erika ultimately concluded that being a paramedic was the best career for her. She truly loves emergency medicine and the challenge of putting her knowledge and physical findings on the scene together to diagnose and treat a patient appropriately.

When Erika decided to become a paramedic, she looked for a school with the best reputation. Her research led her to Pro EMS Center for MEDICS. She applied and was thrilled when she was accepted. “It's an intense, accelerated program that challenges your ability to think critically under pressure during every class, which I think is an irreplaceable experience,” said Erika. “They put you in real-life scenarios with real-life distractions and evaluate your ability to perform at your absolute best.”

During her clinical rotation at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, Erika was able to experience the long-term diagnostic practice and care of patients. During her ride time in the Merrimack Valley, she was able to put her hard work and knowledge from the past year into practice, knowing that she has the lifesaving tools she needs to truly make a difference in someone's life.

“It's definitely a career in which thick skin is necessary, not just for the high stress situations faced everyday, but also for handling daily constructive criticism,” said Erika. “Everyone wants to be the best and teach one another to be the best, but not every situation provides enough time to be polite with each other.”

As a woman in a male-dominated field, Erika sometimes notices hostility toward all-female crews. There are times in which women's physical ability is questioned by patients, paramedics, firefighters and others. “It can get frustrating, but you learn to shake it off, laugh, and prove them wrong,” elaborated Erika. “Most people are pleasantly surprised by our skill, dedication and strength.”

As for the future, Erika hopes to have a long career in medicine. Whether that means becoming an RN, Physician's Assistant, advancing her career in emergency medicine, or teaching future generations of paramedics, her goal is to be the best medical care provider she can be.