FDNY Family Portraits:

EMT Anthony Gadison

EMT Anthony Gadison, Station 38, knows the value of hard work and dedication.

The two-year FDNY veteran has spent the last year nurturing the FDNY's future leaders as part of the Youth Workforce, where he, along with EMTs Christabelle Chin and Iyana Curtis, have taught teens and young adults about health, fitness, and perseverance.

"I tell them to never give up and when you feel like you're about to fall, there's always someone who is there," he said.

He instructs students at the FDNY Capt. Vernon A. Richard High School for Fire and Life Safety and Winter EMS Academy (WEMSA) – both of which hosted graduations this week. These courses prepare students for careers in EMS, providing training to help them pass the state exam and eventually become FDNY EMTs.

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The programs also have a vast alumni network, and past graduates often return to show current students all the numerous opportunities available within the Department.

"They've become paramedics, firefighters, lieutenants, and they show kids they don't have to stop at being an EMT," he said. "They see what they can work toward."

If anyone should know, it is EMT Gadison. He was a member of the FDNY High School's class of 2012.

Before enrolling, he said he wanted to be a police officer, like his cousins and uncle.

"But the high school sold itself to me and I bought it," he said, laughing. "I really wanted to stick with it, I wanted to make sure I had a career, not a job, when I graduated."

He credits one of his school instructors, Brandon Mahon, for pushing him to do his best and work toward his goals. Because of mentors like him, EMT Gadison said he passed the state exam and went on to work for two private ambulance companies before he was called to join the Department in 2017.

Then last year, Assistant Commissioner Michele Maglione saw the potential in EMT Gadison and his classmate, EMT Chin, and encouraged them to apply for the Youth Workforce posts.

"This job lets me give back," he said. "I can relate to these students, and we have a great connection."

Now he is working with his old teachers and seeing things from the other side, noting "it's weird – but great – to go to meetings with them and talk to them on a different level."

Yet he did not abandon his work as a first responder. EMT Gadison said he still loves working aboard an ambulance – even more so since he was a patient himself.

In January 2018, he was in a car accident that left him hospitalized for four weeks. EMT Gadison lost the ability to walk, stuttered, and had significant memory loss, but he persevered. Through hard work and sheer determination, returned to the job in just six months.

His remarkable recovery not only earned him a Resilience Award, but gave him a new respect and compassion for the work he does in the field and the people with whom he works.

"I like putting a smile on the face of someone who is ill, joking with someone and distracting them from their pain," he said.

It also strengthened the bonds he has with his coworkers.

"It opened my eyes to how many people are there for you on this job," he said, noting all his old high school classmates and new coworkers regularly visited him in the hospital. He said he feels that support every day at work and hopes to instill that same passion in the students he teaches.

"I love this job," he said. "They always take care of you."